

SELF AND SELF REALISATION

LOVE, THE DIVINE ELEMENT OF HUMANITY

Love is a sentiment, which comes unbidden to a human being. There is a saying that love conquers everything. Lord Jesus Christ stresses the love of God who is in heaven. He also speaks of the love God has for His creation. We also see the love manifest in our lives. A husband loves his wife dearly. A mother loves her child profusely. A human being loves his possessions solely. Some love to play. Others love to sing. Yet, others may love to paint and so on. So, love is a prevailing and all-consuming emotion which we perceive and experience all-around us. The question, which we want to answer is, whether love is a divine element, whether it is benefiting and good for us and what is the basis of this love.

Saints have clarified this situation. They have distinguished between the two types of love. One may be called self-love. The love, which you have for yourself and your possession, comes in this category. The other is the love of the source of all creation, namely, God, Allah, Waheguru, Nirankar. This is the other kind of love the saints talk of.

The first type of love, namely, self-love has been very beautifully explained by Lord Buddha . He has called it attachment. A man's love for himself, his family, his possessions and his position, can be termed as attachment. All these things have an enslaving element attached to them. One hankers after money, position, children, possessions. Once, one wish or desire is satisfied, another takes its place. Human being is truly enslaved by the things he desires. The objects of desire perform a receding action. It is like a child who throws away his old toy and hankers after a new one. Once he is tired of the new acquisition, he is looking for another different one. Same happens to a human being. He is constantly chasing a mirage of ever-shifting needs and desires. His love for these things does not bring any happiness, solace or peace. He is forever running after more and more, and new items. It is his love for these transitory things which has completely ensnared him into this cycle of love, attachment, dissatisfaction and further desire.

So, self-love is a downward spiral of human existence. It is a path of constantly chasing the ever-elusive happiness, which does not seem to materialize. Is there a way out of this whirlpool of going round and round without achieving the real life of truth, consciousness and bliss?

Fortunately, there is a way. That way has been shown by all true saints. It is the same way which my Satguru Nirankari Baba Jee is showing today. His message is simple, cogent, practical and achievable.

He tells the devotees: Do not run after material things. These are all transitory. Your body, mind, relatives, worldly possessions, are not yours, at all. They are only a temporary gift given unto you to keep and enjoy. Use them by all means, but do not be attached to them. What you have, thank the Lord Master for it. What you do not have, you could work for it. If God Almighty bestows these on you, thank Him once more. If, instead, He withholds these things from you, even then bow to His will. Surrender and be happy in all what you have. Rejoice in what extra He gives you. Never worry about what you do not receive. In fact, this attitude of a devotee makes him a better worker and performer. In this act of surrender, his achievement improves. He achieves and does things, which would have been considered impossible by following the self-love principle.

Where the self-love is a degrading phenomenon, the God-love is an enlivening and invigorating movement.

This divine love attitude does not come automatically. You have to first see and understand God Almighty, who is the supreme creator of all things. Such a vision can only be granted by a Satguru. In his divine grace, he tells the devotees: Look and behold Nirankar (God, Allah, Ram)! He is the true creator. All other things, which you see, hear, feel or perceive, are His creation. You yourself are His creation. You are an integral part of this unending, unchanging, all-powerful entity. You have arisen from it and you will fall back into it. Do not,

therefore, worry about the temporary phenomenon of your body, your relations or your possessions. Repose faith in, and render devotion and attention to, this underlying supreme reality, namely, Nirankar (God Formless).

In this way, a magical change has been brought about by the True Master Nirankari Baba Jee. After knowing one's true self, how can one be attached to anything lower than that. A true devotee then remembers this Nirankar in all his conscious moments. He also remembers the Satguru who has imparted this divine knowledge to him. He bows down at the feet of the devotees who have realised the essential truth behind all creation, namely, Nirankar and love of the devotees.

Nothing can bind him any further. All human beings become his brothers and sisters. The whole creation is a vast playground, created by the good Lord for His enjoyment and sport. One may be rich or poor, high or low, a Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, or of any other caste/religion, a Satguru transforms everyone who comes to him in sincerity. He gives each one of them the powerful tool of love for all, respect for all. The recipient is now ever satiated with divine love. From an ever-engulfing self-love, he is transported to the realm of ever-effulgent divine love. Bliss, peace, joy are now his own. Gone is the hankering after material things and family. These lose the power to attract him, enslave him or pain him. He is free like a bird in the spring, rejoicing in his freedom and singing paeans of the True Master.

Love is, therefore, definitely the divine element of humanity. We only need to change its direction and stress. From self-love, which comes most naturally to all human beings, we must move on to God-love or divine love. For this, we have to realise our true self, which is Nirankar. Then the divine love becomes easy and natural. It not only sublimates the devotee but also creates a circle of love, joy and happiness, all-around him/her. Blessed is such a devotee, who then spreads what he has acquired, all-around himself or herself.

PAST, PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

Man has a memory of his past, is keenly aware of the present and awaits his future. This is his life, his consciousness and his being. What is the truth behind these three states? Do they need to be handled differently? Are they related to a man's well-being, his happiness and his purpose of life? We will attempt to answer these questions.

Let us first examine the past. All the past was present, at one time or the other. This much a person is aware of. However, no one, absolutely no one, can recreate the past in the same intensity as the present. In fact, the past is just a jumble of memories: some pleasant, some unpleasant, some vivid, some vague. Some childhood memories are likely to be quite vivid and memorable. The good fun you had with your mom and dad, say on a train journey, is a pleasant memory to recall. The loss of the loving grandmother may be a painful reminder. Then the recent events are easily remembered. Your present colleagues, you may know them all. On meeting a good friend of yesteryears, you may know him vaguely. "Yea! I know, I met him during my stay at Chennai. But what is his name?"

So, we see that all our past does not have that permanence as the present. Past exists in a human being as an ever-evaporating store of vague impressions and imperfect recall of events. Also note that some elements of our past are beyond recall. No one can recall his birth. Does that mean that a person was not born, at all? We know by logic and intuition that memory of the past in no test of reality. Hence, to say that since I can recall an event, it must be true, is not borne out by logic or facts. How often a husband and a wife have differed on a movie? "It was good", the husband says. "It was rubbish", the wife comments. What is the truth? Is it, both are true, neither is true, or both are partially true? In our analysis of our past, what is the real past and what is only the personal impressions I have?

We should also examine its affect on the present. Does the past affect our present? We have to admit that it does. The knowledge and experience one gathers in the past can be used in the present. A doctor's past knowledge helps to cure a patient now. A professional knowledge of English can Computers helps him to send off a professional report to his colleague in a foreign country through E-Mail.

Granted that past was present at one time or the other. Also, that past in only a memory now. Also granted that what we did in the past guides, helps or hinders our present actions, in terms of knowledge and experience. But can the past be changed? The answer is an emphatic 'No'. Not one single thing, not one single moment or one single memory can now be changed. What is gone, is gone forever, is irreparable, unchanging and unwavering. It is like a solid granite monolith, casting a big permanent shadow over your present.

Before we proceed with the analysis of the present, let us examine the future. Can the future be known and predicted with absolute accuracy? General trends can be predicted. An intelligent, mature person is likely to do well in life. A person with bad habits is likely to get into trouble. A coin thrown up a number of times, is likely to come up heads, fifty per cent of the tries. A person buying a lottery ticket, where one million tickets have been sold, has one chance in a million to win the lottery. These kinds of statistical and general trend predictions are possible. Then, there is a plethora of astrological predictions. The Gemini person is likely to fall in love this week. The Capricornian is likely to get a raise this week. The Virgo person will get a pleasant surprise through a letter. These are all sufficiently vague, and equally intriguing to keep you amused. Some of them may also come out true by sheer chance. Not all predictions come true. Those, which do materialise, follow the law of statistics and chance. Let us take the case of lottery. One million persons have bought the ticket. Can it be predicted who will win it? Out of total hospital admissions in a month in a city, some 8 to 10 persons will not go back home. Can it be predicted, as to who these persons will be? Especially in the matter of life and death, God's ways are all unpredictable.

Hence, we see that future is not ours to control fully. We can pray for it, hope for it, work for it, but we cannot predict it in a very accurate manner. We can worry about it. Thereby causing immense harm to our life. Recall the person who is constantly worried about death. He is dying even before his actual death. The constant worry about the future can be a constant source of pain in your life. Wise persons know that it is not worth the effort.

So, we see that the present is all you have. Past is no more and you cannot change it. Future is yet to come and you do not know what it will be like. Present, however, is in your grasp. Let us see how best to use our present.

The saints has such as the Nirankari Baba has explained this mystery of past, present and future, in a lucid and clear manner. Space and time are the creation of God. In it, we have physical form and we experience the passage of time. In reality, the physical form and the passing of time does not exist. It is all a transitory, temporary phenomenon. We may feel that we exist as separate real entities and past, present and future are also real. Nothing is real. All this arose out of God. Also, all this will fall back into God. God is the source of all existence, physical forms, consciousness and time. Lo and behold, His creation is constantly changing. Physical forms are changing, time is passing, birth and death, joy and misery, all are transitory happenings.

With this absolute vision of the absolute reality, how is one to conduct oneself. Baba Jee proceeds to add, that know thyself to be the Supreme Being's creation. Remember Him, love Him, work for Him, rejoice in Him, accept Him, glorify Him. Forget the past. Don't worry about the future. Simply grasp the present and lead a model life as being taught by the Great Masters. In this lies your salvation. Nay! This is the only path to your salvation. Know Him through the grace of a Satguru. Understand the Timeless One. Merge with Him through God-remembrance (Simran), rendering selfless service (Seva), and holy congregation (Satsang). Since He is beyond time, you, too, can enjoy this state of timeless bliss, by raising your consciousness to His level. It is possible through the grace of a true saint, a True Master.

SCIENCE OR RELIGION : WHICH IS SUPREME

“Science or Religion, which is supreme?” This debate has been going on for centuries. A very well recorded confrontation took place in the seventeenth century. Galileo was imprisoned by the Church for daring to support the Copernicus system, which stated that the earth is not the centre of the universe. Later, Darwin’s theory of evolution was opposed by the priestly class, which presumed that man is like any other animal, and had evolved from the ape. The religious zealots, however, insisted that man was created in God’s image in an immutable, constant form. Others like Newton developed equations to explain the movements of heavenly bodies which could be verified by experimentation. Newton’s theories were later modified by Albert Einstein’s Theory of Relativity. His basic tenet of space-time continuum explained the bending of light near heavenly bodies. He also discovered that the speed of light was the limiting factor for any type of radiation. George Gamow went a step further and put a date to the birth of this universe, which he called the Big-Bang. This was vastly different from what was written in the Old Testament. A raging controversy is on, whether light and other radiation are waves or particles. These exhibit both types of behavior. The old theory of indestructibility of the atom stands abandoned. Man’s development of atom bomb is the proof of the destructive power of an atom. Previously, moon was a heavenly body. It is now an airless piece of rock, going around the earth, once a month. All the lyrics and poetry, written around the beautiful moon shining through the trees, has lost its charm and glamour in the eyes of scientists, who know it to be just a piece of matter.

Each new discovery has led the scientists to think of the universe as an everexisting, everchanging and self-regulating mechanism. The scientific method is their God. They state a hypothesis. They prove this hypothesis through an experiment. Lo and behold, they have snatched the mystery from the created universe. The monsoon can now be predicted, and chemical reaction can be realised and estimated well in advance. Even the effect of nuclear devices are preplanned in terms equivalent to kilo-tons of TNT explosive. Electro-magnetic waves can be harnessed to ensure instant global communication. Crops can be grown to reasonably feed the increasing human population. Sheep and rats can be created without the normal procreation method. These are clones. Theoretically, it is possible even to create human beings by cloning, that is, growing them in a suitable solution. All you need is some essential genetic material from the donor. So, you see the source of arrogance. What the creator can do, man can do, too. What the creator does, is explainable, controllable, and subject to laws and equations which a scientist can decipher. In fact, some scientists have expressed this sentiment by stating: “I have no use of a hypothesis regarding the existence of God in my work.” In some cases, he even claims to do better than the mother nature. Birds can fly. Man can build a plane to carry hundreds of passengers. Fish can swim. Man can transport tons and tons of cargo, oil, passengers by ships. New breeds of wheat, rice, fruits and vegetables have been developed and produced. Man’s ingenuity has done wonders with his scientific achievements. Many, many more are yet to come.

Our other contender for the top post is Religion. We need to see its place in human development. Unfortunately, the balance-sheet does not look so good. There was the Spanish inquisition, which put people on the cross after condemning them as unbelievers, heretics or witches. There was the supreme rule of the Pope in earlier centuries over many kings and countries. We have the history of crusades, which pitted the Christians against the Muslims. We have the example of Northern Ireland, which is basically a Catholic-Protestant clash. Mughal kings in India forced their Hindu subjects into Islam. The recent Bombay riots, were primarily between the Hindu and the Muslim communities. The Delhi riots saw the Sikhs being chased and burnt alive just because they happen to be Sikhs! Some misguided Sikhs, at the height of insurgency, killed the Hindus in cold blood. All these atrocities were perpetrated in the name of religion. This type of action and this type of religion needs to be condemned in the strongest possible words. This is an aberration in the name of religion, which needs to be understood, castigated, prevented and eliminated.

How come, a rational and scientific man went into this kind of behavior? The fault lies in his forgetting his true origin. The true origin of all creation, including man, is the Lord Almighty Himself. Jesus Christ called him “Our Father in Heaven”. Prophet Mohammad called him “The merciful Allah”. The Hindus called him Brahman, who is the source of all things. As long as the human race stuck to this basic truth of “Fatherhood of

God and Brotherhood of Man”, there was peace and joy for them. Whenever they began to divide the humanity in terms of caste, creed, colour, religion, there was strife, misery and death for them. This is not a new struggle. It has been going on for ages. For ages people have been putting Jesus on the cross, killing Ali in the battlefield of Karbala, beheading Guru Tegh Bahadur in Chandni Chowk (Delhi) and other such horrible acts. On the other hand, saints have gone ahead with their aim of uniting the humanity. Their clarion call has been: “Realise your true self. Know your true origin. You are a drop of the Superconsciousness. All creation is His. Remember Him. Respect His creation. Love all. Be pure, humble, respectful. Shed hatred, anger, desire and attachment.” Such is the call of the Nirankari Baba. He is here to transform you into a rational, loving, caring and happy human being, with no malice or hatred. Such are the personages, who can wipe away the tears of humanity. Such are the Masters, who can check the senseless massacre of people in the name of religion, caste, and creed. Those, who listen to this message, will be saved and thereby will be a bulwark against human misery.

So, we see that religion is being practised at two levels. The lower level, where the stress is on division and strife. This is a bane and curse on humanity. The other is the higher level, where the main plank is unity, respect, understanding and love. This, actually, is the true religion. All Great Masters such as Jesus, Mohammad, Guru Nanak, Kabir, Ramakrishna Paramhansa preached it and practised it. The true devotees resist any misinterpretation of their great teachings. Nirankari Baba is now stressing this basic true religious knowledge. Those, who ‘come to his lotus feet’, are then blessed with this divine enlightenment. It has both an esoteric and a practical angle. In becoming a devotee of the Nirankari Baba, you not only become a happy adjusted human being yourself, you also become a willing and active well-wisher and servant of humanity at large. You then have the seed of being a genuine useful social being for the good of society.

We have talked of science and we have talked of religion. We have not sorted out the supremacy angle yet. Nirankari Baba’s teachings offer a very neat, plausible, logical and understandable solution to it. All we see, including man, is God’s creation. So man, in performing big scientific feats, is all guided and helped by the Almighty Nirankar (God Formless) Himself. Nirankar is the repository of all scientific, esoteric and divine knowledge. As and when He wills, a small pearl of wisdom is passed on to His own creation, namely, Man. The source is endless, and so is God’s bounty. He made the human and the human made all the scientific things. So, how can science be outside the domain of Nirankar? This very thought has been reflected in the writings of some enlightened scientists. Each new discovery made them more humble, rather than arrogant. The arrogant ones were also there, but we now know that their stand and attitude was unjustified. Humility before the Lord Master is the correct human trait. The Nirankari Baba further goes on to state, that all worldly possessions, which include all those which science has provided, are the gift of God to us. They are not ours to own, and desire and hanker after. They are ours to use and enjoy as items loaned to us under trust. This way, that plane ride becomes God’s gift. The ability to talk long distance is for us to use in God’s name. The luscious fruits, the pizza, the hamburger, the ice-cream and the sundae, are all for our consumption and pleasure as God-gifted things.

Science, scientific knowledge, scientists and scientific achievements are instruments in the hands of humanity to use for the benefit and uplift of humanity. The supreme are hence the thoughts of the Lord Master, the true thoughts which preach the brotherhood of man, love, humility, remembrance of Lord’s Name, service and patience. With these, the science and all human knowledge become a blessing and an asset. Let us, therefore, imbibe this nectar of divine knowledge as being imparted by the Nirankari Baba and take our place as true human beings on this planet earth and pledge ourselves to use all scientific knowledge for the betterment and upliftment of humanity.

STAGES OF GOD-REALISATION

Some persons even argue about the existence of God. For those, who believe in Him, the realization is either nil, partial or defective. Then comes the case of a genuine seeker. Does he get an all-engulfing, all-clear vision in one go? Or, is it a slow painful process? We will attempt to answer these questions.

A reference to the stages of a learner in Methods of Instruction may help. The first is the stage of **unconsciously incompetent**. Let us take the case of a person who has never seen an automobile. No one has told him about it. For him a horse may be the fastest and best mode of transport. He simply does not know any other. He cannot imagine a vehicle which may carry 5-6 persons in one go at a speed and distance much beyond the capacity of a horse. Such a person is unconsciously incompetent.

Similar is the case with God-knowledge. God is beyond their concept. All animals fall in this category. Also the bulk of the human population. They have no need to know the concept of God. They go through life based on their basic instincts of hunger, fight, escape, provocation, etc. They are no better than animals. They may be called **unconsciously ignorant**. Lord Jesus summed up their case very succinctly when he was nailed on the cross: "They know not what they do."

Now we can go back to the same man who had never seen an automobile, and no one had mentioned it to him. There comes to his village a traveller riding a jeep. The jeep is raising a dust-storm and coming towards him at a speed of a galloping horse. Leaning out of the jeep is a person brandishing his gun and shouting at everyone to get aside. The jeep comes to a halt near him with a screech of brakes. Six persons with strange costumes and with guns in their hands come out of it. You can imagine his astonishment. It turns to incredibility, when they pick him up and give a round of his fields in the jeep. He has now reached a stage, which may be called **consciously incompetent**. Previously, he could not even comprehend what an automobile is. Now he knows what an automobile is, and what it can do. But he does not know, how to get it, how to drive it, how to run it and how it works. He is now conscious of his ignorance about an automobile.

A very similar case can be made out for a small chunk of humanity. They see the creation all-around them. They witness the cycle of birth and death of all living things. They see the insignificance of human will against the forces of nature. They introspect on this and deduce: "Yes, there is some entity which has caused all this. There has to be a creator behind this creation". Such a person then could be called **consciously ignorant**. He is conscious about his inability to grasp the essence and meaning of the creator and creation. He knows God's presence through the creation, but also knows his lack of knowledge of His ways, His purpose, His limits, His boundaries, etc. Such a person is better placed to ultimately know God, compared to our first category.

We will move on to our third category, which is called **consciously competent**. Now, that same villager of ours performs a hazardous journey and reaches a town which has automobiles. He takes up a job and ultimately reaches a driving school. The tutor now explains to him the purpose of the steering-wheel, clutch-pedal, gear-shift-lever, accelerator, break-pedal, etc. He reaches a stage where he can do a slow circuit of the driving school compound. His slow drive requires all his attention and concentration. He has to be thoroughly conscious of his thoughts and actions. "Now I must press the clutch-pedal which is here. Now I must change the gear from this slot to the next. Now I must give slight pressure on the accelerator. Oops! there is a stone ahead, I must press both the clutch and the brake pedals." He is competent enough to drive, using his brain, body and thoughts in a conscious manner. He has to remain alert and conscious about his actions.

A parallel in God-knowledge could be drawn. Our second category person whom we called consciously ignorant, now comes across an opportunity to gain God-knowledge. He meets the True Master who can impart the supreme God-knowledge, called Gyan. By the grace of the True Master, he is then shown the Creator as distinct from the creation. He then sees himself as a 'drop' of the Divine. He sees clearly the true seed, cause and controller of all creation. Once he gets this God-knowledge from the True Master, he has now moved on to the next category which may be called **consciously knowledgeable**.

Such a person has to remain conscious of the knowledge gained. The Nirankari Baba asks all such enlightened persons to surrender themselves to the Lord Master. They should consider all their material possessions as His. Their mind, body and action should all be in His name. Baba Jee tells his devotees to do Simran (constant

remembrance of Lord's Name), Seva (selfless service) and Satsang (holy congregation). These three elements then become our conscious effort in our realisation of God. Without these conscious means, the mere act of acquiring God-knowledge will not suffice. The person would just slip back to the earlier stage of consciously ignorant. One sees this happening, again and again. After attaining God-knowledge, a conscious effort is a must. The method and mode has been shown by the True Master. One, who practices this consciously, derives joy, bliss, happiness, contentment, which is the true meaning and purpose of human life.

We have now the fourth category of knowledge, which is called **unconsciously competent**. Our same villager has now become a fully licensed driver. He has been hired by a rich man to drive him to his place of work. He is no longer our fumbling person, searching for the correct pedal to press or the correct gear-shift to be selected. He is now carrying out his duties of driving the vehicle, while engaging in conversation with his employer. Driving a vehicle is now an unconscious activity. He just sits in it and drives off. No more conscious action to press a specific pedal and move the lever in an appropriate direction. All this he does unconsciously.

The parallel in God-knowledge is that of the true saints. They are ever-free, ever-loving, ever-calm, never angry, never worried, and fully immersed in God-knowledge. God remembrance comes to them unconsciously. Doing good comes to them unconsciously. Living in God, living for God and following the ways of God is an easy, continuous and unconscious effort for them. They do not have to think about it. It comes to them naturally and unconsciously. Such persons may be termed as **unconsciously knowledgeable**.

Such persons not only benefit themselves, they benefit all those who are around them, and in doing so, the whole humanity. Let us thank and pay homage to the Nirankari Baba for creating such a category of devotees. Those with no enmity, no rancour, no personal gain or profit motive. Their motto is the establishment of Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God. This category has developed out of our preceding category. Only thing which has happened is that the devotee's conscious efforts have now become automatic and unconscious. Such devotees are very few, and they are truly blessed. Let us all aspire to become such devotees of the True Master, and bow down at the feet of such persons. It is Nirankari Baba Jee who is bringing about this transformation in human beings. Let us be worthy of his trust in us.

THE THEORY OF KARMA

Life is but a result of your Karma (past deeds). If you are prosperous, it is due to good deeds you did in your past lives. If you are poor, you are being punished for the evil deeds of your past. You cannot escape the results of your actions. This way, everything is sought to be a result of your deeds. This argument is even carried further. "Yes! there is a big problem in your life. You can, however, overcome it. How about an Akhand Path, (uninterrupted recitation of a scripture), a special Pooja (worship)? Why not try feeding four Brahmins? May be feeding a Gao Mata (cow) will bring you merit. See, I suggested this method to you, so how about my Dakshina (gift of money)?" The innocent and the ignorant get carried away by such reasoning. If things do not work out, blame it on your past deeds. Also, keep on spending money, effort and time on useless and fruitless ventures and rituals. Maybe it is more so in India. However, other countries are also not fully free of this superstition.

The extreme case is of those persons, who are resigned to the ill luck, poverty, misery, dejection and unhappiness. For them, life is a long-drawn-out painful experience. They are a hair-breadth away from thoughts of death. Some in desperation even welcome it. "This is my Kismat (destiny)! How can I overcome what I deserve?"

Saints think otherwise. Let us see what they have to say about Karma. The real cause of this world, including all human beings, is the unmanifested Nirankar (God Formless). The unmanifested has manifested this creation out of Himself. He Himself has created time, space, matter, heavenly bodies, life, creatures, insects, trees, flora, fauna, consciousness, human beings, feelings, emotions, and all what you can see, hear, feel, smell, think,

perceive and imagine. So where was Karma when only He, the unmanifested, was? There was no Karma, because there was no creation. At the cosmic level, He Himself is the source, the doer, the perceiver, the creation. In such a situation, whom can we blame for Karma, other than He Himself.

So, we see that Karma is a concept only at the human level. “You shall reap, what you sow”, says the Bible. So, we have a dilemma at our hands. At the human level, the results of your deeds are a relevant matter. At the cosmic level, Karma is not applicable.

Is it possible to reconcile these apparently, irreconcilable issues? Well, the saints can do it. Here is what the Nirankari Baba has to say: First know your true source, the unmanifested essence of your being, called Nirankar. Now surrender everything to Him. Treat your body, mind, soul, material possessions as His. All these are the gift of the Supreme Being to you. Use them by all means, not as your own, but as a gift/trust given to you by God. Now, since you are not attached to them, their presence, absence, increase, decrease, should not affect you. Do your normal work for your family, the society and the humanity in the name of God. These should not be done as a matter of greed or avarice. Instead, the work should be done as worship to the Lord Master. Now, such actions and such a life is not subject to Karma. Also, the result of your actions is likely to be better since these are now performed with zeal and vigour. You are not bound by these. Since your actions are all in the service of God, how can their results affect you. You are now as free as the Lord Himself.

Hence, we see that there are two essential steps to free yourself from the wheel of a Karma. Firstly, know the real essence of all beings, namely, Nirankar, through the blessings of a Satguru. Without this, the second step is not possible. Because without knowing Him, your mind will never be convinced about your smallness compared to the Supreme Being. The center of your life should not be you, yourself, but the Supreme Being. How can you take this step unless you know Him? The second step is that of surrender. Surrender your all to the Supreme Being. He is all there is. There is nothing outside of Him. So live, work, enjoy your life in His constant presence. Remember Him, talk to Him, live with Him and be absorbed in Him. Assign all your actions, deeds, thoughts to Him. So, where is Karma for such a person? He is not doing anything, at all. What he does, is all for God. Such a person is beyond and above the wheel of Karma.

Are these two steps easy? Well, they are both easy and difficult. Easy, once you find a True Master. Difficult, because the single step of bowing your head before a True Master and praying for God-knowledge in all humility, does not come easily. One is so steeped in one’s own pride of knowledge, that one never admits his lack of knowledge: “I know whatever is there to be known.” Such a person can never take the first step. In refusing to ‘come to the feet’ of the True Master, he is depriving himself of the golden opportunity of coming out of the cycle of Karma. Maybe this, too, is God’s will. Some He saves, others He sends them into the spin around the wheel of Karma.

Some, who having taken the first step, do not proceed further. Doubts and uncertainty engulf them. Their own ego comes in the way. They surrender something, but not everything. A partial surrender is of no use. Once you retain anything in you, which you may say is mine, you are still bound by Karma. For riding yourself of the effects of Karma, you must surrender your all to this Lord Almighty. Nobody said that it is going to be easy. The true devotees even surrender their effort of surrender. “Lord, I am yours”, they say. “Do as you please with me. Keep me in any form, place, position or predicament. I am all yours.” Such person is then full of joy, happiness, bliss, peace, love and all the good things a human being should have. No worry or action can touch him or disturb him. He is truly free of the effect of all Karma. He truly is immersed in the Supreme Being. Nothing can touch him. Being a calm, mature person, he achieves more than that what he would have achieved otherwise.

Such individuals face poverty, disease and adversity with calmness and serenity. They just keep on working in God’s name and change their surroundings for the better. Notice the calmness of Lord Jesus on the cross.

Recall the sweet words of Guru Arjun Dev spoke while seated on a hot iron plate. Nothing touches such souls. They live for ever. During their earthly lives, they go through life in peace, calmness and serenity.

All this is achievable. Come to the feet of our Satguru Nirankari Baba Jee. Realise the source of peace, love and happiness, which is a birthright of all human beings and thus free yourself from the wheel of Karma.

BONDAGE VERSUS FREEDOM

Human life is a virtual bondage to hunger, worry, care, trials, troubles, failures, disease and death. One moves from one crisis to another, concerning his physical, mental and spiritual wants. These simply do not end. There are the wife and children to be looked after. From the simple provision, of two square meals a day, to children's education, to house, creature comforts, there is a constant lifelong struggle. When one want is satisfied, another promptly takes its place. Things which you desired and obtained, could themselves become a source of pain. You desire children, and should they turn out to be abusive, demanding and selfish, they then cause endless pain. Wealth acquired by dubious means could lead to censure, jail and worry. This whole cycle of human desires, their fulfilment and their disenchantment is an ever-repetitive phenomenon. Marriage, children, wealth, once acquired, lose their initial lure. Instead, worry, concern and frustration takes their place. Ask any normal human being if he is happy. He will generally speak of being happy provided, of course, he got the following. And then he will proceed to narrate a few things which he still wants to become really happy. In other words there is hardly any human being who is truly happy. The worldly items such as relations, wealth, position, name, fame, all hold him in bondage. He is bonded to 'me' and 'mine' : "my wife, my children, my position, my status, my opinion, my intellect, my mind", is his constant refrain. He is caught in this circle of what he feels, what he thinks, what he wants and what he has achieved. There is hardly any place in his thinking for others. So, such is the life of an ordinary human being, full of worry, cares, frustration, unhappiness, aimlessness and emptiness.

Naturally, the question arises, if this is the normal state of being for all humans what is the way out? Well, help is at hand. Those of you, who wish to move out of this life of bondage, of worry, care and frustration can do so. You have to make a decision to approach the True Master. In his benevolence, the Master can free one from all bondage. Only he has both the power and authority to do so. Let us see how this can be achieved.

The Master informs the aspirant about his true self. All human beings have come forth from one divine being, called God, Allah, Ram, Nirankar, etc. He shows the spatial and mental relationship of the human being with Nirankar (God Formless). Once a devotee understands the purpose of his existence, and the nature of his creator, the whole puzzle is solved. He understands now the infinitesimally small position he occupies in this creation. He is just like a small drop in the ocean. What he previously thought to be his own, are only that of Nirankar. His worldly possessions are but a trust given to him by the bountiful Nirankar. He is to use them as available, without getting attached to them. Now the very things which caused him pain, lose their hold on him. If all is His, then how can you worry about caste, creed, religion, colour, manner of dressing, food habits, etc. All are God's creatures and have their being in Him. All should be treated equally and fairly. The message of universal love and universal brotherhood becomes very clear. There is no scope for hatred, anger or revenge in such a scenario. The whole personal life is now treated as gift of God. One should spread joy, happiness and love all-around, instead of grasping, whining and complaining. The whole scene, the whole activity and the whole happenings are only a play of God, as He pleases or cares to do. We are just a small bit partners in this whole game. Ours is only to rejoice and play the part allocated to us, as per His wish and command. We have just to surrender to His divine will. Live not as per you small-minded desires, but as a loving, willing surrender to His divine will.

Such a person is truly free. He has the freedom from desires or wants. Not that he stops working. He only works for Him. All his actions are performed in the name of God. Only with this surrender comes the true Karma Yoga (Path of Action). The name of the Lord is on his lips, even as his hands and feet are in His

service. For such a person, all his actions are divine. There is only the smile on his face and only joy and happiness radiating from him. Such a person is truly blessed, truly happy and truly free.

“Now come on, is such a miracle possible?” a skeptic may ask. Not only is this possible, it can be demonstrated, in your life. Take heart and come to the Nirankari Baba, the contemporary True Master. He can work this miracle in you. From a life of bondage to worldly things, he can take you to the freedom in His heavenly abode. Arise, awake and act. You have nothing to lose except your ego. You have everything to gain, including the heavenly kingdom. What a bargain it is! It is the same Sacha Sauda(true bargain), which Baba Nanak speaks of. Why not avail of this opportunity? The crowning glory is yours to grasp. Wonder of wonders, it does not take long. Just a humble salutation at the feet of an enlightened soul to accept you, is all that is needed. You then have the Gyan (Enlightenment). Thereafter, the practice of Sangat (holy congregation), Simran (Remembrance of the Lord) and Seva (selfless service) will fetch you that true bliss and that true freedom, which is the birthright of every human being.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE VALUE SYSTEM

All the great and well-known religions of the world had a value system. Moses talked about his Ten Commandments. Lord Jesus Christ stressed “love thy neighbor” and humility. Lord Rama set an example of devotion and truthfulness. Prophet Mohammed was instrumental in creating a vast brotherhood who prayed together and ate together. In fact, all religions of the world have a value system to preach. Guru Nanak in his travels took a Hindu, Bala, and a Muslim, Mardana, with him, signifying equality of all humans, irrespective of their caste or religion. The question, which may be raised is, whether the value system of different religions is different. The true saints know this to be a fact that the essence of all religions, namely, its value system is the same for all religions. Alas! this fact, even though known by most people, is disregarded by most in practical terms. There is an essential basic reality behind the value system. Those, who know this reality and have understood it fully, for them the values stand revealed. No longer are they plagued with doubt. That one reality is God, Allah, Ram, Brahman, Nirankar. People have given it different names. It has always been the same : it is the same and it will remain the same. This reality is only known by grace of a Satguru or True master. Those chosen ones who first acquire this knowledge and later practise this in their lives, are the true saints of this world. This God knowledge or Gyan is a precondition to understanding the value system under which the humanity should work. The beauty of the whole thing is that the underlying reality of God and the value system, which is an essential adjunct to it, has remained the same through the ages. All the prophets have preached the same one underlying reality. Also, they have preached the same value system. Their teaching may seem different and look different. The true saints know it to be the same, but not the worldly people. And, this is the tragedy of human existence. Human life, which is meant to enjoy love, peace and joy, becomes a life of fear, hatred and enmity. The cause is, of course, ignorance of the true creator. People get involved in the creation and forget the creator.

Let us, therefore, summarize the two essential elements of human life.

Firstly, all humanity and this creation is the outcome of a single entity, called God, Allah, Ram, Brahman, Nirankar, Waheguru. This entity is one and, anyone, who even tells you otherwise, is himself unenlightened.

Secondly, the value system of such enlightened persons, who know the first truth mentioned above, is also the same. Such persons will be loving, caring, humble, truthful, happy, contented, devoted.

Even though this value system has been in existence for ages and all the prophets and saints have tried to preach the same, it may not be out of place to list these common points.

The Nirankari Baba after bestowing the free gift of Gyan or Enlightenment upon a devotee, asks him to live by the following basic values:

*Consider all your wealth, including your body, mind, house, car, clothes, money, everything to be a gift of God. Treat these as a trust given for use. Do not be attached to them. Do not hanker after them. Use them and thank the Lord for having given these to you.

*Do not hate anyone for his caste, creed, religion, colour or nationality. All human beings are equal in the eye of God. Treat everyone equally love and respect all.

*Do not discriminate on the grounds of dress or food habits. People may dress differently and have different food habits. You are not to take offence on this ground. You could follow your choice of dress or food. Give others the liberty to follow theirs.

*Do your duty to your family, country and humanity at large. You are not to renounce your wife and children for the sake of religion. Live the life of a householder and know God to be near you, under all circumstances. The true saints do not renounce the world. They only renounce their attachment to the world.

These then are the basic tenets of the true value system. A little reflection will show that this very value system was taught by all saints. Words may have been different. Stress may have been different. Essence was never different. The Nirankari Baba stresses this point, again and again.

In fact, the value system a person follows is an indication of his true state.

Those, who stress division, practise hatred and preach killing and mayhem, are far from truth. They may quote the scriptures and make powerful speeches, but alas, they are themselves 'burning' in their own self-inflicted wounds. Theirs is the life of worry, misery and restlessness. Do not listen to such persons. If you can avoid them, do so. True saints and devotees, however stick to their faith in the one underlying reality, i.e. Nirankar. Forever, they practise love, humility, softspokenness and patience. Their value system is entirely different, and as per the four basic values mentioned above.

No wonder then, that in the Nirankari congregation, the stress is not on rituals, but on character-building. Time and again, Baba jee will stress humility, equal treatment of all, patience, calmness, absence of desire, absence of anger, constant remembrance of Lord's Name, service towards fellow human beings, etc. The whole emphasis is on surrender to the lord master and imbibing the qualities of a true human being. There are no great ceremonial practices, and time-consuming harangues and lectures. It is a simple straightforward exhortation for being a good human being and enjoying the good life, God has bestowed on you.

We may state, therefore, that all great religions are based on a value system. Where the value system gets diluted, it should not be termed as a true religion. Nirankari Baba is here to re-establish the value system. Rituals and ceremonies may have some relevance in religion. However, without the value system, they have no importance, and are, at best, to be tolerated. We should, however, not succumb to this dichotomy that one can claim to be a religious person without the value system being in place. Let us, therefore, review our views and stand on it. Let us imbibe and 'incorporate' the true value system, which has been the real basis of all great religions, in our lives. This is the harbinger of true joy and happiness in this world.

WITNESS OR THE DOER

A human being is a unique creation of God, in that he can think, question, infer and feel sad or happy. The thinking ability of man could be a source of joy and sorrow. It all depends on his viewpoint and what is he concerned with. There are some, who never question anything. Their philosophy is "Here I am. Now let me do the best as I can". Others are seekers who question their very existence: "Who am I? Why I am here? Now that

I am here, what am I required to do?" And lastly, "Am I a witness or is my destiny in my own hand?" This article is being written from this viewpoint of examining the issue of a man being a witness or a doer.

At the outset, therefore, we need to define these two apparently opposite viewpoints, namely, "I am a witness and I can not control anything" and "I am the doer, and I can control all things, including, including my destiny".

Both these viewpoints seem to be the opposite ends of a pole. The first one absolves the persons of all blame, and makes him a passive non-entity, capable of being kicked by fate, in any direction. The second one makes him a super God, capable of full control and master of everything. A little reflection will reveal that both these viewpoints are wrong and perhaps irreconcilable. Not only have these two irreconcilable opposites been reconciled, they both have been made true for an enlightened person. This is the miracle, which the true saints have performed.

The first thing the true saints stress and inform the world, at large, is the basic unity of creation. There is, of course, the creation all around us, a fact which is well established by our perception, and without the need of too much explanation or justification. There is or should be a creator or doer, who has caused this creation to be in existence. This, too, is a fairly logical observation or statement to make. Hence, there is the creation made by the creator, and man is a part of that creation. Now we need a virtual high jump in our thinking and philosophy to take the next step. The true saints now state that the creation is not separate from the creator. In fact, the creation is part of the creator. It is His Maya, wish or extension. So, the creator has two aspects. One, the unborn, unchanging, limitless element, called in different terms such as Nirankar, God, Allah, Brahman, Ram, and the second aspect of the ever-changing physical, mental living beings, worlds, stars, time, matter, etc. In the Hindu philosophy, the creation is divided into nine ingredients such as Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Life etc. The human being is supposed to be composed of five of these elements called Tatvas. Hence the creation, including the human beings, have come out of Nirankar (God Formless) and will go back to Nirankar. A human is, therefore, an element of Nirankar, who has taken a temporary form of a living, breathing, thinking being. The body is not a permanent feature of the creation, but Nirankar element of a human being is. That is why the Nirankari Baba exhorts and advises all human beings to recall and remember their true essence, which is Nirankar. Hence, there are two types of human beings in this world. One are those, who have forgotten their origin, i.e. Nirankar, and have come to believe that their bodies and the present existence is the only truth and that there is nothing beyond it. The others are those, who by the grace of the True Master have realized their true source, i.e. Nirankar. Now they are established in Nirankar, forever, singing His praise and treating their body and their worldly possessions as a temporary trust given to them. Such enlightened persons are then called saints, and for them the creation, including they themselves, are not only an aspect of Nirankar. Such persons are true salt of the earth. They are selfless, contented, happy, well-adjusted human beings. Their life is of bliss, happiness and contentment, in the service of Nirankar and His creation. The worldly worries and cares do not even touch them. They are like the proverbial blooming lotus in a dirty pond(signifying the earthly existence).

Such a miracle can only be wrought by a Satguru. In his benevolence, he imparts the divine knowledge of the relationship of man with his true source, namely, Nirankar.

We may now revert to our original axiom and try to answer it. We will first try to answer the same from the viewpoint of the enlightened persons. For the enlightened persons, the doer is truly revealed. He is Nirankar. The entire creation and all its physical, mental, ethereal and sensory movements, all happen by the will of Nirankar. There is no other person or being who has created, sustained and run the creation. Only He Himself is, what we see, what we hear, what we think and what we feel. So, what is the position of a human being in all this? He is a witness to Nirankar's creation. If enlightened, he is aware of his true self, and does not move or swing with the change in his surroundings. He remains calm and equidistant in success and failure, in health and sickness, in abundance or lack of riches. He is ever calm and ever happy in whatever situation God should

place him. He subordinates his will to God's will. Not that he stops working, but whatever he does, he does in the name of God. His is not an abject surrender to destiny. If anything, his faith in God makes him achieve stupendous results. Even temporary setbacks do not deter him. After all, his actions are for God. So, where is the question of thinking of personal success or failure? The tasks, the efforts and the results are all assigned to God. This attitude produces better results than what would have been achieved otherwise. He not only benefits himself but also his family, his society, his country and the human family as such.

An unenlightened person, on the other hand, thinks of himself as the doer. He fumes and frets, if what he wants is not achieved. This affects his performance further. If by chance he has achieved something, he becomes overconfident, careless, arrogant and overbearing. This can also affect his further performance. To both success and failure, he reacts in a negative manner.

The Nirankari Baba calls upon the whole human race to see and realise the true Doer of the whole creation, namely, Nirankar. Then to be a witness to His Maya (magical power), Leela (divine play) and existence in a detached, loving and devoted manner, and so enjoy the bliss and happiness of life, which is a birthright of all human beings.

CONTENTMENT, AN ACHIEVABLE GOAL

Everyone craves for peace and contentment in his or her life. Very few get it. The holy scriptures point out to the craving of the people for happiness (Sukh) turning out to be only pain (Dukh). This subject and enigma of whether a person will get happiness or pain has been studied by all spiritual leaders. All have arrived at the same conclusion, i.e. person's pain is his own making. Lord Buddha has termed it as attachment. Some scriptures have called it ego (Haumein). At other places it is named as pride (Ahankar). All the confusion arises due to ignorance (Agyan) of one's self and the failure to recognize the Supreme Lord of all creation.

Before proceeding further, it may be worthwhile to examine the process of getting contentment or feeling contented. You have desires, wishes (Vasna), wants and dreams. When these get fulfilled, you are contented. Now comes the catch. There is no end to a man's desires. Once one desire is fulfilled, another rises in its place. This unquenchable thirst of desires is never ending. There are the simple physical desires of food, clothing, water, shelter. Then there are the subtle desires of position, name, fame, recognition.

There is also the so-called hierarchy of desires. The lower level desires are food and water. The higher level are bungalow, car, T.V., etc. It is presumed that once lower level desires are satisfied, higher level desires crop up. The desires are universally applicable to all ages, times and people. Children may have different sets of desires such as toys, comics, etc. Adults and grown-ups will have another set of desires. No one in any country or climate is rid of this malady.

We may now summarise the malady. Firstly, every one has one desire or the other. No sooner one desire is satisfied, another crops up. Secondly, contentment may occur when a desire is fulfilled but it is short-lived. The same desire or others crop up again to drive away our feelings of contentment.

SOURCE OF DESIRES

So, it seems that the malady is in the occurrence of desires and non-fulfillment thereof. Can a person be desireless? What are desires, after all? It seems that we have to locate the very source of desires and then destroy or at least negate it. The source of all desires is 'me' or 'mine': "This is me" and "This is mine". How nice it will be to have riches, children, house, jewelry, goods, services, relations, respect, name, fame, love, affection, etc. There is a need and drive for acquisition, domination and being one better than the other. It all comes from the thought of 'I'.

A little reflection will reveal that this 'I' is quite illusory. Is 'I' the consciousness, which sees and interprets the world and its working? Is 'I' the inner desire for more and better things all the time? One has to conclude that the 'I' and the consequent desires are all these things put together. This maze of 'I' and the world is termed as Being (Jiva) and the supreme being, is God. There is the embodied soul (Jivatma) lost in this world of illusion (Maya), which is controlled by God (Parmatma). It is an everlasting snare into which the human being has been ensnared. There does not seem to be an outlet to this never-ending treadmill of self, desires of the self, and hence the lack of contentment.

REMEDY

The solution to this apparently unsolvable problem is offered by the true saints. The first step is to realise the basic nature of this world and the power behind it, i.e. God Formless (Nirankar) who can be shown to a true devotee as the limitless power behind all things. Everything, including self, the world, the universe, desires, aspirations, arise out of it and fall back into it. A human being is a very small, insignificant part of the creation. The creation itself draws its sustenance from the creator, who is Nirankar. Though created by the creator, the creation is inherently transitory. The only everlasting reality is Nirankar. Rest is all illusory, transitory and short-lived. Attachment to any transitory thing will itself be transitory. It is like falling in love with a bird which comes into your garden once and then flies away.

The true saints know all this and are not moved by worldly things. Their minds are fixed on Nirankar and they ever enjoy the everlasting bliss. For example, they do not say, "God give me this because I desire it." Instead, they say, "God, thank you for what you have given me. I have no desire or need for what you have not given." A true devotee considers all his material possessions as a gift from God and uses them as a trustee. Any addition to his material possessions is treated in the same way. Also there is no hankering and whining if you do not have which others may possess.

Well, how is this miracle to come about? How can a human being develop this attitude of contentment? It all comes out of Satguru's gift to a devotee. The Satguru explains the true nature of self and Nirankar. The knowledge thus imparted is further strengthened by Service (Sewa), Remembrance of God's Name (Simran) and Company of true saints (Satsang). This is the path shown by the Sant Nirankari Mission.

Almost a similar solution is offered by the Holy Bible: "Count thy blessings," it says. A selfish person will always concentrate on what he does not have rather than what he has. If we were to concentrate on all the bounties and gifts of God, which we take for granted, we would realise the true benevolent nature of God. He is all merciful and bountiful. It is only the selfish nature of man, which prevents him to realize the true greatness of the Lord. He is the supreme giver (Datar) and most generous (Sakhi). He is forever showering His gifts on His creation. Alas, the ignorant man does not see it but concentrates on only what he does not have.

A story illustrates the point further. A poor man went to a saint and narrated his tale of woe and misery. He wanted riches and money. He was informed that a way could be found if he was willing to part with what he had. He readily agreed and was asked to come the next day. When he eagerly arrived the following day, he was given a choice of 1 lakh or 2 lakh rupees. He was overjoyed and wanted to know what he had to part with. But he became dejected when informed that by donating both his legs he could get 1 lakh and by donating both his eyes, 2 lakh rupees. "How am I to enjoy my wealth if I lose my legs or eyes?" Thereafter, the saint explained to him the riches he already had, that is, rupees 1 lakh worth of legs and rupees 2 lakh worth of eyes. Hence, he is quite rich by comparison and should not hanker after what he does not have.

Contentment or Santokh only comes as a result of enlightenment and shedding of ego. A true devotee works in a selfless (Nishkam) manner, donating all his labour and work to the Lord Almighty, and accepting what the good Lord gives in return. He then is the truly blissful individual, ever content and ever happy. Such a state of mind is possible and demonstrable by the saints of the Sant Nirankari Mission.

THE HUMAN QUEST

The human existence, compared to the existence of the earth, is a recent phenomenon. In this infinitely small period, the human race has acquired a dominant position among all God's creation. The human race is multiplying, dominating, spreading and achieving ever greater heights of communication, science, material comforts, exploration, culture and art. People talk in terms of inhabiting the stars and life expectancy of hundreds of years. Yet, others predict both manual and almost all mental work being done by machines and robots within a hundred years or so. In short, the so-called visionaries predict a bright and glorious future for mankind, where humans will have nothing else to do except follow their hobbies and interests and generally enjoy themselves.

A keen observer of human development may admit all this, but would like to point out some other aspects of the human development and quest. We have faced two world wars in this century, where almost the whole human race sided with one or the other party and vowed to destroy the other. It is the same human race which developed the atom bomb and dropped it on other humans. World War II finished in the forties, but a never-ending fervent search and endeavour continues for better, larger, faster and more destructive weapons of war. Nations and people compete with each other for territorial and economic dominance. There is a very vague and very weak desire among the enlightened human beings for a world society based on human justice, human equality, equal opportunity and mutual love and respect. Is this an imaginable and achievable goal? Most people will answer it in the negative. They have seen the vagaries of human life, human strife, human mistrust, human selfishness, and are generally of the opinion that mankind is going down the drain. This is not a new occurrence. Throughout the ages, this struggle has been going on. Some call it the fight between darkness and light. Some refer to it as the struggle between evil and good.

The true prophets of the world have known and understood this underlying principle of the human quest. Their solution is simple, straightforward and effective. They concentrate on the human being. Once the human being is transformed, the human race will, automatically, be transformed. Lord Jesus, Prophet Mohammad, the Enlightened Buddha, the Compassionate Mahavira, Guru Nanak, Ramakrishna Parmahansa and many others and now the Nirankari Baba have the same message for the human race and are working for the transformation of the human being. A skeptical person may as well retort: "So, what is the great thing in it? It sounds simple enough."

The difficulty in all this is the human being himself. He is too set in his ways of thinking, beliefs and prejudices. He is unwilling to part with his inherent tendency of selfishness, mistrust, dominance and greed. This struggle of transforming the human into a true saint has been going on for ages. Each new era saw the rise of a prophet who carried on the noble struggle. Each of these prophets faced some difficulty or the other. This did not stop them from performing their task. Theirs is the noble crusade for the good of humanity. They carried on regardless of opposition. Such a one was Baba Avtar Singh and later Baba Gurbachan Singh. Adversity and even death did not deter them. They worked not for themselves, but for the human race. Even today they are here to kindle the message of love and trust among all human beings. Nay, they are here to change the whole human race into a loving, caring, happy family. Will they be successful? Only time can tell. But this much can be stated now and here: Those humans, who 'come to the feet' of the True Master, enjoy bliss and happiness thereafter. Gone is their worry, hurry and scurry. Such saints become the centre-point of change for the whole human race. It has been rightly stated that the very existence and prosperity of the human race is due to the presence of the true prophet and the true saints. Whatever sanity, goodwill, respect and tolerance is left in the human race, it is due to the influence of the true saints. Hence, it is best for the human race if the tribe of true saints multiplies. So, here is the double advantage of 'coming to the feet' of a True Master. Firstly, you as an individual are transformed from an unhappy, worried human being, into a blissful, joyful and effulgent person. Secondly, you become a centre-point for the upliftment and betterment of the human race. It is obvious that the

first item is more important to you as an individual. You gain personally. But viewed from the viewpoint of the human race as a whole, the second aspect is perhaps more attractive.

Such an enlightenment is provided by our Lord Nirankari Baba Ji. The aim of this article is to inform the readers about the relevance of his teachings for the whole human race. He not only changes the minds and hearts of people, for their own betterment, he is here to change the whole human race, and make it a unified, loving, accommodating, supportive whole. All this is sought to be done not by force, coercion or conquest. His is the path of love, tolerance, patience and humility. One can only repeat the words of Lord Jesus: "Come ye all, who want to be saved."

The Nirankari Baba first exhorts you to *save* yourself. Then and only then can you think about the family, country, society and human race.

It is impossible to describe the transformation, which comes about in this small article or for that matter by writing a long description. Who can describe the joy, the feelings and bliss of the seven describe of Lord Jesus, when he washed their feet and drank the water. By this one act, he transformed them into loving, devoted and energetic individuals for the spread of God's word. He moulded them in his own image, who went forth and spread his message. No wonder therefore that the Christian doctrine is known the world over. We also have the examples of Hanuman and Bhilni, who were devotees of Lord Rama, performing miracles and doing wonders in their Master's name. More contemporary is the example of Swami Vivekananda, who spread the message of Vedanta to the whole world as a disciple of Ramakrishna Parmahansa. It will suffice to say that each and every one is transformed, ennobled, changed, divinised by 'coming to the feet' of the Master. The good Lord gives everything to his disciples. The absorption of this bounty, however, depends on the capacity of the disciple to accept the same. Everyone is duly changed for the better up to the extent of his or her surrender. Lord Jesus describes this as Faith, which, according to him, can move mountains.

The lay reader may get an impression that Nirankari Baba Jee's teachings are limited to worldly matters of changing human being and hence the humankind. Where is the concept of God, the creator, the mover and sustainer of the creation in all this? His observation would be very valid and hence needs to be addressed. Baba Jee's teachings not only take this into account but this is the very start-point of his teachings. There is the Creator and there is His creation. The human race and the individual human being is part of this creation. Only a human, though a part of His creation, can still know the Creator. Once he knows his creator, only then the transformation can begin. Only then does he understand his mere existence in relation to the Creator he then understands the transient nature of his body's existence and the true centre of his being, which is everlasting, effulgent and evershining. In India, people have called this state Brahman, Sat-Chit-Anand (Truth-Consciousness-Bliss). Only then does one understand the true nature of the 'One that became many'. Such persons then become the centre of love, peace, enlightenment and progress. Hence, God-knowledge or Gyan is very much a part of Baba Jee's teachings. Self-transformation is the resultant effect of this Gyan. Gyan is the seed which the Satguru sows in the hearts and minds of his disciples to make them divine and hence ideal citizens of this world.

One last doubt may remain. How are Baba Jee's teachings different from the past Great Masters? The first and automatic response to this question is that his teachings are not different. The essence and central core is the same. The message of Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man is the same. Stress on the One Lord of the universe is the same. It is He who has been in existence throughout the ages. He is ageless and never dying. The universe is His creation but He stands apart from it. He does not undergo change. In Him is all bliss, all happiness and all life. He is the only entity worth praying to. All this is stressed and taught by Nirankari Baba Jee, which is the same message of all past Great masters. Hence, there is nothing new in his teachings.

Baba Ji's role is one of rediscovery of the ancient and true wisdom and pass it on to his disciples. His personal entreaty to each of his disciples is to first acquire Gyan (Enlightenment), and then render Sewa (Service),

Simran (God-remembrance) and Satsang (Holy congregation). The eternal truth first needs to be understood and later practised in your own life. It is a lifetime pursuit and a slippery path. Some have likened it to walking on a sword's edge. With Satguru's grace all this is very easy and very simple. The life's journey becomes tranquil and serene in company with the Satguru's Gyan and God's Name. Satguru is there to smoothen one's troubles and tribulations. The human quest comes to an end 'at the feet' of the Lord. Come, avail of his grace, thou who are troubled or are lost. He can save you. His wisdom is the same which was known and taught by all the Great Masters. He does not go by your caste, creed, colour, sex, race or nationality. His message is for the whole mankind. In fact, his disciples are the true benefactors of the human race. How beautiful is this transaction. You not only save yourself, you then become an eager, devoted and true votary of peace, unity, progress and prosperity of the human race. Hail the Nirankari Baba. He wishes more power to your efforts. We human beings are just mere puppets. Let us become worthy instruments in the hands of our good Lord Baba Jee, and incidentally serve the humankind, without seeking any return, riches or reward. Oh! our True Master, please accept us and help us to do your bidding selflessly and devotedly.

UNDERSTANDING, THE ELEMENT OF PEACE

Throughout the known history of the world, there have been conflicts of one sort or the other. Sometimes they were based on religious fanaticism, for example, christian versus Muslim, Shia versus Sunni, Catholics versus Protestants, Hindus versus Muslims, etc., etc. The examples are too many, too varied and, unfortunately, always resulting in loss of life and property. Religious fanaticism is perhaps the major cause of human suffering. Of course, there are other examples of conflict on economic and political grounds. The recent two World Wars could be categorised as wars of politico-economic domination. The recent wars in Korea and Vietnam also find their origin in the parties fighting for or against the World Communist Movement. The recent Iraq War could be called economic in nature. After all, the fight was for control of oil.

Having reviewed the world situation, let us come nearer home. Indian is not at war with anybody. Yet, innocent lives are lost in almost all parts of the country. Mutual distrust and hatred rule the crowd and the killers. Domination, elimination and subjugation is the name of the game. How and why have we reached this state of affairs? India, the land of milk, honey, prosperity, peace and tolerance, has become the land of marauding bands of killers. There is something very wrong in the national psyche. It is evident that not all Indians are to blame. The malady is limited to a small number. This small number then with the passive connivance of the silent majority has the capability of immense mischief. What can be done about this vexing problem? The solution lies in changing the attitude and motivation of the individuals. Nobody said that it is going to be an easy task. This has, however, to be attempted by all right-thinking individuals.

In fact, all religions started with the aim of bringing peace on this earth. The basic percepts taught by all were to usher in the golden age of human peace. Lord Jesus, Prophet Mohammad, Lord Buddha, Lord Krishna, Guru Nanak and most of other prophets and saints achieved some element of peace and unification around them. Their original message seems to have been lost and forces of hatred, malice and acrimony are seen to be gaining ground. Maybe this is God's will. Maybe God wants each generation of human beings to learn their lesson by direct experience. Some sort of similar theory exists in Sufi literature. The idea is that the truth gets lost and needs to be rediscovered by a new Sufi saint. Should not that be applicable to new generations, as well?

Such is the teaching of the Nirankari Baba. Love, peace, tranquillity prevails among the saints. Outsiders are amazed at the transformation of human beings into models of perfect behavior. It is the inner spiritual spark imparted to the true seeker which works this stupendous miracle. Gone is the hankering, questioning, reasoning, hatred, malice, etc. From the life of Aah! Aah! One goes to the pinnacle of Wah! Wah! This human transformation is possible and being demonstrated by Nirankari Baba Ji, almost daily.

Ego is the root cause of all hatred. When you think in terms of I and you, all those difficulties arise. When you think in terms of you and you alone (Tuhi, Tuhi), all difficulties vanish. Each enlightened person (Gyanwan)

then becomes a nucleus of love, happiness and amity. Gyan (Enlightenment), without the corresponding inner change, is of little use. Gyan must be accompanied by the complete surrender to the Lord. Only then do you attain true happiness for yourself and only then can you impart true happiness to others. The more you surrender, the more peace and happiness you will radiate. The Satguru may be called the Sun of Enlightenment, and all his disciples, the various moons who pass on the reflected light. The Sun is ever effulgent and there is no diminishing of its light. The disciples sometimes do not perceive and absorb the light due to the clouds of their own ego. One cannot blame the Guru for it. Notwithstanding all this, a truly enlightened (Gyanwan) person will be the centre and epitome of peace and understanding between human beings.

Maybe we should examine the interaction between two ordinary human beings. There is the sender who has his own mental makeup of knowledge, experience, emotions, feelings, pet theories and pet beliefs. Then there is the receiver with a similar mental makeup of knowledge, feelings, etc., but his mental makeup will be different from the sender's. Then there is the message – verbal, written, visual, olfactory, body-language, tone of voice, etc. What actually happens is that the message as sent is generally not received in the exact manner as originally sent. The receiver modifies the message according to his own perceptions. The process is called filtration. Everyone has quite a few filters. One classical example is the religious filter. This is how one such filter works: “I am a Hindu. Hindus are building a temple at Ayodhya. They must be right. Being Hindu, I support them.” Another filtering process may be: “I am a Muslim. Hindus want to lay a claim to a mosque at Ayodhya. I will oppose it.” The news and facts as received in newspapers are filtered into distorted stands and perceptions. The truly enlightened individual will say: “God made all human beings equal. There is no need to think in terms of Hindu or Muslim. All are places of worship and all should be respected and revered.”

Hence, one is back again to the question of Ego and its identification with transitory and illusory ideas such as one's religion. We have a nice Indian equivalent word to describe this state called Haumein (freely translated it means “I am”): “I am rich.” “I am powerful.” “I am superior.” These are some of the filters one acquires as a result of one's ignorance and Haumein. One views the world and its events through these filters. Naturally, there will be discord and disharmony. The Satguru removes the Haumein from the individual and thereby removes all the wrong filters. Complete understanding and peace then follows.

Understanding, therefore, is not an item to get by acquisition. It is a state of mind depending on a person's attitude. The attitude is a derivative of the Ego or Haumein. Remove a person's (false) ego and you have a person with deep understanding. Such is the task ahead of us. With Satguru's grace, this seemingly impossible task can also be accomplished. The best place to start is with yourself. Drop your Ego in favor of worship to surrender the Lord. Peace and understanding will follow.

SELF-SURRENDER VERSUS SELF-ASSERTION

The knowledge of self is at the base of all spiritual knowledge. Blessed is the one who knows his true self. For him the duality is ended and he is one with the Lord. Unfortunately, this state of being is not achieved automatically. Neither is it a matter of hard work or a super intellectual feat. It is a simple act of self-surrender to the Word of your Guru (True Master). It can come about in a giffy when the time is ripe and the Guru's grace is present. Some struggle for it over years and years. For others, it is an immediate achievement, most easily attained and a most natural event in their life. Can one prepare for it? Let us examine this aspect.

No one can doubt the existence of this physical world, where the human race has found itself, as the supreme entity or being. At one end, we see the physical progress of the humans in terms of technology, mobility and physical sciences. We have houses, televisions, aeroplanes, roads, vehicles, air-conditioners and a vast array of physical goods, including food, clothing, beverages, drinks, drugs, and what you have. On the other end, is the bankruptcy of man's mental and spiritual needs. By following the path of self-assertion, human is disturbed, dissatisfied, unhappy, worried, pained, overstressed and joyless. Those with surfeit of physical comforts, bemoan their lack of it. Those, who have surplus of physical items, are constantly in search of more and more of

the same things, without achieving peace or happiness. Look around you and you would find the majority of the human race caught in this Chakarview (Puzzle). Everyone is in this game of self-assertion to achieve something, which he feels will give him happiness. And once he achieves this, he is presented with another goal, which he now starts chasing. Is this the be-all and end-all of life? It would be summarized as the “constant chasing of material goals till the end of your life” without purpose, without joy and without bliss. No! this is not the aim or purpose of life. The enlightened ones amongst us like the Nirankari Baba explain and tell us the real purpose of life. The real purpose of life is to know thyself and surrender yourself to the true Lord and Master, which is your own higher self. Let us revert to our original query of preparation for this life or the new blissful life. It is clear now that the preparation portion is both weird and simple. You need no preparation except to bring yourself to a point of self-surrender. Just walk out today and with folded hands ask an emissary of my Satguru Baba Jee, the most sought after and most precious items of them all: “Kind Sir, please show me the True Lord, who is the true self of all. “Yes! this simple act of self-surrender is all you need to do. Are you surprised or disappointed? Don’t go by your such feelings. God is beyond feelings or intellectual reasoning. He is what He is. He can be seen by the grace of the true Guru. He is available, discernible and knowable, by a simple act of surrender in just one sitting with an enlightened person.

Does the journey end with the Gyan (God-knowledge) imparting ceremony? No, it does not. For the simple-minded, who cannot or do not wish to reason, question or investigate, the matter ends here. Their faith carries them to the land of joy and happiness. From the state of self-assertion, they move to the state of self-surrender. There is only the joy, happiness, bliss, for such souls. Blessed are such individuals, but their number is very tiny. They are few and far between. For most of us, the real journey starts now. Having known the true self of all is one thing. To be able to practise self-surrender, as a constant central idea and theme of our life, is yet another. One forgets and slips. References to such falls from grace are available in almost all cultures and religions, starting with the devil, in the Christian mythology, who was once an angel. Somewhat of the same thing can happen to all of us. O.K., we have the knowledge of our true Lord Nirankar (God Formless), which is the true self of all. But can we and have we truly surrendered to Him? In Sikh scriptures, two words indicate this dilemma admirably. You could be a Manmukh (a self-oriented or self-asserting person). Or you could be the opposite of it, namely, a Gurmukh (a Guru-oriented or self-surrendering person). This journey from Manmukh to Gurmukh is to be performed by all true seekers as part of their life. At one end is the Manmukh, whose life is full of hurry, worry, pain, stress, restlessness. The Gurmukh, at the other end, is calm, collected, joyful, peaceful. The choice is yours.

The Nirankari Baba makes us a Gurmukh to face this sea of life. He first asks us to know our true Lord. Then he asks us to surrender ourselves to Him. This surrender is achieved and facilitated through Seva (selfless service), Simran (Remembrance of Lord’s Name) and Satsang (holy congregation).

This is the same philosophy and the same means which have existed in this world from times immemorial. Baba Jee has given a new urgency and a new meaning to this ancient wisdom. It is now available simply, easily and without any trappings of rules, regulations or stipulations. Also, this ancient wisdom is given freely without the bias of caste, creed, gender, age, nationality, religion. What more can a man ask? Hail! Nirankari Baba Jee, who is the real saviour of our age. Let us make use of his presence and save ourselves. Let us go from the life of drudgery, routine and emptiness to the life of meaning, joy, bliss and happiness. All it needs is a simple act of surrender. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and ye shall enter. This is the clarion call to all seekers of Truth in this present age. Come ye all and be blessed into a life of eternal bliss.

THE AMBROSIA OF LIFE

The ambrosia of life is also called Amrit. When studying the genesis of the word, we note that it literally means “That, which does not die.” Its literal meaning is a far cry from the current accepted meaning of the word. The generally accepted meaning is of a liquid which is given by a Guru or a saint to a disciple which makes him immortal and also bestows bliss and happiness - Ananda. Then we have the term Charanamrit, i.e. Amrit from

the Charan or feet. The practice still exists of washing the feet of a saint and partaking of the liquid. It is then supposed to bestow on the drinker bliss, happiness, divine bounties, etc. Some other practices enjoin chanting of hymns, holy words, scriptures near a pot of water, which then is supposed to have become the ambrosia. In some other religious practices, Amrit is prepared by set rituals, utterances and addition of fixed ingredients. Then it is distributed to the devotees. In yet other places, Prasad (holy offering) given at holy places in liquid form becomes ambrosia.

The author disagrees with this interpretation. Amrit or ambrosia is not a physical entity, at all. It is, rather, a non-physical item, which is very much in existence, in the same way as love, compassion, trust and other such abstract things. Then the question arises, where does this ambrosia, which we also call Amrit, exist? How can we obtain it? What good can it do for us? These are the questions which are proposed to be tackled here.

There is a repeated reference in Hindu literature and Bani (divine utterances of the Sikh Gurus) about ambrosia being there in every human being. There are also five 'thieves' mentioned which steal it, thereby leaving nothing for the person himself. The five thieves are named as Kam (lust), Krodh (anger), Lobh (greed), Moh (attachment) and Ahankar (ego or pride of self). When an enlightened person gets rid of these five thieves, he imbibes the ambrosia which is already there in everyone. This may sound all very symbolic. Well, symbolic it is of a fact so very often not understood properly. The fact is that the path of enlightenment and bliss is the path of character-building also. One cannot have Amrit (signifying bliss and happiness) without getting rid of negative traits such as anger, greed, lust, etc. Ambrosia and the five thieves mentioned above are mutually exclusive: when one is there, the other cannot be there. This basic fact is to be accepted by a devotee as the central idea of the code of conduct if he earnestly desires to have ambrosia. If one is in doubt about this, one is only to look around and see for himself such people who harbor the five thieves - lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride. They cannot ever be happy irrespective of their wealth, position and faith. Hence, the problem revolves around getting rid of these five thieves, who are there in everyone. However, this is easier said than done.

It is said that once Swami Vivekananda was asked as to which is the greatest crime a man can commit, and his answer was: ego. Ego is the root-cause of all crimes and unhappiness of man. Let us take anger or Krodh. It is because one feels superior to others that one gets angry, and this feeling of superiority comes due to ego. Take the example of greed or Lobh. One has greed because one desires to possess everything, which is again derived out of ego. Take attachment or Moh, which is derived from a false sense of calling your relatives or possessions as yours. Again, this aspect of possession and calling it yours, is derived from the ego. Lust or Kam is also derived from ego in the sense of possession for selfish pleasure. Hence, the five thieves which are there, are all the manifestations and different forms of ego. All the four minor thieves, namely, lust, anger, greed and attachment are the variations of the chief thief - ego. One would do right to concentrate on ego in order to get rid of the other four also.

Ego, which is also termed sometimes as Haumein, is an outcome of a false sense of 'I am', 'I want', 'I will', 'Only I', 'For me', 'My need', 'My son', 'My pride', 'Mine own', 'Me, the great', etc. It takes all these and many other forms. Basically, the putting of yourself above all, is ego. Ego can also be said to be of three types, i.e. pride of body or Tan, pride of mind or intellect or Man, and pride of wealth, possessions, relatives or Dhan. These three types of ego cause the occurrence of lust, anger, greed and attachment. That is why in the Nirankari Mission, the very first guiding rule of life is to consider your body, mind and possessions as God's. Herein lies the crux of the whole philosophical issue. Who is owning this body, this mind and these possessions? Surely, not the human being. He has it today and he has to leave it tomorrow on his death. Hence, these three items are in the nature of temporary gifts given to him. So, why to be proud of these? It sounds so simple and straightforward as enunciated here. In real life, however, it is so very difficult to get rid of ego. In the Nirankari Mission, the three methods of Sewa or selfless service, Simran or God's remembrance and Satsang or congregations are stressed upon. These are all selfless activities, helping a disciple to get rid of ego.

In all Indian scriptures there is a great stress on Simran or sweet remembrance of God's Name. But there is a basic hitch involved here. One can only remember a known entity. As unknown and imaginary entity is difficult to remember. Hence the step of God's remembrance can only follow the knowledge of God. Once you know His shape, location and see Him face to face, only then you can remember Him, though He is right in front of you! In joy, sorrow and happiness, You call out to Him: this is Simran or Naam. Mere repetition of God's Name has no meaning. Only simple sweet remembrance of the All-pervading God, knowing and seeing Him all the time, has all the meaning. Hence, Gyan or God-knowledge must precede God's remembrance. Then the three ways of selfless service (Sewa), God's remembrance (Simran) and congregation (Satsang) take you further on the path of spirituality which is nothing else but getting rid of ego. Only then one gets the ambrosia of life, namely, Amrit. The devotee acquires a state of bliss, which is also sometimes called Sat-Chit-Ananda, i.e. Truth-Consciousness-Bliss. It is the same state of feeling as of having found ambrosia. Hence, the true devotee does not quarrel over words used: he only goes for the truth behind the words.

In some scriptures mention is made of Amrit trickling down into the palate of the devotee. We have already seen above that Amrit or ambrosia is not a physical entity, but an experience gained by a true devotee. The sweetness of Amrit is not felt on the tongue, but in a sense of joy, happiness and bliss, which permeates the whole life of a true devotee. He feels light, healthy, always smiling, calm, cool, without anger, greed and attachment, radiating love and sympathy for all. He then becomes a true saint. We could call it Amrit, Sat-Chit-Ananda, nirvana, or by any other name, it does not matter.

Hence, we see that Amrit or ambrosia is obtained by getting rid of lust, anger, greed, attachment and ego, called the five thieves, which, in fact, are all the faces of ego. And ego can be discarded by first attaining Gyan or Enlightenment and then following the path of selfless service (Sewa), God's remembrance (Simran) and congregation (Satsang). Ambrosia is every human being's birthright. All he has to do is to find a True Guru (Spiritual Guide) and follow his instructions. Ego is the worst hurdle, which a human being has to cross to get ambrosia (Amrit). Is it too high a price for getting the celestial Ambrosia of Life?

HUMAN NEED AND GREED

A recent UNESCO report published in major newspapers gives some startling facts. In one developed country people spend more money on cosmetics than the total budget needed to remove illiteracy in the world. Another example was the expenditures on pets, which far exceeded the requirements of food to feed the starving populations in certain impoverished countries. Consumer and consumption drive the economies. Everyone wants to outdo the other. For some, one house is just not sufficient. They need to add a villa in salubrious climate, a working penthouse for real hard work and may be a retreat for getting away from the world. Take cars, for instance. There is his car and her car, and may be a separate family car, as well. When it comes to food, the same pattern emerges. A 10-course dinner is normal. How about a 36-course dinner with 3 types of wines, 2 types of entrees, side dish, main dish, 6 types of cheese, 8 types of desserts and so on! An element of exhibitionism enters, as well. "My car is more powerful, larger, faster, more shiny, etc. My dress is smarter, costlier and more striking. Also, I wear my dress only once to a party. I cannot be seen in the same dress by the same set of people again. What will people think, that I do not have money to buy a new dress?"

Then there are the poor of the world. Their needs are few. Two square meals is all they require. These, too they may not get. A drought in one year leaves them starving and without succor for years. Floods wipe out their whole crop. Many die. Those who survive, pick up the thread of life, as best as they can. Some are natural calamities. Others are man-made. Long, hard work does not, automatically, grant prosperity. They just happen to be in a place, situation and country where poverty is prevalent.

Is there no solution to this very diverse disparity between the haves and have-nots? The true saints have specific message for this situation. Simply put, it states that one's possessions are only a gift of God and we are to use them in His name. We should avoid greed, since this is a self-defeating and a self-inflicted injury. No

one, absolutely no one, has been able to satisfy his greed fully. Once one item of one's greed is satisfied, another simply takes its place. It is like a bottomless pit, which never gets filled however hard you may try to fill it. If one car did not give you satisfaction, three more are also likely to leave you dissatisfied. "See! but I donnot have a private jet as the Big Boss has," you might comment. Another might say, "My friend always moves to his cottage in the hills during summer. I have no such facility. I only have to sweat it out here."

Then there are the enlightened saints, who thank the Lord God for what they receive, and what they have. If the Lord gives them something more, they are profuse and sincere in their meditation, prayer and thanksgiving. Otherwise they make do what they have. You can imagine what kind of world it would be if everyone thought this way. So, herein lies the saint's contribution to humanity. They extol and encourage sharing, compassion, love and brotherhood of man. There is enough for the man's need, but not for his greed.

Is such an impossible miracle possible, where people who have, share gladly and even those who do not have, also share what they can spare? Where there is no grasping, cornering, cheating, for the sake of greed. There is only love, concern, sharing, benevolence for the human good. Yes! It is possible if people would listen to the true saints. Such is the clarion call of the Nirankari Baba: "Know the One and be one." The Baba further explains that the whole creation, including humanity, is but God's manifestation. There is no place for greed in His reckoning. There is place only for love, humility, sympathy, co-operation, mutual respect. Unfortunately, we have very few takers of this hypothesis. People would rather follow the path of greed than the path of contentment. The true seekers, however, know what is good for them. The path of greed only ensnares a person further. The human greed is never fully satisfied. Such a person goes through life chasing mirages which vanish or arrival. "Look! Look! There is another fabulous sight." He goes chasing it, wasting his time, energy and may be money, but never reaching the satisfaction stage. The true saints, on the other hand, have what is called Santosh Dhan or the wealth of contentment.

This does not mean that the saints do not work. In fact, they work harder, since they work in the name of God. Their results are also better, since they work with equanimity and balance. All their actions are in His name, and hence the results are likely to be better. Of course, like the worldly, they too plan, review and manage, but they are not worried about the results. The results they have left in the hand of God. Failure does not deter them. Adversity does not bother them. They just keep on working diligently, consistently and untiringly. The results are bound to be good. The other person, whose driving force is greed, is looking for shortcuts, quick money, perhaps will cheat and lie, as well. Such a person is bound to fail, and even if he succeeds, he will stick to the old ways and thereby cause harm to himself and those who trust him.

So, the true seekers, who would really wish to succeed in life and also be happy in life, should forgo the path of greed. Instead, they should 'come to the feet' of the Nirankari Baba and secure the key to real success and real happiness. It lies in knowing the One and being one. So, here is the dream of the Nirankari Baba. He wishes to turn the humanity into one loving, caring brotherhood in the spirit of the same slogan of Lord Jesus, namely, Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man. For such a brotherhood, there is enough in this world for every one's need. The trouble begins when the people demand, crave and grasp according to their greed.

As stated earlier, the pull of greed is real and strong in a human life. It takes a true seeker and a strong will to shun greed and imbibe contentment in life. Thus the choice is there before everyone. Do you want to be caught in the circle of greed and worry or are you the person who would surrender his self to the Lord Master and thereby gain love, happiness and, above all, contentment in your life? The choice is yours. May the Lord Master grant you the discerning mind to make the right choice. The way, the direction as well as the aim has been shown to you here. Rest, of course, is in the hand of the Lord Master.

LIFE IS BUT A DREAM

In the Guru Granth Sahib there is a couplet by Guru Tegh Bahadur, whose free English translation will read somewhat like this:

(Lord) Rama has gone and even (King) Ravana. So have gone their numerous progenies. Hence, O man! please realize that life is nothing but a dream.

Now this comparison of life to a dream is quite apt. Dream is a passing phenomenon. You see and experience things in a dream which evaporate on waking up. You are hard put to remember the places you have seen, the places you have visited, the feelings you have experienced in a dream. Some residual memory is still there. Mostly, it is an overall sense of loss, joy, worry or wonder. After a few days even this is gone. Maybe last night's dream is still fresh in your mind, but dreams you have had over the years are all a vague memory. Now compare this with your life. Do you recall everything which happened to you? Of course, you do not. Your early childhood life is all lost to you, such as how you were born, how you were suckled by your mother, or your nappies were changed. Your childhood memories may commence only when you were 2-3 years old. Even your later life is all evaporating slowly. Some events you may remember; all others are gone, as if they never happened to you? How often you have said, "Yes! I recall being there at that party, but I do not recall meeting you". In very old age, people only remember the near and the immediate. The past life is but a dream.

So, We all see that life does resemble a dream. As long as we are in the dream, it is a reality. On waking up, it is gone. Similarly, as long as one was living a particular event, doing a specific thing, talking to persons present, it was a reality. Later that becomes a dream.

The saints, however, refer to the analogy not only for events in your life. They refer to it implying that your whole life is but a dream. Hence, a much more deeper and profound understanding is needed. Let us commence with the moment of your birth.

Did you parents create you? Who made the heart and the lungs? Who gave you the power to see a certain spectrum of light-rays and hear a certain range of audio frequencies? Who gave you the power to think, exercise your logic, power to memorize things, ability to learn a language and similar mental and consciousness faculties? Definitely not the parents . Surely, they were a mechanism to create your body. This we know from our present knowledge. But who made that wonderful constituent part of the body, and gave it a human consciousness? It must be a supreme power, who created you and before you, your parents and grandparents, and before that, this whole visible universe of earth, suns, planets, water, air, creatures, flora, fauna, etc. The logic is compulsive and immutable. There has to be a supreme power which created you, and this universe before you.

Now we come to the crunch question. Are you, the humanity and the creation, a static entity? Positively not. You, as a human body, were born. You are passing through life and one day you will be no more. Life itself on this planet is changing. Dinosaurs and many other species have come and gone. The human being is currently the leading life entity on this planet. Humans themselves are evolving, changing and emerging into something else. Let us see what happens to the human race. Our sun is slowly dying. Will that be the end of life on this earth? Universe, too, was created couple of million years earlier. Who is to say when it will end? It is definitely changing all the time. Galaxies are moving apart, suns are exploding and some are dying. New suns and planets are being created. Matter is converting into energy and, on the other hand, energy is getting converted into matter. So, this supreme Being /Power is a funny chap. He is constantly changing every bit of His creation, all the time. That includes all humans, including myself and yourself . So, we see that human life is a dream. It is true as long as it lasts. After that, it is but a dream. For that matter, the whole creation is a dream. One renowned scientist had very aptly stated: The whole creation is but a dream in God's mind . He was partially right. The saints have a better, more rational and more accurate explanation of the creation.

There is one supreme being , who is Nirankar (God Formless). He creates the creation, which has form. The creation has many aspects (nine according to the Hindu philosophy viz. Earth, Fire, Water, Jiva (embodied soul), Air, Ether, Moon, Sun and Stars. All this creation has its being and existence in Him. He not only creates it, He also sustains it and He later destroys it (the aspects of Brahma, the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Shiva, the destroyer, as per Hindu Trinity). Even though He makes His creation, He himself stands apart from it. He is unchanging, untransformable, ever present entity. The whole creation, including you and me, are His temporary dream like creation. So, what is the locus standi of a human being in all this? The saints tell us that man as a human being is but a dream. The essence of the man as part of divine supreme being is, however, deathless and ever the same. Can this basic essence of the human being, which is the same for all humans and for all creation, be known and understood? Yes, say the saints. Find yourself a Satguru or True Master like the Nirankari Baba. Thereafter now humbly at his feet and pray for the knowledge of your true essence, namely, Nirankar (God Formless): That which was always there, and will always be there. He alone is the changeless, formless, everlasting entity, and you have arisen out of Him. He is the source of all creation. Know Him and thereafter live this temporary life of yours in joy, bliss and happiness. Your body was born and it will die, but *you* were never born and *you* will never die. The essence of you, when it knows Nirankar , will be released from the bondage of life and death. Then you will understand that your human life is but a dream, and the day you get the enlightenment from the True Master, is the day of your deliverance from this dream. Life may be a dream, but this dream itself becomes cogent, logical and meaningful after you have attained the Gyan (God-knowledge) of Nirankar (Formless Supreme Reality).

SATGURU IS FORMLESS

This debate on who is a Satguru, has been going on for ages. Let us first understand the term Satguru. “Sat” means truth. The word “Guru” consists of two parts, namely, “Gu”, which means darkness and “Ru”, which means light. So, that entity who shows us the truth and takes us from the path of darkness to light is a Satguru. Therefore, the prime mission of a Satguru is to show us the Truth.

Now a question arises as to the description and definition of Truth. Is it God or is it Allah? Is it Ram or is it Rahim? Is it Waheguru or is it Jehovah? One could get bogged down in different names. Then comes the various practices. Is He attainable by praying to a stone idol or by going for Haj to Mecca? For others, it is the visit to holy places like Kashi, Mathura or Ayodhya, which will bring them salvation. Yet others may desire to kiss the Pope’s hand and be saved for life. Monastic life may be someone else’s panacea for salvation. So, wherein lies the truth and the means to achieve the same? Of course, we have the various scriptures to guide us. There is the Bible, the Quran, the Guru Granth Sahib, the Vedas, the Upanishadas and the Geeta. Which out of these is one to follow?

The true saints come at various times to resolve this recurring problem. “There has been and always will be one underlying reality to this creation. It is timeless, unchangeable and the source of everything. Only our perception of this basic reality changes. The various books and the various saints only describe it differently.”

This is how a Satguru will describe Truth: “That, by knowing which everything else is known.” His is an all-encompassing, unifying and all-embracing kind of vision. Whenever and wherever, it is the division or the difference, which is stressed, be sure that you are deviating from the eternal truth. That which unifies, encompasses and explains all shades of thoughts, all manners of living, is the test element of truth. A Satguru comes to unite and shower love and affection and not propagate hatred and jealousy. Such a person was Lord Jesus Christ, who proclaimed the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man. Also such a person was Prophet Mohammad, who united warring tribes into a loving brotherhood of Islam. So was Baba Nanak, known for his secular vision of uniting Hindus and Muslims. Lord Krishna befriended the lowly Sudama. Lord Rama ate the partially eaten berries of Bhilini, a low caste woman. Caste, creed, birth, colour or position had no meaning in their reckoning. Such persons could be called Satgurus. They provided the vision and guidance in their times to the humans who were true seekers. Truth was revealed by them, for others not only to know but also to

follow it in their own lives. Such a revelation is now possible through the grace of the contemporary Satguru, the Nirankari Baba.

So, we see that “Sat” or Truth has been in existence since times immemorial. The same Sat (Truth) is now available by the grace of Satguru Nirankari Baba Ji.

Has a Satguru to be a human? That is a profound question. We know that Lord Jesus, Prophet Mohammad, Baba Nanak and many others were all humans. So were Lord Rama and Lord Krishna human beings. Yet, some believe that realization of Truth or God-realization is possible by praying to an idol, bathing in a river or doing a critical study of a holy book. This debate will go on and on. The solution is to test and experiment. Approach the Nirankari Baba and test for yourself his ability to grant you the boon of Divine Knowledge. This Divine Knowledge is the same which was available throughout the ages.

We know that all human forms are themselves transitory. So, what happens to the human form of the Satguru. The Satguru himself explains this riddle. The human form may be transitory, but Truth is eternal. The human form comes out of the eternal Truth, preaches the eternal Truth and falls back into the eternal Truth. Revelation of the eternal Truth through the medium of a Satguru has been going on throughout the ages. Hence, the Satguru has emerged from the Formless Eternal Reality – Nirankar (God Formless) and will merge in it again. So, his human form may be subject to change, birth and death, but his formless form (Nirankar) remains always eternal, never changing, timeless and ever existing. Those, who take refuge in him, join him in eternal life in Nirankar. For them, there is no more life and no more death. They acquire the same position and status as that of the Satguru himself. Blessed are such seekers.

So we see that Satguru is really the formless one. He can, however, be known through his human form. In fact, it may be stated, that He takes human form as a Satguru for His devotees. Those, who consider a Satguru a human being, gain little. But those, who regard him as the Formless Reality (Nirankar), reap all the benefits. By merging in this Reality, they are saved from the cycle of birth and death. They are then established in the supreme reality, namely, Sat Chit Ananda or Truth, Consciousness and Bliss. So coming to the Satguru, you also access Nirankar, which is the true self of all. This is not only possible, but also desirable for all Truth seekers. So, be warned that a Satguru is not a mere human. Do not be led away by his human form. He is the eternal, everlasting and ever-effulgent reality. Know him, worship him and merge with him and thereby enjoy the bliss of happiness of life, which he alone is capable of bestowing. What a beautiful, benevolent and rewarding bargain this is. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose by this act of surrendering to the Satguru. In fact, how can anyone do without it? So, know the human form of a Satguru to be only an appendage of the Formless Reality – Nirankar. Through him you can also tap and access the most powerful, the most benevolent and the most stupendous source of joy and happiness, love and wisdom.

LIFE OF ILL-WAY OR SANR-WAY

There is the ill-way of life. One is constantly disturbed, worried, feeling harassed and generally upset. This person is worried about his family, his position, his work, his finances, what others think about him, etc. Such a person is constantly on the run. He goes here, he goes there, he does this, he does that, but his mind is in a constant state of upheaval, agitation, disturbance and dissatisfaction. “I wish I had that car. I wish my wife was more caring about me. I wish my boss does not show favour to Mr. “X” over me. I wish I had a country-house. I wish I could have more time with my family. I wish... I wish.” So goes this person’s refrain. He is living his life in an ill-way. He is ill of an ailment which he does not know even exists. It was Swami Vivekananda who stated that “It is only the saints in this world who are sane. Rest of the humanity is insane to a lesser or more degree.”

It is not the fault of a human being. He/she has been programmed in that manner by God. The programme is that “this body is me/mine. Rest is mostly external to me. This is my wife, my children, my house, my car, my

job, my colleagues, my city, my country; I have to survive in this. For this, I may have to do many things for my sake.” This reasoning is then extended to grabbing, cheating, hurting, lying as long as it benefits “Me and mine”. This state in Indian philosophy is called *Haumein* (i.e. I am), where you and your body is the centre to the universe for you. Everything else is external. Such a programme only bodes ill for you. You will remain ill and you will make those with whom you come in contact also ill. You are living the ill-way of life.

Is there another way? Guru Granth Sahib has a very apt saying in it : **Sarab Rog Ka Aukhad Naam**” (God’s remembrance is the panacea for all ills). This is the way shown by the saints: Do not live the ill-way of life. Learn to live the sane-way of life.

The saints are capable of reprogramming you for the sane-way of life. Actually, the programme lies within you. It is your own inner essence. The saints only do the job of pointing this source of health, of happiness, which is already inside (within) of you. Look! You have arisen from the source of all power. Your true nature is that of love, compassion, calmness, concern. You had only forgotten it. Change the centre of your life from your own self to that the *Murshid* (Guru or True Master) and through him the absolute reality – *Nirankar*. He is the centre of all life, including your own centre. Once you realize this, you become one with Him. Since He is absolute, changeless, impartial, all-loving, all-benevolent, all-encompassing, you become the same. Gone is your worry for yourself, for your family, for your position etc. You live and work only for Him. You are now the ever serene, ever calm ever poised person. It is not the calmness of inaction or laziness. It is the calmness even in the most intense action-oriented activity. Recall the doubt and inaction *felt* by Arjuna in the battlefield of Mahabharata. How Lord Krishna revealed to him the true Doer? It was then that Arjuna took up his bow and arrows without worrying about the consequences of his actions. Such are the saints who bow at the feet of their True Master. Theirs is the only sane-way of life: "We are nothing. All is you. We exist in You, we work in You. We enjoy what we do. We leave the results to You." Such persons live in calmness, humility and compassion. They do not harm, hurt no one, wish ill of no one and always extend their hands in help, love and companionship. What do you think such a person will be like? His is the only true sane-way of life. All others are 'ill'. The beauty of it all is that the sane-way of life not only benefits the person who is living it, it also benefits everyone around him. "How is it that Miss "L" is so calm under all circumstances?" "How is it that Mr. "M" took change in that emergency, while everyone else panicked?" "How is it that Mrs. "T" has always good words to say about everyone else?"

Such are the remarks one hears about the truly sane persons. My Master, *Nirankari Baba Ji* is converting the ill - way of life to a sane-way of life. Is it not a stress on character - building? Yes! It is much more. It is character - building and preaching, and imbibing of the good characteristics in your day-to-day life. It is not only the lecture and the harangue. It is the practice and imbibing which *Baba Ji* stresses. Does it involve lot of personal effort? No, if you follow the basic principles and practices as taught to you by *Baba Ji*. In fact, it is the most easy, natural way of life. Provided, of course, you have surrendered fully. Partial surrender will not do. Till you retain any element of "I-ness" 'at the feet' of the Lord Master, then yours is the sane way - the way of all saints. The way which was shown by Lord Jesus, Prophet Mohammad, Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, *Baba Nanak* and others. Such saints are the truly sane persons in this world. Such a life is also with in your reach.

THE RITUAL AND THE REALITY

The author was once in London and wanted to visit a famous church, and hence he asked his friend as to where were the shoes to be removed and kept. Imagine his surprise when he was told that removal of shoes was not necessary. Even though he hesitantly entered the sacred premises, he was not very comfortable about it. How could you enter a place of worship with your shoes on? The ritual of removing the shoes is considered a mark of respect for the holy place. Not so for the ordinary church-goes in London . The story did not end there. When we went a little further, there was a somber looking gentleman collecting all the hats. He pointed at the author's turban. The friend had to explain that it was not a hat but a part of the dress. Imagine the perturbation caused. How could a Sikh (as the author is) remove his turban and present himself before the church priest? It would

amount to sacrilege and insult to his faith. And here were people, very calmly removing their headgear to walk into the church. If they would come to visit a Gurdwara (Sikh temple), we would ask them to put on something on their heads. The ritual of wearing or removing headgear had acquired absolutely different meaning for the two sets of people. What about the reality behind it ? The reality is the same, i.e. a mark of respect. Hence the one basic reality of showing respect has led to two exactly opposite sets of rituals. One showed respect by putting on something over his head, the other showed respect by removing his headgear.

Hence, is there a need to fight over rituals? The answer is that one should go beyond rituals and try to find out the reality behind them.

A devout person prostrates himself before a stone idol. He is so moved that tears flow down his cheeks. Is he doing a wrong thing? The reality is that in his own simple way, he is showing his love of God. Another will call him Buut Prasat (idol worshipper). This person is then so angry that he goes and breaks the idol. He is then called Buut Shikan (idol breaker). His question is how can God, who is the supreme power, the all-pervading entity, be a mere piece of stone. Now he, too, is correct in his own limited way. Both are partially correct. The saints have the knowledge to resolve both these conflicting viewpoints. They point out that one should not worry about the mere rituals. One should rise above them and understand the reality behind them. Mere rituals can have different meanings for different people.

A youngster shouts from the door, "Auntie! Peri Paina" (Auntie, I bow at your feet). Just a mere shouting of these words from afar has no meaning. He is merely performing a ritual. A real respectful person will go near the auntie and very humbly touch her feet, and then stand up with folded hands, waiting for her response. No words are necessary. A genuine loving action says it all.

What happens is that the mere ritual has become the whole message. The reality behind it is neither sought to be known nor verified. This causes all the problems of the world. You are wearing saffron, whereas we are from a sect, what wears white. You are keeping long hair, whereas we shave off our beards. You eat anything, which you get, whereas we are pure vegetarians. You believe in prophet "A", we are the followers of prophet "B". City "A" is your holy place, whereas we go to city "B". Your marriage rituals are like this, but ours are like this. Your holy book is "X", ours is "Y". The examples are endless, so are the misunderstandings over them.

The true saints like Nirankari Baba Ji cut through this wall of ignorance. Look beyond all this. Go beyond mere outer trappings of dress, caste, creed, religion, colour, language, cultural differences, etc. That ultimate reality called variously as Allah, God, Brahman, Waheguru, is the sole source of all creation, all thoughts, all prophets, all holy books, all actions, all religions and all rituals. Such is the message of true saints. They are here to reconcile, unite and unify humanity. All others, through the stress they place on differences of rituals, only divide humanity into different sects, different races, different people. This struggle has been going on for all ages. One has to decide which side one wants to be. There is the life of Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God, as envisaged by Lord Jesus. On the other side is the life of division, selfishness, stress on mere differences of rituals. The enlightened man shuns this. Herein lies the importance of the true saints and devotees. They bring peace, unity, love, understanding to humankind. And such is the message of the Nirankari Baba. Those who see him only in his outer form of a human being, miss the point completely. He is the embodiment of the inner reality (Nirankar or God Formless). No specific rituals of caste, creed, colour, dress, gender, age, language, nationality bind him. He is free from all this. Each human is equal in his eyes. His benign grace is showered over the whole of the humanity. You may do his Aarti (a mode of worship) and he accepts it. You may perform no Aarti but just stand before him with folded hands. He accepts it. You may wear anything, eat anything, speak in any way. He accepts it. He brings to you the union of the inner reality which has been the inner reality of all ages. He is beyond rituals and the outer visible self. He only considers your inner urge and devotion and blesses you for it. So, rise above the rituals and come and see the inner reality. This is his message for the whole humanity.

THE TRIGGER OF YOUR LIFE

Two friends are watching a hockey match, sitting side by side. The opposing teams jostle, run and position themselves for the ball. Suddenly, the centre forward of the Red team is near the opposite team's "D". He dodges the remaining back, enters the "D", and strikes a stinging shot into the goal which finds the board. The goalkeeper is left standing. Such was the speed of the shot. At once, one of the friends shouts loudly, "Goal! Here comes the equalizer." The other friend moans, "Oh, no! What happened to the other back who should have been guarding the Red centre forward." Now both of them are watching the same match and the same incident. One is jubilant because his Red team has scored. The other is sad because his Blue team has conceded a goal, which they could have avoided by better play. Why this different reaction to the same external event? The answer is their different inner motivation. In one person's case, the trigger of his behaviour is the support for the Red team. In the other's case, the trigger is his support for the Blue team. Hence, we see that not an external event but the inner motivation is the trigger of their behaviour.

Let us take another example. One person who has a fairly high fever is lying in bed. Baba Ji goes to visit him. He tries to get up, but Baba Ji restrains him. "How are you feeling?" asks Baba Ji. "Baba Ji! I have some fever but now that I have got your Darshan (holy glimpse), I am going to be alright," says the devotee.

There is another person who, too, is sick with somewhat less fever. Baba Ji goes to see him, too. "How are you feeling?" Enquirer Baba Ji. This devotee slumps further in his bed and says, "Baba Ji, I am feeling miserable. Probably, I am dying. I cannot bear it any longer. My whole body is paining."

Both the persons are in somewhat similar situations. However, their trigger (inner motivation) is different. One has full faith in Baba Ji and has a positive attitude to life. The other is full of his own importance and his sickness. He is exaggerating his sickness and thereby making it worse. You can yourself guess as to who will get well soon. Here, too, we see that even in very similar circumstances a person's inner state of mind governs his actions, perception of life and his health and happiness. Here, too, the inner trigger is more important, more powerful and more effective than the external circumstances.

Hence, we have seen that the inner state of mind is the trigger of your life. How is this inner state of mind acquired? As human beings can we do something about it? This is a profound question which every human needs to address in his life. We will attempt to unravel this mystery.

The mystery is automatically solved, once you know your true origin. Your inner mind, your inner motivation, your inner trigger is nothing but your real self, which is the self of all. To understand this let us go back to the origin of each human being. How was he/she created? Parents were only a mechanical means of your procreation. It is God who created you, hopefully in His image, as stressed by Lord Jesus. The whole problem/trouble arises when one does not know his own true origin. The trigger of the whole creation is Nirankar (God) Himself. The human, who now sits at the top ladder of His creation, is also created by Him. He is the trigger of everything, visible, sentient, imaginable, existing and evident.

Hence, we have two types of humans. The ones, who know their origin (trigger), namely, Nirankar* - (God). Not only do they know Him, they live by Him. Such persons are very few. The others are those, who know Him not and even if they know about Him in a vague sort of way, they do not live by Him. Such persons are numerous, may be 99 percent of the humanity.

In the Indian school of thought, such a one is called Gurmukh (a Guru - oriented person). It is the Gurmukh category who really enjoy life, are balanced, have love for humanity and are devoted, loving, caring and sympathetic and calm. On the other hand, is the Manmukh category who are selfish, deceitful, ever complaining, ever blaming others, letting external circumstances and persons affect them. To be a Gurmukh, involves the guidance of a Guru (Murshid or Master). The Guru informs the human about his origin, i.e.

Nirankar (God) and then asks, exhorts and encourages him to live by Him. Blessed are the few such chosen ones, who have full faith in their Guru. Through their Guru, they have come to know the real trigger of their life. On having known Him, they live by Him. Thus they save themselves from the painful, miserable, troublesome life. Instead, they are a centre of love, joy, happiness, calmness, serenity and goodness of life. This is the kind of miracle wrought by the Nirankari Baba. Come! And know the real trigger of your and this creation and thereby trigger yourself into the life of joy and happiness. Can anyone ask for any thing better?

ARJUNA AND THE VIRAT SWARUP

Two armies are facing each other. On the one side are the Pandvas and on the other are Kurus. The whole history of this conflict is narrated in the epic of Mahabharat. The culminating point of this epic is the final battle scene. At the start of the battle, the conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna is the subject of the Geeta, also called the Sing Celestial. In this book, the whole Hindu philosophy is summarized. The aim is not to repeat what was said in the Geeta. Rather, an effort has been made to explain that one portion wherein Lord Krishna shows his Virat Swarup (Universal Form)

Arjuna is facing the opposing army and his eyes fall, on his Guru, Dronacharya. He further beholds his elder, Bhishampitama, who was the object of his love and affection all his life and on whose lap he used to sit as a small child and listen to Pitama's words of love and wisdom. "Am I to take up arms against them?" "Will I have to shoot the arrows to kill such people?" He is full of remorse and doubt.

At this moment of doubt, he turns to his friend, Lord Krishna. So far he has been treating the Lord only as a relative and a friend, helping out a person in need. He does not know the true form of Lord Krishna or his greatness. So, he turns to his friend, Lord Krishna, who has also volunteered to be the charioteer for Arjuna's chariot. He expresses his doubts and worries.

Lord Krishna now narrates the wisdom which has been chronicled in the Geeta and also shows his Virat Swarup (Universal Form).

"Do you think that you are going to kill these persons? They are all dead. For whoever is born is destined to die. You are not going to kill them; it is I who am going to kill them," says Krishna.

Here we must pause and understand that Krishna's statements in the Geeta are made in two different perspectives. One is the perspective of a human being that is born and is related both to Pandavs and Kurus. He is a normal human being who lives amongst them as a mortal. This is how Arjuna, too, understands and sees his friend. Then there is the other perspective of Lord Krishna, that of God Almighty Himself. He is Himself the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer. When he tells Arjuna about the real killer of all human beings, he is referring to this second perspective. Krishna is the Lord of birth and death. In that capacity it is His will and His wish which terminates the lives of human beings, and not Arjuna's arrows.

The Mahabharata serial which was telecast shows the Virat Swarup (Universal Form) as an enlarged form of Lord Krishna himself. The only change is that many heads are added on both sides of the main head. Also there are many hands and feet. Further, it is depicted that each of the head is spewing something or swallowing something. It could be water, fire and human beings. Maybe the effort was to show that Lord Krishna is the creator of the creation, human beings water, fire, etc. and also their destroyer. Similar or somewhat similar pictures made by certain artists depict the Virat Swarup of Lord Krishna, in the same manner.

The enlightened one know that such depiction does not do full justice to the depiction given in the Geeta. This is not a personal assessment. In Geeta (2:23:24) Lord Krishna describes His Virat Swarup - Universal Soul - in terms of individual soul, viz: God is formless, all - pervading and cannot be cut by weapons, burnt by fire,

blown by wind, wetted by water. He is unbreakable and insoluble. He is everlasting, all-pervading, unchangeable, immovable, eternally the same.

We now move on to the effect the revelation of the Virat Swarup has on Arjuna. Gone is his worry, his doubt. He takes up his gandiv (bow) strumming the string of which produced a sound so fierce that the enemy's hearts used to sink on hearing it. From a depressed and reluctant warrior, he now becomes Arjuna, the valiant and the Arjuna, the conqueror.

Some people wonder at the setting of this dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna. Why should the long discourse take place at the start of a battle, when the two armies are facing each other in full regalia? Is this the time and place to discuss abstract philosophical tenets? Some people also think it to be a later add-on to the Mahabharata by its author, especially since it would not have a lot of bearing on the main story. This is, however, one point which needs elaboration. Maybe the author is trying to prove that God realization is possible even in a most unlikely place such as a battlefield. With this explanation the setting becomes very logical and appropriate. We can imagine Arjuna leaning before Lord Krishna and listening to him with folded hands. This is how the Geeta was born and Arjuna saw the Virat Swarup - Universal Form (of the Lord). This Virat Swarup which was shown to Arjuna by Lord Krishna is very much realizable, here and now. All you need is to humbly bow at the feet of the Nirankari Baba and pray to be enlightened. Thereafter, you too, can see the Virat Swarup as seen by Arjuna. Also you can yourself compare what you see with what is written in the Geeta about it. You will find it to be entirely matching. Rest is a matter of your own faith. The key is with the Nirankari Baba. Avail of this golden opportunity of having the Truth Master amongst us. You, too, can become a valiant warrior just like Arjuna in this battlefield of life, vanquishing your foe of lust, anger, greed, attachment and selfishness. These epics, parables and stories were written to guide the humans towards a better life. Mere reading of the stories is not likely to benefit you. It is the divine spark and the true enlightenment imparted by the True Master which would make you and your life divine. Come ye all and become Arjuna in the battlefield of life.

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