

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

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PREFACE

Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj, Head of the Sant Nirankari Mission is giving a clarion call to the mankind. This is a universal message, which is touching and penetrating into each and every human heart. Everybody who listens to this message incorporates this message into his life.

A mundane person is involved in the drudgeries of life for materialistic gains which holy scriptures term as inferior and not worth wasting all our efforts on. Sadly, man breathes his last without accomplishing his real task because his unending desires for materialistic things always keep pushing the limit of his accomplishment. A question arises: "Is this the achievement of human life?" Even the brilliant intellectual brains have not treaded beyond the three-dimensional targets – intellectual, mental and psychological spheres.

Intellectually and spiritually, seers and sages have carried out research in the field of life and came out with flying colours. According to them, the aim and the target of human life are beyond the three dimensions. Certainly, man has to attain something greater and beyond these three dimensions.

One thing has always been irking human mind – Why am I restless? Why am I not getting peace despite making material gains and enjoying the comforts of human life? A conclusion has been drawn by saints and sages that man is not "body, mind and possessions" but a soul – a drop. Existence of the body is dependant on the continuous supply of five constituents – earth, air, fire, water and ether (Aakash) and disconnection with any of these results in death. Similarly, man has consciousness, which we call soul – the sustaining power of the body. If the mind does not have communion with the source of being, then it results in ignorance, frustration, fear, restlessness, unhappiness, sorrow, pride and prejudice, hatred and arrogance, and all the evils that have been mentioned in scriptures.

In the present era, His Holiness Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj has come out with a solution for this human problem that has been described in the various chapters of this book. His Holiness has constantly laid stress on the importance of selfless service as the practical application of the realization of the Almighty. Baba Ji has also emphasized that rooting out of ego is a prerequisite to selfless service. While Baba Ji has preached about the universal brotherhood, he has also stressed upon observing one's duty towards the nation, society and family. Whenever any natural calamity has struck the nation, His Holiness has contributed towards the rehabilitation of the distressed families by building houses (lakhs of rupees were spent to rehabilitate the quake hit victims in Gujarat) or organizing blood donation camps or in any other way. So enthusiastic is Baba Ji about spreading the message of the need to realize God (not just worshipping) and removing ignorance from this world that he has not been caring for his health. Everybody in the Mission is aware of the frequently tiresome long tours that Baba Ji goes on to awaken the mankind from its deep slumber. Many states in India have honoured Baba Ji by conferring upon him the status of a State Guest in recognition of the yeoman's service he is rendering for the welfare of the society.

This book "Spiritual Awakening" is a humble attempt to share with you the thoughts and instances that I have either come across or been privy to through my first-hand knowledge of Baba Ji's life. No doubt I am grateful to my father, late Pt. Shiv Kumar Ji who inspired me towards moral virtues right from my childhood, this book been possible with the inspiration and blessings of Her Holiness Pujya Mata Sawinder Kaur Ji. Rev. Gaurav Malhotra, a young saint, has proved to be an asset to complete this humble venture. He is a staunch devotee of Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj. He volunteered himself to compile my thoughts, spiritual ideas and experiences, which I gained during various spiritual tours of His Holiness throughout the country and abroad.

This book is a drop in the ocean to pen down all about the great divine ocean of God-knowledge preached by His Holiness. Initially, it suffered from several shortcomings, but the Hon'ble Members of the Screening Committee and particularly Rev. Kirpa Sagar, Member Incharge, Publications Department were

gracious enough to remove the same. I must, therefore, express my gratitude to them. May Satguru bless all of them as also the young saint Rev. Gaurav Ji and other saints who have helped me to complete this book.

- Major J.D. Sharma (Retd)

Delhi,

January 1, 2005

FOREWORD

'Spiritual Awakening' is the first book received from its author Major J.D. Sharma (Retd). As a distinguished devotee of His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj and a staunch follower and preacher of the Sant Nirankari Mission, he requires no introduction. He is conspicuous with his presence behind the stage during congregations addressed by His Holiness.

As a matter of fact, the book 'Spiritual Awakening' is an attempt, and a successful attempt, on the part of Major Sharma to share with our esteemed readers the knowledge and experience of the Mission's ideology he gained during the these congregations over the years.

Truly speaking, the Mission is what the Master of the day proclaims in his holy discourses. And his message is meant not only for his own devotees but the entire mankind. Satguru or the True Master does not go by the religious faith one follows, the language one speaks or the region or culture one belongs to. He raises every individual from such narrow considerations and unites him or her with the omnipresent and all-pervading God. Since is the supreme source of purity, it makes one's mind and heart pure.

Major J.D. Sharma also manifests the same purity of mind and heart when he seeks to share the message of 'Spiritual Awakening' with the world through this book. His message is, of course, the same as that of His Holiness who calls upon every human being to link oneself with the Almighty Nirankar – the supreme source of all that is good, noble and virtuous, as early as possible. The author also emphasizes the fact that spiritual awakening is possible only with the grace of the True Master (Satguru) and calls upon one and all to seek the blessings of His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj. As the readers will find, he has taken full advantage of his command over English language, since he has been a scholar of English Literature.

I pray to His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj to bless Major J.D. Sharma as also his young associate Rev. Gaurav Malhotra so that they continue to serve the Mission and its literature with all their ability and dedication in future also.

Kirpa Sagar

Member Incharge Publications

Delhi,

February 5, 2005

BONDAGES

Man is born free but he is living a bonded life. In contradistinction to every man's desire to live a free life, most of the people are living in constraints in their social, religious, cultural and economic life. The shackles of rites and rituals prevalent in society are, in fact, ready to imprison the baby even before it is born.

The moment a child is born, a concurrent birth of bonds of life takes place. The social standing of the family, the stratum of the society it belongs to, the caste of the family, the nationality of the family, etc combine together strengthening the bondage of the child in the society. As the child grows, the pride of one's family, caste, financial status, etc coupled with the ego, further ensnares a human being. When the child grows into an adult, the pride of one's learning, physical strength, beauty, or intelligence becomes a fetish. As a consequence man loses the freedom to think because our mind gets obsessed and he becomes a slave.

A slave is a person who does not have either independence of either action or thought. The human beings today are slaves to wealth, pride, ego, et cetera as these do not allow independence of thought or action. His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj once narrated a story about how Alexander, the great king of Macedonia. He went to pay homage to a saint before spearheading an armed expedition. As the king approached the saint to seek his blessings, he expected the saint to honour him by getting-up. But the saint in his meditation did not even come to know that Alexander had come to meet him. This made the king angry and he started calling names to the saint. The saint replied: "Do you want me get up for my slave's slave?" The king arrogantly claimed in an angry voice "I am the great king Alexander of Macedonia. How dare you, a petty ascetic, call me a slave?" Maintaining his poise the saint replied, "Anger is my slave and you are a slave of anger. You act under the influence of anger which is equivalent to becoming a slave of your anger. Therefore, it does not befit that I get up for you who is my slave's slave." This made Alexander to realize that he was a more slave.

The vices like pride, anger, ego, lust et al have enslaved man since times immemorial. Satan, as in the biblical stories, felt that he could not fight uprightly with God and, therefore, conspired against Him. He ordered his army of vices (lust, anger, pride, violence, etc) to infiltrate every man and distort man's image by enslaving man to the vices. Therefore, by enslaving the mankind whom God created in his own image, Satan wished to overpower God by guile. And undoubtedly, today, man is a slave dancing to the tunes of material wealth and the pride associated with it.

The way to be free from these bondages, however, is not the renunciation of the material wealth or possessions as some would think. His Holiness has often stressed in his discourses that "renunciation does not mean running away from the material pleasures. Renunciation is another name for the awakening of our soul – i.e., the use of material belongings with a sense of detached-attachment. A saint knows that he needs to use material belongings for his and everyone's good but he also knows that the use or possession of the material things should not instill pride in him. As a consequence, a saint commands the situation by being the master because he is not enslaved by the pride of possession. Instead, it is the pride that is enslaved.

"But are we masters of our lives?" This is a subject for self-analysis. A didactic story from the Upanishads aptly portrays to what extent we are the masters of our lives and not slaves to pride or forgetful of the goal of our lives.

A haughty king on seeing a majestic elephant expressed his wish to ride it. The advisors of the king counseled against riding the majestic but mad elephant that went uncontrollably wild even when ridden by the best mahout in the kingdom. The king could not be convinced against his wish and decided to ride the elephant. As expected, the moment, the king rode the elephant, it went wild. The king fell from the elephant and banged onto the ground. He started running away, from the elephant running amuck, trying to save his life.

In a bid to run away and save his life from being trampled under the elephant, the king faced a dilemma of jumping into a well. The king jumped into the well, and

while falling, his legs were stuck in the trunk of a small tree growing out of the rondure (of the well). Life could not have been more miserable for him. Dangling precariously upside-down from the tree, the king saw the face of horror – innumerable terrifying cobras on the surface of the well swaying their hoods waiting for their prey.

As the king looked towards the trunk, he could see two rats gnawing at the base of the trunk. Mindful of his imminent horrible death, the eyes of the king oscillated between the cobras, the rat and the wild elephant eager to playfully crush him to death.

Just then, like a whiff of breeze on a hot day, a drop of honey from the hive on the tree growing out of the well trickled into the mouth of the king. As more drops trickled into the king's mouth, he started relishing the honey and became oblivious of his life sandwiched in dangers. He forgot about the cobras, the two rats, and the elephant and, quaintly, about his own precariously dangling upside-down posture. The moment the trunk was to break, the king realized his situation and repented in waste of being engrossed in relishing the honey. But there was no time for him to do anything to save his life. While the king fell from the trunk into the well with cobras waiting to relish him, he continuously repented about wasting the precious moments he could have used to save his life.

Drawing some parallels to this story we can learn that the advisors of the king are the saints and prophets. The king is the man who is moving heaven and earth to amass worldly wealth and is, therefore, enslaved by the satanic forces like pride, ego and guile. But the man is constantly and selectively deaf towards the advice and teachings of the saints and rides the mad elephant of pride. Man tries his best to chase the worldly treasures enticing him to fall in the ditch of forgetfulness. His state is like the aware but unmindful king precariously dangling in the well. The cobras represent his death while the honey is the taste of the glamour and temptations of the world that are fatally engrossing. The two rats (one black and the other white) gnawing at the trunk represent the day and the night and as the trunk of life is consumed ultimately the death approaching man with the swift passage of time in the form of breathing (inhalation and

exhalation). The time taken to cut the trunk is symbolic of the time between birth and death. And what effort could the king make? Perhaps the only thing he could do was to remember God and pray for His mercy.

The moral, unmistakably, is our constant obliviousness towards the advice and teachings of the saints who have counseled man since times immemorial about not wasting the precious moments of one's life in chasing the material possessions.

One aspect that scriptures converge upon is that if we want to save our life from being wasted away, we must pay heed towards the Divine-Knowledge bestowed by the True Master to awaken ourselves to Eternity, and free ourselves from the temptations of this world while remaining associated with it (a magic in itself!).

It is the body, mind and our material possessions that suffer from the effects of satanic forces. If a man meets a seer, he realizes that he is not a body. His true identity is in the image of God i.e. our soul.

EH SAREER BRAHM NAHIN EY BRAHM JO EHDE VICH BOLE.

- Avtar Bani (316)

(This human body is not God, God is what speaks within)

The seer enlightens the man that he is a part and parcel of the omnipresent consciousness that is incapable of being touched by the satanic forces. A drop of consciousness dropped into the ocean of consciousness is, therefore, freed from the shackles of the world, and the circle of birth, death and rebirth. The soul, therefore, becomes unfettered and emancipated.

His Holiness, Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj has been cautioning the man to pay attention towards the Ultimate Reality of life by listening to saints. Sant Nirankari Mission is dedicated to carry the message of His Holiness far and wide and is giving a clarion call to people to break the shackles of life by taking the refuge of Gyan (Divine-Word) His Holiness is bestowing the world with.

**TAN MAN DHAN DA MAAN TYAAGO SHARAN GURU DI AA JAO
JIS RAB DI HAI BHAAL TUHANU IK CHIN UNDER PA JAO**

- Avtar Bani (280)

(Shed the pride of body mind, and wealth and seek the shelter of the True Master; You will realize, in a moment, God whom you have been searching for.)

And this is the only way to free oneself from evils as also from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. The liberation of the soul never came so easily. Believe me...

* * * * *

IMPURITY

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”

- Mathew 5:8

It is paradoxical that even with the pathbreaking development in science and technology, the vulnerability to living a retrogressive or an impure life has actually increased. “Adulterated liquor kills many” is an attention-grabbing headline in many newspapers and television news time and again. Liquor is known to be harmful but adulterated liquor causes death in no time.

Another relevant point is the pollution in the air we breathe. In December 1984, the infamous Bhopal Gas Leak Tragedy that killed thousands of citizens in their sleep never to see life again was the topic for discussion in several seminars and debates. Today, too, it gets a fleeting mention among intelligentsia in any discussion on the ill effects of air-pollution. In big cities, commuters who have to wait at the traffic signals amid chokingly impure air suffer from various disorders. No wonder that bronchial diseases are on the rise because of the increased vehicular emissions and pollutants. This is not all. It comes with spin-offs. The amount of ultra-violet rays entering through the expanding hole in the ozone layer are alarmingly increasing. These extremely harmful rays could well be the bane of many incurable skin diseases in the world.

Similarly, consumption of impure water diseases the body. Spilling of oil tankers in the sea causes deaths of thousands of fishes and the destruction of other aquatic life. Not to forget, increasing industrialization is constantly reducing the concentration of forests and it is aggravating the grim danger of global warming – another hot topic of discussion for the conservationists.

I have served in Rajhara Mines in Chattisgarh as an Assistant Commandant. The earth in that region is about 60 per cent iron-ore rich. However, trains cannot run on that ground because it contains iron-ore. The trains need steel tracks to run on. So, when the iron-ore is processed in steel plants i.e. its

impurities are removed before it could be processed into steel. The steel is then used to build steel tracks, which are tenacious enough to bear the tons of weight of the trains. In the same way, human beings need to be purged of their impurities and vices. They are sublimated through the knowledge of God and emerge as purified human beings of moral mettle. As a consequence, a man is moulded into a good human being who is a realized soul.

What is noteworthy in the process of sublimation is that nothing is to be added. Likewise, it is just the removal of ego, which gives rise to other impurities like anger, selfishness, hatred, violence, etc that makes a human being sublime. It corroborates the fact His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj repeats so often: Each human soul is potentially divine.

The murk of ignorance, darkened by the impurity of ego, besmirch and cloud the divinity of human beings. The knowledge of the Formless One and its remembrance resurrects the purity/divinity of the human soul by removing the murk of ignorance and revealing to man his true nature of being.

Brewing notions of ignorance about the Creator, hatred for fellow beings and jealousy for peers continue to defile and adulterate humane side of man. In the lure of self-aggrandizement man does not even hesitate to think bad and do worse to one's fellow beings. It happens because:

The veil of ignorance clouds our vision and deludes us to regard others as aliens.

- Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji

When things do not actually function or behave the way they were designed to or when they get adulterated, it is harmful. All human beings were created as potential replicas of God i.e. human beings are potentially divine and bear the stamp of divinity. The Holy Bible, too, testifies in the following words:

God created man in His own image.

However, instead of insisting on this aspect of religion, people are told to be careful about the rites and rituals that are distinct and different from the core values of every religion. Mind should be indulged in kind deeds but it gives in to hatching conspiracies and as a consequence outrageous deeds are committed.

Religion is the guiding spirit for an individual and should be a uniting factor. As His Holiness Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj put it:

Religion unites, never divides.

Quite sadly, religion today is dividing people and not uniting them. Perhaps I put that mildly. The religions today are creating compartments among people. “Religious terrorism” is an oxymoron that has, as a result, inevitably crept in our diction. In our own country, religion has become the bane of turmoil, suffering, arson and destruction between the two most predominant religions. At the global level, circumstances are not as bad as they seem. They are worse. The war against terror under America’s hegemony has not been able to protect itself from being construed without religious hues. Again, world’s two most predominant religions’ followers are at loggerheads. And the tussle has become hateful with each passing day. Throats of innocent people are slit mercilessly in the name of religious propagation and conferred as a holy act against the blasphemous – a sure sign of the adulteration in our religious values.

Religion is the opium of the masses, Right, it has benumbed our senses even towards the most violently outrageous acts against humanity. This religious adulteration is least compatible and acceptable in a world where highest standards and benchmarks are set to maintain high quality in other spheres of life.

The reason invariably has been the defiled interpretation of religion and vindictive propagation of one’s own religion. Religion, which actually establishes peace, is now becoming the cause of belligerence. The root-cause of the affected or adulterated human psyche, which makes one believe that cheating or harming is profitable for me, is the darkness of ignorance about the Almighty. “This

ignorance gives birth to ego, ego to hatred and hatred to violence” says Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj.

The darkness makes us misconstrue a rope for a snake. Likewise the darkness of ignorance about the Super-Soul deludes us into thinking our fellow beings as “the others.” His Holiness Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj has felt the pulse of the diseased man and medicating him with “God-Realization.” The light of the Divine-knowledge that is being bestowed by the True Master enlightens man about the true nature of his being. As a consequence the man who was deceived or guiled into thinking one’s fellow beings as “the others,” now perceives others as brothers.

The “Divine-Knowledge” sublimates the adulterated mind – the mind afflicted by the ignorance of the Almighty and jealousy for one’s fellow beings. Because the mind is aware of the Almighty and perceives His omnipresence, the soul dwells and glows in the luminosity of the “Divine-Knowledge.” The heart is full of love, the mind is enlightened and sublime, and the soul enjoys the grace of the Super-Soul – all pervading consciousness.

Every species was programmed to behave in a particular fashion. Man was programmed to love each other and behave as per the traits, norms, and the code of conduct by the Creator. On the contrary, a mal-functioning human being becomes just like software being attacked by a virus. The virus is dangerously reproducing and can irrecoverably corrupt the stored data in toto. The defence guard – run an anti-virus software before running or using the computer. The advantageous result – protect your data from a virus attack and the data stored in other computers too, if it’s online. Prevention – keep running the anti-virus software periodically to detect or pre-empt the virus attack. Our ego too is like a virus that reproduces itself manifold and can deprave a person’s goodness. But hey! Don’t panic. “God-Realization,” an anti-virus is available. The result – it dispels ignorance and demolishes ego. The prevention is – after being blessed with “God-Realization” by the True Master – to keep remembering the Almighty and not being deluded by ego which is based on the pride of one’s actions.

Today His Holiness True Master Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj is endeavouring to make human beings pure by blessing them with “God-Realization”. Such a human being is an asset for the whole world. His fragrance of good deeds makes the world inhabitable. The “Divine-Knowledge” bestowed by the True Master is creating a bond of universal brotherhood by eliminating ignorance and ego, and supplanting it with knowledge of the Almighty, selflessness and love. The spin-off: **Permanent peace in the world.**

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DUALITY

You can complain because roses have thorns. Or you can rejoice because thorns have roses. Duality is one of the hallmarks of creation and our existence. Whatever exists, it has two sides to it. Our eyes, too, are two but they see one vision and see views more than one. The mind, too, is also always engrossed in weighing the pros and cons of each and every situation. We have day and night, dark and light, good and bad, mundane and divine, contaminated and pure, flesh and soul, love and hate, freedom and slavery as common parameters to define duality. The human beings are also engulfed in this duality of creation. Man and woman is a testimony to this duality of nature. And as human beings, we can either be good or bad, kind or unkind, loveable or disgusting, humane or brutal, etc. Duality is, therefore, almost a law of the nature.

Air is necessary for us to live. The same air can, however, be annihilating in the form of a storm. A cool breeze or a zephyr is pleasant or desirable but blowing of hot air ('Loo' in India) is harmful for health. Similarly the water we drink is a boon for us and as necessary to our existence as the air we breathe. But a flood or a whirlpool or a typhoon wreaking havoc is the flip side of the same water we drink. The human beings too have the potential to be either good or bad, be a realized soul or an ignorant soul. The Holy Bible has defined this duality in terms of satanic and angelic.

A person depending upon his judiciousness or by the lack of it can make a boon of his life or waste it away. We pay full attention towards the upkeep of our body. But we ignore the existence of our soul and consequently our spiritual health. Living is not just caring for our body but also nurturing and catering to the needs our soul. It is to be realized that the driver of the vehicle has different needs and the vehicle has different requirements. The driver needs food while the vehicle requires fuel. We cannot satiate the driver by just putting the fuel in the vehicle or feeding the driver with the fuel and the vehicle with the food. Similarly, we must understand that our body has different needs than our soul.

We have heard about the legendary warrior Maharana Pratap and his brave adventure-loving horse, Chetak. Wherever Maharana Pratap went he was honoured and respected as a king and his horse too was well looked after. This is the deserving treatment to the master (a king) and his horse. How annoying or illogical it could have been to shower all the respect and care on the horse (Chetak) instead of the rider (Maharana Pratap). Likewise, our soul is driving the vehicle called body. Appropriate treatment to each is required. It is unfortunate that the body is meted out a kingly treatment and the soul is not assigned any attention. The body is cared for: we exercise, wear expensive and beautiful clothes, use toiletries and air-conditioners, eat good food – all this we do to maintain our body and make them good-looking. Imagine not taking any pains to maintain our physical health or look. Our body will get dirty at first, then diseased and will finally decay. This is also reflective of the true condition of the soul without the attention that it deserves. The soul needs its fair share of food and care just like the body. The solution is not to overfeed the body but pay due attention to the soul which is the forgotten aspect of our existence and is crippling for want of its fair share of attention.

His Holiness Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj has often stressed in his discourses that both the wings of a bird are to be flapped in conjunction for it to soar high in the sky. It is not possible for a bird to fly with the effort of just one of its wings. Similarly, spiritual health as well as the physical fitness of human beings is necessary for a healthy and fulfilling existence. Lack of either kind of health is a cause of great worry and distress. The people of the world are striving just for the physical health by going to the gymnasiums, health clubs, doing aerobics or yoga, or learning martial arts. The impaired spiritual health too needs attention. Just like the deficiency of even one nutrient makes a child malnourished, the human birth remains unused for which it is considered purposeful, if we ignore our spiritual health. In other words, the soul remains not just malnourished but unnourished.

As per the scriptures, it is ignoring this crucial aspect of our existence that can spell doom. Living a life devoid of spirituality is like ignoring the better half of our existence. It is behaving like a lame person when we can have the ease of

walking using both of our legs. Satanic and angelic beings differ in no other aspect other than this. Saints and sages are alert to maintain their spiritual health. Spiritual health is not just important for our awareness of our after-life but also for leading a morally upright life. The Divine-Knowledge enlightens the being of its source and its end and also how to traverse the distance in between. Just like the flower is meant to be fragrant, human beings are meant to be spiritual. A flower without fragrance, even though it physically looks like a flower, may be found unreal because it lacks its basic quality (fragrance). Similarly, human beings without spirituality are not worthy of being considered as humans because this way they lack their basic quality.

No man has the right to abandon the care of his salvation to another. Each one of us is individually responsible to take care of our spiritual health just like we take care of our physical health. Duality of creation is a boon to be used to groom us. The choice to choose or pay attention to the required things has been vested in us by the Almighty. In other words we call it wisdom. This is the time to seek the blessings of a saint who can bless you with the Divine-Knowledge that is a panacea to all the problems in this world. Else, as someone has rightly said, to pray against temptations and yet rush into the same on certain occasions, is to thrust our fingers into the fire, and then pray they might not be burnt.

The negative aspects of life have sometime a positive co-relation. The Divine-Knowledge transforms the thoughts of an individual into a positive outlook. As a consequence, the negative aspects are viewed with the optimism that the naked eye fails to see. A critical mind will question both the veracity and practicality of Divine-Knowledge in life. It would be worthwhile to note that in compost garbage is recycled into manure and transformed into highly useful and productive fertilizer. So, the efficacy of the Divine-Knowledge in transforming an individual's pessimistic views cannot be doubted. It is noteworthy that the Divine-Knowledge transforms the infernal ideas into divine thoughts. It is symbolic of the penetratingly divine effect the Divine-Knowledge has on the life of any person.

The duality of the creator and the creation also needs our attention because we tend to confuse the two and more often than not take creation for creator. However, the creator permeates the creation and yet the creation (maya) is termed as a serpent. We forget that creation is also the expression of the creativity of the Almighty. Just like we should know how to use electrical gadgets carefully and safely, we should know how to make use of the material belongings carefully. Else, just as the electrical gadgets can be harmful, maya (creation) too can be harmful. Therefore, blaming the creation as bane or cause of our temptations and sufferings is not justified. An interesting anecdote related to the Mission is when Baba Buta Singh Ji was offered a 100-rupee note on the verge of his death and he put that not close to his chest. One of the persons standing near him remarked “Maharaj, you are still tempted by maya (100-rupee note)?” At this Baba Buta Singh Ji said this maya is nectar and from it will be built beautiful Bhawans (congregation halls) for the Sangat (devotees). The message was loud and clear that the creation of the Almighty, in whichever form it may be, should be used for the welfare of all. If material belongings (maya) are used judiciously it is nectar, otherwise it is poison.

We have often seen boards hanging at the gates of various houses cautioning against the pets, mostly dogs. If a relative or a friend of the dog's master enters the house, the master instructs the dog to keep away from that person and may even admonish the dog to obey. As a result, the dog does not dare to bite us. In fact, it wags its tail. Similarly, creation (maya) may be tempting and harmful but not when we know the Master – our Creator, our Father.

His Holiness Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji has always drawn the attention of the wayward individuals towards this duality and is blessing his devotees with “God-Realization” to make the best use of the duality in the creation.

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UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Diverse are the ways of nature is a truth embodied in fauna and flora and other creations of the Almighty. Innumerable variety of plants and uncountable species of animals is just a sample of the versatility of the Creator. At a more personal level, different visages are paragons of the variety in nature. With billions of people in this world, there are not any two persons who are ditto even though they may be twins or triplets, etc. (they may look similar but their DNA constitution is different). Surely, that the thumb impressions of all the people of the world are different is not a hidden truth.

Human faces are different, so are our attitudes, civilizations, etc. In fact, some people have termed variety as the spice and taste of life. Some people have even said that the diversity in nature is the beauty of the nature. How monotonous the world would be without this diversity is a nightmarish thought. But, the diversity has often been the cause of fight, ego and destruction in this world. It is a sad reality that the diversity, which is termed as the beauty of the nature, is a cause of conflicts. If my interests or my nature does not coincide with my peers or colleagues, it is a conflict of interests. But is this dissimilarity a valid reason for conflict or is it something to be appreciated depends on the parties involved.

Dissimilarity or variety is manifested in creation. The dualities of day and night, black and white, good and evil, contaminated and sublimated, divine and unholy are a standing testimony to this rule. In a movie, for example, the hero and the villain are the two roles quite indispensable to its production. The duality is, therefore, in the scheme of creation. Whether we see this unavoidable truth as a boon or a curse depends on us.

Can we make all things uniform to suit our taste? Or, in the first place, is that desirable? If I try to force my opinion on someone, it will invite retaliation and not accommodation or understanding of my viewpoint or opinion. The judiciousness lies not in forcing one's opinion on the other but trying to understand each other's

viewpoint and reconciling. Where we try to force our opinions or convert, there is tension and conflict. On the contrary, where we try to reconcile, there is peace. Reconciliation is not necessarily being impressed by what the other person says or does. It is based on the fact that the other person is trying to adjust to my viewpoint and, therefore, so must I.

Saints and sages have always seen mankind as one and all the people of the world are alike to them. Difference in colour, religion and community, traditions, et cetera has never been a hurdle to see the mankind as one. It is not to say that they were oblivious of the differences in colours, religions, and traditions. Instead, they could find a binding force in each and every human being, which made them admire one and all. Just like the different gizmos and gadgets serve different purposes, it is known fact that they are all powered by electricity. Without electricity, all the gadgets are no more than debris and when electricity is supplied to them, the gadgets are useful. Saints and sages realize that the discriminations based on colour, communities, et cetera. is overlooking reality. The reality is that we are all powered by soul. Our bodies are mere covers of different shapes and sizes and all of us serve different purposes just like the different gadgets. The fact that I wear different clothes is no reason for someone to hate me. Similarly, we have no logic in hating people on count of their colour, habits, etc. which are like different clothes and coverings.

However, the understanding of this truth does not dawn until the True Master bestows Divine Knowledge upon us. This Divine-Knowledge makes human beings realize that his source is God who is the Super-Soul. What is noteworthy is that there is no special qualification to seek the Divine-Knowledge from the True Master. On the contrary even sinners are forgiven without being questioned anything. There is a reference in Adi Granth which asserts:

PASHU PARET MUGADH KAU TAREY PAHAN PAAR UTAREY

- Adi Granth : 802

(The True Master redeems the animals, evil souls, and the unwise, the unkind.)

No matter how big a sinner or murderer a person is, he qualifies to seek the Divine-Knowledge. One, this is the immeasurable scale of the merciful nature of the True Master, and two, there was never a man who never committed a sin. So, the need of the True Master is inevitable for every person.

Once the light of Gyan (Divine-Knowledge) has dispelled the ignorance about the existence of God, we realize that we are all similar and not different. Just like the pitchers with water in them kept under sun will show images of the sun, we, too, realize that God is in all of us. The Holy Bible says:

God created man in His own image.

Then the dissimilarity banishes and the reconciliation is forged through the commonality of God in each one of us. A potter creates different pitchers or vessels. They may be of different shapes and colours. But it is undeniable that all the vessels or pitchers are made of the same clay and are created by the one creator – the potter. Similarly, we may wear ornaments made of silver or gold. It may have different designs, weight, sheen, etc. But it is, again, undeniable that all those ornaments have been carved out of the lump of gold or silver that once was a part of the ore. Likewise, men too, may have different colours, features, etc. but intrinsically they are one – the nature of our being i.e. the soul is the same as the Super-Soul – the Almighty. Once this is clear, it is not hard to understand what is meant by, “God created man in His own image.” Then one sees oneself as a part of the family of God and the others as one’s own brother or sister. The conflict of interests gives way not just to accommodation of opinions or thoughts but priority in lending a helping hand. I remember the quotation that I used to read during my training on the wall of Chatwood building at the Indian Military Academy (IMA) in Dehradun.

Comfort of men stands prior to your own comforts.

The Divine-Knowledge transforms a selfish man into rendering selfless service to one’s fellows like the sun.

Diversity then becomes a cause to cherish the creativity and versatility of the Creator. The Sant Nirankari Mission has created a sample of Unity in Diversity. His Holiness Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj by bestowing the “God-Realisation” has modelled an example of the utopian unity in diversity. And it can be witnessed every year at the Nirankari Sant Samagam where people from different walks of life, belonging to different nationalities, communities, castes, gather and sing the praises of the Formless One realized with the benevolence of the Lord Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj.

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GYAN AUR VIGYAN

Unbridled scientific progress is leading to suffering and destruction and needs to be tempered with spirituality.

- Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji

Brahmgyan or Divine-Knowledge is divine enlightenment – a state in which a person is fully aware of the presence of the Almighty. It is a state in which one's consciousness merges seamlessly with the super-consciousness or God.

An inquisitive mind's desultory musings over the correlation between science and spirituality or Divine-Knowledge may not yield much in common. But an enlightened being is aware of the symbiotic effect of the 'brahm-gyan' on vigyan (science) and vice-versa. For an enlightened being, science is not inherently averse to spirituality and spirituality, too, could be a beacon for scientific progress.

His Holiness Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj has often quoted the famous words that 'today we have guided missiles but misguided men'. The world is continuously progressing but the moral state of man and the role of spirituality in his life has been proportionally retrogressing. Spirituality is vanishing from the lives of the men and science is becoming the bane of mankind. It is because science has been used to invent weapons of mass destruction that is not just totally against spirituality but also violates and endangers the peaceful human existence.

Just like a chariot runs on two wheels, the human life too has two aspects – the material comforts and the spiritual food for the soul. The body needs food, water, et cetera and other material comforts and it is religiously provided for. But it is the soul that suffers from the undernourishment or malnourishment. Science plays its role whereas spiritualism is relegated into oblivion.

What has our obsession with the scientific progress done for the world? The recent gifts to mankind have been the deaths of innocent persons in Iraq. The havoc caused in Hiroshima and Nagasaki due to the atomic bombs is still fresh in the minds of the people of the world. Even after 58 years of that fateful incident, the land has not become fertile and babies are born with some grotesque feature or the other. Cries full of pain and sufferings of gory tales have repeated the need for spirituality in our ignorant lives. Saints, sages and seers have never advocated against the scientific advancement. However, as His Holiness Satguru Baba Ji says:

**We are not ready to believe that the billions of dollars which
are spent on developing lethal weapons and waging wars
cannot be put to use for the welfare of the mankind.**

Someone has rightly said that 'wars are first fought in the minds of men and then on the ground'. Therefore, if the mind becomes the dwelling of God, science cannot ever be used wastefully. In fact, in most of the countries, the allocation of funds for the defence is considerably more than the developmental activities like the education, community health, et cetera. Spirituality, today, plays a second fiddle to science. The desired and ideal scenario would be where spirituality takes the driver's seat and leads the scientific progress to mitigate the sufferings, pangs and the miseries of the humanity. And it is the need of the hour because in some ways science is like our mind: it has the potential to become the servant and benefactor of the mankind or take the form of a Frankenstein. Today, science is being used by vested interests to attain their personal goals. And it is of utmost importance that science be used to foster friendly activities rather than encouraging hostility and terror-ridden atmosphere.

If spirituality is accepted by the world as a guiding force, it would serve as a beacon on a dark stormy night which saves many ships from the wrath of the sea. The ships that sail precariously through the violent waves are led astray. But the sailors who keep their eyes on the lighthouse sail through the roughest of the waves. Spirituality is the lighthouse that beckons people to be guided by it and not led astray and lost in darkness of the illusory material world.

The Divine-Knowledge is the matrix through which ideal human beings are engineered. Arjuna, the friend of Lord Krishna was blessed with the Divine-Knowledge only after he was dyingly curious to know God, the Formless One. He surrendered himself completely to Lord Krishna and beseeched the Divine-Knowledge. And he was not denied the “Divine-Knowledge.” He was readily blessed even while standing in the war-field. Such is the magnanimity of the True Master.

The gist of all this is that one has to shed one’s pride and then implore for the “Divine-Knowledge” from the True Master. If we just scatter the seeds on the surface of a ploughed, furrowed and manured piece of land, it does not guarantee that the seeds will blossom. The seeds may just get blown away by wind or picked and eaten by the birds. The seeds have to be buried inside the ploughed land. Similarly, for the tree of spirituality to grow and flower in our lives we ought to bury thine existence in the earth of obscurity, for a seed which is not buried fully, does not bringeth forth in fullness.

In another aspect, the knowledge of God (Brahm-gyan) is also quite logical. When Gyan is bestowed on us, we are made to understand how the nine elements - sun, moon, stars, air, Jeeva (being), Aakash (called ether), earth, water, fire – are different from God. If we worship the elements, it implies that we are not worshipping the Almighty. So, probing faculties of mind push us to worship God and none else. The reasoning and logical aspect of science is, therefore, a check on the purity of spiritual experience we must go through.

The science or logical thinking is as much important in spirituality as spirituality is in keeping the scientific progress to work for the welfare of the mankind. Preference for spiritual health over unbridled scientific progress will result in the amelioration of the suffering of the mankind.

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THE MIND

When a person makes his mind the dwelling of god, he is all bliss.

- Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji

Mind is a part and parcel of the unit called man. It is an intangible functional organ in every man – the other parts comprising soul and body. An important aspect of the mind is that it functions both positively and negatively. However, it is flexible enough and its negativity can be converted into positivity and vice versa. Also, it is the mind that enjoys the activities of five senses. For example, when we relish a delicacy, it is actually the mind that enjoys. If the mind is "dead", eating is no more than a biological activity. Similarly, the other four senses – seeing, listening, touching, smelling – can be put to use if the mind enjoys it. It is not body which controls the mind but vice versa. Such is the power of the functioning of our minds. Therefore, the frame in which we dwell our mind is very crucial for our overall functioning. It is very important for us to have some control over our minds so that we steer ourselves on to the path of spirituality.

A desultory mind is like a serpent. His Holiness True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj often narrates a story in his discourses that a cow may eat dry fodder yet it gives milk. A snake may drink milk yet it gives out poison. This is the nature of the mind. We serve ourselves with the best of physical comforts, yet our mind yearns for more and thinks negative because desires are never-ending and keep popping up eternally. Desires are like a raging fire. No matter how much wood we feed to the fire, it would still rage for infinite amount of wood. This is the paradox of satisfying our desires. Our indulgences satisfy us for sometime but the mind again craves for something more and something better.

Satisfaction of a desire is like a night's sleep.

When we wake up a new desire crops up.

- Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji

A story which His Holiness often narrates symbolizing the never ending desires of man is of a man called Paham (“How much land does a man need?”) who wanted to be a big landlord. He would often think that he is the monarch and that there is none to dispute with him. One day an angel appeared and Paham sought that he be made owner of vast tract of lands. The angel grants him the time between the sunrise and the sunset to cover as much land as he wishes to own by walking or running. The next day, Paham started walking and then realizing that he was going too slow and could cover more distance by running, he ran beyond his health would allow. He did not even spare himself the time to rest and eat food. The whole day he kept running in the greed to cover more and more area. Just when the sun was to set he saw a hillock that he thought he better captured lest some enemy might attack him from that strategic hillock overlooking his tracts of land. Already burnt and worn out by tiredness, and gasping, he tried to climb the hillock. As he was climbing, he vomited blood and got so breathless that he breathed his last while trying to cover more and more distance. Ultimately, his body was buried in the six feet long pit. His desires ended with his death and sadly his lust for land became the cause of his premature death.

The truth is that fulfillment of desires creates more hunger even as they are satisfied. The mind eternally craves and, therefore, is always devising ways and means to fulfil desires. The result: a fleeting mind creates a dithering personality. As a consequence, a lot of worries and mental tensions afflict a person.

How to control mind?

Mind is a composite of positivism and negativity that can also be referred to as angelic or satanic tendencies respectively. And the state of mind depends upon in what I involve myself with. It could be saintly or cruel, pessimistic or optimism et al. Therefore, what we are it is because of the state of our mind and its attitude. It is true that it is very difficult to control the mind because it gets attracted to the temptations of the colorful world. But scriptures have prescribed an easy way to control the mind. The following words are very useful in this context:

**MAN BECHEY SATGURU KEY PAAS
TIS SEWAK KE KARAJ RAAS**

- Guru Granth Sahib

(A person who surrenders his Mind to the True Master never faces any problem.)

If the mind houses the teachings of the True Master then the mind is also in under control and a devotee's chores are also not stalled. A controlled mind is a mind devoid of ego or prejudice. In the olden times, the princes were sent to *gurukuls* (in the True Master's school cum residence) to keep their ego in control, and thereby their minds. The princes were made to do all the menial jobs along with other not-so-privileged students to inculcate in their minds the feelings of equality and respect of all and root out ego and prejudice from their minds. So, the mind becomes what it is made to be. Therefore, if the mind guided by satanic tendencies it would lead to selfishness and if it is guided by the realization of the Almighty or divinity it leads to self-effacement because the ego vanishes. Can a drop have any ego when it witnesses the expanse and scale of an ocean? Similarly, when the soul realizes the Infinite God, the mind understands that it has no reason to be egoistic and, therefore, submits itself. My father was once asked to control an unbridled horse. Because he was an adept rider he could control the horse and tame it too. Likewise, mind can be controlled and even tamed with the rider – the Divine-Knowledge.

There was a rich man who wanted a servant who could do all his work. One day, the rich man found a servant who agreed to do all his work but quite strangely said that he would kill the rich man the moment there is no work for him. The rich man agreed. The servant did all the work of the rich man at an amazing speed. Soon the rich man realized that he was running out of work. The servant soon found that there was no work left for him to do and asked the rich man to give him some work to do else face death. Now the rich man had no option but to run away. The servant started chasing the rich man. In the meanwhile, the rich man took the refuge of a saint and related his problem to him. The saint advised the rich man to climb a tree and tie a rope and then direct the servant to climb up and

down the rope till further work is assigned to him. The rich man did likewise and soon found that the servant who was after his life could now be kept busy forever and could also be directed to do anything as and when required without proving to be harmful to him. Those who followed this story closely must have realized by now that climbing up and down the rope is symbolic of the realization and the continuous remembrance of the Almighty. The mind is not just kept busy this way but busy in a useful way.

Similarly, in the Indian mythology we see goddess Durga seated on a tiger. The tiger actually is symbolic of our mind. A realized soul too rides the wild mind and keeps it at its beck and call. Only after the realization of the Almighty is the mind characterized by Sato Gun (i.e. goodness and not Tamo Gun and Rajo Gun which relate to the greed of the worldly pleasures, ego, malice, et cetera.).

His Holiness Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj once said in his discourse that youth is like a river in flood. If a dam is built in its way, the wrath of the river can be controlled and its energy can be used for productive things like feeding the irrigation canals and so on. And I have felt that similarly, mind is also always in a flood of thoughts and desires which can be channelised by the dam of "Divine-Gyan." This way mind can be controlled and it is "Paradise Regained" because the soul is enlightened and communion with the Almighty is established. When the mind is in the control of never-ending desires, it is "Paradise Lost."

In the legendary Indian epic, Ramayana, Sita is abducted by Ravana and prisoned in Ashok Vatika. Ashok Vatika is set ablaze by Lord Hanuman and then a war ensues between the Ravana, the demon king and Lord Rama. Sita is, hence, finally liberated from the shackles of Ravana.

Saints have drawn spiritually inspiring parallels to the story of Ramayana. Sita is an allusion to the soul, which is enamoured by the Ravana who symbolizes mind. Lord Rama is symbolic of "God-Realization" which unfetters the soul from the mind and thus gets liberated.

The mind is also like a lift in some ways. A lift is meant for our convenience to travel up and down in a building. But if a fault in the lift causes it to move up and down unstoppably, it will be mind-boggling. Never ending desires are like the fault in a lift. They keep the mind engaged and unsettled like a faulty lift. The true function of the mind, however, is to provide convenience to the body by regulating our thoughts and desires and focusing on continuous remembrance of the realized Almighty.

The great warrior, Abhimanyu, mentioned in the longest epic Mahabharata, knew how to strategically enter the trap of the soldiers set in place to kill him. But he did not know how to come out of it. As a consequence, Abhimanyu was mercilessly assaulted by many warriors and killed in the trap he was caught in. The state of mind is too like Abhimanyu. The mind connives elaborately to achieve physical comforts and belongings but gets embroiled in them and does not know how to liberate itself. The man dies with an inconclusive list of desires unfulfilled and objectives unachieved.

Does that mean we should kill our desires? Certainly not.

By annihilating desires, you annihilate mind.

- Claude Adrien

The desires need not be killed. They just need to be controlled and channelised.

Long-time back, I went to Kurukshetra, the place where the great battle of Mahabharata was fought. I saw a Sadhu (ascetic) who was wearing saffron-coloured clothes. I asked him, "How to conquer or control mind?" He replied, "It can only be controlled by penance and meditation." That was quite surprising. An uncultivated mind is like an unbridled wild bull. It runs amuck and destroys whatever comes in its way. And if I say that I sit in penance and meditation in front of the wild bull to control it, I am being ignorant and unwise. A wild bull can be made docile only by a ringmaster and needs to be tethered. And if a cart is attached to the bull it becomes a bullock cart that is highly useful. The True Master who tethers the mind with "God-Realisation", lets devotees controls their

minds. And if the mind is used for devising ways to serve the mankind and the saints, it becomes like the beneficial bullock cart. Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj is blessing the seekers with the "God-Realisation," only by which the mind can be controlled and its negativity converted into positivity. Just like a radio catches the signal for the frequency at which it is set, the mind too catches the effects to which it is attached. If it is attached to the world it won't think beyond the mundane. If it is attached with the Almighty then it works positively and for the welfare of the mankind.

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GOD INCARNATION

It is a sad reality that despite living in a progressive world we are told to believe in the past and not accept the present. And this has been going on since ages. This is not just true of the scientific developments but also of the religious or spiritual ideas. And those who have been the beacons of such ideas or at the forefront of such a movement have invariably been regarded as heretics, blasphemous and traitors, and afflicted with intolerable cruelty.

Copernicus, the scientist who first claimed that it is the earth that revolves round the sun was sentenced to death for propagating such views. Because the people believed that it is the sun that goes round the Earth. The truth and the fact that is now acknowledged became the cause of his death. Copernicus' views were considered irreligious and he was punished at the instance of some vested interests.

Similarly, it has been the fate of most other movements or people who were ridiculed and tortured for having irreligious and blasphemous views. And the religious history of the world is also not an exception to it. Lord Jesus Christ was subjected to utmost cruelty for spreading the gospel of Truth. Though there were some disciples who listened to him, the people at large made fun of him and Herod, the ruler, fearing a loss of his authority mercilessly crucified Him. Today, we worship him and he is one of the most noble and endearing entities in the world. The world missed the opportunity of gaining his blessings and now craves for his resurrection.

Prophet Mohammed also spread the message of One Allah i.e. God and stones were pelted on him. Undoubtedly, the most heinous crimes have been perpetrated against the prophets, seers and sages and till date more blood is shed in the world in the name of religion than for any other cause. What a perfect example of irony!

However, what is more ironical is that today we call them back (whether that's Lord Jesus, Prophet Mohammed or Lord Rama); perhaps because it's been long since people maltreated a saint. If that's the reason we want the saintly personalities back, let me remind you that the humanity recently has had its share of maltreatment towards the saints. Baba Gurbachan Singh Ji Maharaj, the former head of the Sant Nirankari Mission, the True Master who spread the message of the Almighty by making people realize the "God ye worship," was murdered in cold blood at the instance of religious fanatics and vested interests like many sages in the past who suffered similarly.

So, let's better not call them back. But there is another irony. Those who are calling the "Divine-personages" or saints back do not actually believe that they can come back or manifest themselves in human forms once again. So, their call actually is a farce and yet they pride themselves in calling themselves the most religious.

When I used to stay at Naraina in Delhi, there was a religious ceremony that went on for 2-3 days. The devotees were singing hymns and calling out loudly to God to come back and bless them. Shiv Ram Ji, a mahapursha (a blessed soul) requested me to visit that religious ceremony. The moment I went there, I announced "the one you have been calling for the last 2-3 days has arrived and is waiting for you at the railway station. Those of you want to meet Him can come along because He wants some of his devotees to help Him pick his luggage." None of them volunteered to accompany us to the railway station. So, I retorted that, "When I say that God has manifested Himself and I am inviting you to come along and see it yourself none of you is ready. It simply means that you people do not believe that God can manifest Himself. So what you were calling out was not bhakti (devotion or worship) but merely a ritual and a façade, a pretence." At this one of the persons volunteered to accompany me. As I took him aside and seated on the ground to share with him the "Divine-Knowledge" so that he realized the all pervading formless spirit, there were about 40 persons who joined to listen to the message of the True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj. And they too realized the pervading spirit, the omnipresent formless god.

On one of the salvation tours to Germany, Bhai Sahib Surat Singh Ji had invited me for the breakfast at his residence in Shonberg. Bhai Sahib Ji had also invited about 8-10 native Christian families to the breakfast. After the breakfast, Surat Singh Ji requested me to convey the message of the realization spread far and wide by Baba Ji. I talked about it but none of the families were ready to be privy to "Divine-Knowledge" that I wished to share with them for their welfare. One of the gentlemen present there said to me "We are Roman Catholics and we believe only in Lord Jesus Christ." So I quoted the following words of St. John:

I am baptizing you with holy water. The Prophet who comes after me, though I am not worth the dust of his feet, he will baptize you with the all pervading spirit.

I further explained to them that ignorant people crucified Lord Jesus Christ and that his body is not available for baptizing the seekers with the Holy Spirit. But Lord Jesus Christ is present as an all-pervading spirit. "If you want to see the all pervading spirit, I can reveal that to you," I said.

All those present accepted the Divine-Knowledge with reverence that I, with the blessings of True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj, shared with them.

In our own country, we have heard a lot many people propagating the slogan "Ram-Rajya" (Utopian state achieved by following the teachings of Lord Rama) and discriminating between Ram and Allah thinking it would usher in "Ram-Rajya." How ironical! Scriptures say that "I (God) am neither born nor I die" and the crusaders of Ram-Rajya say Ram was born in Ayodha (birthplace of Lord Rama). It is true that body in which Lord Rama manifested was born in Ayodhya but not Lord Rama because God is beyond birth and death. So, the fight is not for what is actually Lord Rama but for the body (and it no longer exists) that is pure matter and destructible whereas Ram is formless and indestructible.

Another irony that should not go unnoticed relates to the meaning of the word "Ayodhya." The word means a place where no wars are fought and, therefore,

very peaceful. But it is an ironical silent snide at the so-called devotees of Lord Rama that His birthplace (actually of the body in which he manifested himself) today is fraught with bitter communal violence and bloodshed.

Another concern that I would want to share with you is the interpretation of the frequently uttered holy words “Ram-Nam satya hai” (name of Lord Rama is the Truth – literal meaning). ‘Ram” stands for the True Master (Satguru) and “nam” stands for the all-pervading God or consciousness. So, those people who have been reciting these words without actually implementing the real meaning in their lives have been just flexing their tongue. The True Master is ever present and so is the Formless God. If we believe either to absent at one time then it means that the words “Ram-Nam satya hai” are false. However, this is not true because the True Master who reveals the all-pervading spirit or the Formless God is present in the world at this point of time in the personage of Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj. Today many people say that there cannot be a reincarnation of the Prophets or saints they believe in. But we must remember that the formless True Master can appear in human form or body just like God is omnipotent and no one can ban His entry into this world. The following divine words of Lord Krishna mentioned in the holy **Bhagvad Gita** are true for all the three times:

**YADA YADA HI DHARAMASYA, GLANIR BHAVATI BHARTAYA,
ABHIYUTHANAM DHARAMASYA TADATMANAN SIRJAMAHAM
PARITRAANAYE SADHU NAM, VINASHAYE CHA DUSHKRITAAM
DHARAM SANSTHAPANAYE SAMBHAVANI YUGE YUGE.**

(Whenever there is degeneration in the religion I manifest myself in human form to reinstate the true religion.)

This is the time to pay the homage to the True Master of the present time who has manifested himself as Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj and who is not converting the religion or sectarian faith of the people but their mindset while giving due respect to their religious faiths, culture and language, and the prophets they have been worshipping. We must learn to respect the saints present in the world and not the just the ones whom we worship – the ones who

are not present in their physical self. We must learn to live in the present. If I am sick and I think that I can be cured by Lukmaan (a master physician of yore), then I am living in the past and it is not practical. To get myself cured I must visit the doctor who is present for prescription. Spirituality is living in the present and learning and getting inspiration from the past. And the past loudly calls out that the spiritual masters have always manifested themselves to ameliorate the sufferings of the mankind by making people spiritually rich. But not many people listened to their awakening calls while they lived in person. After their deaths, however, they were deified. Today, Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj has come with the same spiritual message of prophets and saints. Let's make an effort to listen to his beneficial advice and be privy to the "Divine-Knowledge" that he is so bountifully blessing seekers with.

Besides, the Sant Nirankari Mission is neither a sect of any religion nor trying to create a separate religion but fostering a way of life amongst people in which the disciples or the realized souls firmly believe that the continuous realized awareness of the Formless One is Bhakti (worship). Therefore, a Muslim remains to be a Muslim even after seeking the "Brahm-Gyan" (Divine-Knowledge) because he can pray to Allah, who was ever present, but this time by realizing His omnipresence. And so do a Christian, et al. His Holiness True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji, and Sant Nirankari Mission respect all saints, their scriptures and their teachings but is stressing that the teachings of the various prophets, saints and gurus cannot be incorporated into our lives without the realization of the omnipresent Formless God. His Holiness True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji is blessing the seekers with the "Divine-Knowledge," thereby revealing all pervading omnipresent entity we worship.

GIAN GURU DA INSAANAN NOON RAB DA GHAR DIKHLANDA HAI

- Avtar Bani (42)

(Divine knowledge imparted by the True Master shows the people eternal abode – where God does dwell).

And yet some people who have been convinced with this clarion call and want to come forward but have not been able to do so because they feel that they cannot take “Brahm-Gyan” from the True Master Baba Hardev Singh because he dons a turban. For such seekers, Saint Kabir’s wise words are:

**JAAT NA PUCHIO SAADHU KI, PUCH LIJYO GYAN
MOL KARO TALWAR KA, PADE REHNE DO MIAN**

(Don’t judge a saint by his external appearance but by the knowledge he offers.)

The True Master is not for a particular community or nation but for the whole world. He is the benefactor and the saviour of the entire mankind.

**SATGURU AONDAI DUNIYA UTTE SAARE HI SANSAR LAYEE;
SATGURU AONDAI DUNIYA UTTE KEWAL PARUPKAR LAYEE.**

- Avtar Bani (67)

(True Master appears in this world for the entire humanity; True Master appears in this world, only for doing good to others.)

I recall a short story of a gypsy who had borrowed some money from a rich landlord but was unable to repay his loan. So, the gypsy compensates by giving the landlord his pet dog that was very brave and loyal, and of a rare breed. One day some thieves ransacked the house of the landlord and stole away the treasure. The dog followed the thieves closely and saw the thieves burying the treasure beside a near-by pond because it was about to dawn. The loyal dog went back and took his new master to that place and this way his lost treasure was retrieved. The landlord was of course very happy and thankful to the loyal and brave dog. The rich landlord thought that the dog had done more than enough to repay the loan of his old master (the gypsy), so he tied a note around the dog’s neck that “your (gypsy’s) loan is paid back with interest.” The dog on the directive of the new master at once moved towards the hut of his loveable old master. The gypsy on seeing the dog thought that the dog had betrayed the landlord out of love for him (gypsy) and ran away from him (landlord). So, he

shot the dog dead. Later on, the gypsy found the note tied around the dog's neck and was extremely sorry for his unthoughtful and hasty action. The gypsy bewailed and prayed in waste to get back his dead loyal dog.

The message is loud and clear. In the heat of anger, the master killed his dearest dog and repented. The prophets too were meted out inhumane treatment by the people because they did not accept the message of God that they wanted to convey. Their messages were considered pagan and irreligious. Now, their messages have been scripted in scriptures and we pray and bewail for their return just like the master did for his endearing pet. However, there is no use crying over the spilt milk. Prophets cannot come back and manifest themselves in the same bodies.

Therefore, all of you who have been calling out the Almighty to manifest Himself must shed your shame or shyness and come forward to realize the omnipresent Formless One by taking the refuge of the True Master of the present time, His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj.

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THE SUBJECT OF SATGURU

Various disciplines of knowledge are being studied today. It is interesting that a True Master's discipline of expertise is humanity. And it is the most difficult discipline because of its gamut. It encompasses the whole world. His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj once said in His discourse:

It is very easy to carve out God out of a stone but it is extremely difficult to carve out a human out of a man.

This is the purpose of the endeavours of the True Master and his expertise on humanity. To make each man humane is the euphoric cherished objective of the study of humanity.

A mountaineer who aims to conquer a formidable height studies the geography of the terrain. He takes into account the freezing low temperature, treacherously covered pits (of snow), defiant steep heights, lethal avalanches, et cetera before he starts the expedition. In addition, the mountaineer arms himself with the state-of-the-art expeditionary paraphernalia like night vision devices, oxygen cylinders, extremely light yet warm and durable attire to protect himself from frost-bite, snow-blindness and other related ailments. The aim is to move forward. Similarly, to know and convince a person is also a Himalayan task like conquering Mount Everest. A True Master also takes into account the various factors, which characterize the people of the world. For example, different communities, cultures, beliefs, nationalities, languages, religions, et cetera. Besides, a True Master is also aware of the increasingly degrading human values which are harming mankind. Global or religious terrorism is just on of the effects of such depraved values. It is in this regard that such satirical comments have been made:

The more I see of man, the more I like dogs.

- Mme Stael

The whole idea is that humans have lost basic values like gratitude and sympathy towards fellow beings which is the hallmark or the distinguishing feature of human beings. A brief story I once listened to is very relevant in this context.

A young tongawalla who was the sole son and breadwinner met an untimely death. Under such catastrophic grief, his old and fragile father took over the work of his son. One day a sudden remembrance of his loveable son made him sad. As he was driving the tonga, he started talking to the passengers about his young son. He shared with the commuting passengers that "My son was a very young, handsome and loveable boy...He served us a lot..." And he could utter no further. But these emotive words to his great dismay did not even earn a mere nod from any of the passengers. Old as the father was, the apathy of the passengers maimed his heart. At the end of the day when the old father could no longer contain his emotions, he involuntarily bursted out the same words while tying the tether in the stable and mournfully said "My son used to yoke you to the tonga and took full care of you." The horse quite surprisingly and unexpectedly nodded in response to emotional words uttered by his new senile master who saw tears flowing down the horse's eyes. The old master kissed his horse as he would have kissed his son and went away. The human beings in contrast are not even ready to listen to the grief of others let alone sharing them. That's why it has been said:

**BANDE NALAON PASHU CHANGERA
JE BANDE WAALI GAL NAHIN**

- Avtar Bani(239)

(An animal is better than a man, if man does not possess human qualities)

The True Master listens to everyone even when others share irrelevant things. He tries to lessen the sorrows and anxieties of people by listening patiently to their problems. It is in this respect that a True Master's expertise on humanity is of immense use. He knows and understands that the cornerstone of our

existence is love, sympathy, empathy, and respect for our fellow beings. If we are not responding lovingly or sympathetically towards our fellow beings, there is a reason to it. One cannot communicate with the other if there is a wall separating them. Similarly, we are incapable of loving each other when there are walls of ego, communal frenzy, hatred and ignorance separating us.

In the year 1987, I visited the site of the "Berlin Wall" which once separated the East and West Germany. But after it was demolished the following was one of the several messages that were found written on the part of that wall which was preserved as a lesson for the coming generations:

The world is too small to have walls.

And we completely understand that if a small room is further divided by erecting some more walls in it, it becomes congested, prison-like, and killing. A True Master simply demolishes such walls of hatred, communal frenzy and ignorance and, therefore, ensures the continuous whiffs of fresh air for a healthy survival. But to restore the glory of humanity in a human being, a person has to implore the "Divine-Knowledge" from the True Master. Prostrating oneself at the feet of the True Master is no guarantee of humility. One has to be like beggars i.e. feel a dire need to be blessed with the Divine- Knowledge. Then, if one prostrates at the feet of the True Master and urges Him, one will be blessed with the Divine-Knowledge.

It is true that the discipline of humanity is complex. But for a qualified expert and a veteran doctor it is, paradoxically, easy to treat and cure even the most acute ailments. His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj is also treating the endemic acute ailments of ignorance and hatred ailing the humanity. But a patient must visit a doctor to get himself cured. So must you come and seek the refuge of the Divine- Knowledge so benevolently and bountifully bestowed by the True Master of the present time, His Holiness Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj. Else, as His Holiness puts it:

**The one who bends, drinks to his full, but the one who stands
erect stays thirsty. In other words, the egoistic remains
'thirsty,' while the humble drinks the elixir and experiences
bliss and happiness.**

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SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

It is said that an orator or a speaker can overcome stage fright by thinking that his audience to be foolish. Baba Gurbachan Singh Ji Maharaj, head of the Mission from 1962 – 1980 A.D., said if this is a prerequisite to address one's audience he would prefer to keep mum throughout his life. This is the essence of being spiritual – NEGATE THYSELF. And yet, it is a freedom and not a bondage, this is the beauty of being spiritual.

Similarly, the prerequisite to spiritual awakening is negating oneself – not have pride relating to one's body, mind or material possessions. God too has hid Himself beneath the veneer of material things even though He permeates the world – His omnipresence is the most subtle secret of this world. Therefore, an individual desirous of realizing the Almighty must surrender one's ego and ask for the Divine-Knowledge from the True Master.

Satan, they say, beguiled Adam and Eve into eating the forbidden fruit. Satan was successful not just because of his demonic influence but also due to the lack of commitment, waywardness of Eve (or even Adam). If we think that Satan, of yore, has vanished, it is our ignorance. Satanic tendencies still persist. The vices and wild instincts which characterized Satan viz. hatred, jealousy, guile, et cetera are more caustic today than ever before. In this bitter, poisonous, and stuffy atmosphere, the Divine-Word of Baba Ji is a commandment that if evil forces can infiltrate the human beings then spirituality or divinity can extirpate those evil forces in no time provided that the people of the world realize the Lord they worship. And, thereby, we can infiltrate the vices with divinity for building a peaceful world.

Spirituality means being able to realize God through the Divine-Knowledge of the True Master and thus, being enlightened that I, who is a soul, am a part of the Super-Soul. This realization and its remembrance is being spiritual and spirituality. It is accepting the rule of God and yet a freedom from the shackles of

ignorance. Spirituality is the joy of knowing God/Super-Soul not just for a moment but for the whole life.

On the contrary, spirituality is not bigotry, dogmatic faith, recitation of scriptures, rituals, or pilgrimages as commonly believed. Spirituality is a way of life – of knowing and remembering the Almighty. And this way of life is symbolic of a true Nirankari – one who is a divinely enlightened soul. Thus, he becomes a universal human being and does not have any malice against anyone's religion, caste, creed, community, et cetera. He does not discriminate between people on the basis of language or country or rich or poor. A Nirankari is a realized soul who knows we are all sons and daughters of the same Father and the citizens of the whole world. They all work for the welfare of the people by ameliorating their sufferings. Self-effacement and selfless service (just like the Formless God who created everything yet is hidden from the world) are the distinguishing characteristics of a Nirankari – a truly spiritual person. Baba Ji has repeatedly mentioned in his discourses that Lord Hanuman had immense powers but attributed the source of his wonderful deeds and powers to Lord Rama. A Nirankari is following the same concept of *bhakti* (worship). At the same time, he also respects the culture and way of life of other human beings and does not impose his own way of living or his diet habits on others.

Spirituality is also not magic or black magic, as some would say. I remember that in my childhood when my brother was drowning in a brook, my father immediately jumped into the stream to save my brother. When an empty pitcher is lowered into the ocean, the whole ocean tries to rush into that pitcher to fill it. Similarly, a soul which remembers and surrenders to the Super-Soul, it has the grace of the Almighty. And it is not magic that the some people are saved 'miraculously' as we say it. It is just the Father saving his son.

Another misconception is that spirituality is the renunciation of the world to live in a secluded place like an ascetic. Quite contrarily, it is the knowledge and acceptance of the Super-Soul or the Formless One and then living among people while always remembering the Almighty that is shown by the True Master truly symbolic of a realized soul. His Holiness has time and again stressed in his

discourses that a good family living is the practical application of the realization of the Almighty. Just like all the prophets lived in society yet they did bhakti (lived a spiritual life). And living in the society means that we duly look after our family, or society, our nation. This is the way Prophets have lived and this the way we ought to live to be truly spiritual.

A man who is devoid of spirituality is akin to unfertile and barren land. Like a fish can survive only in water, all human beings need to realize the Almighty for living; else it is just an existence. An existence, which is a slavery of the vices and wild instincts endemic in the world. The army of Satan has infiltrated the human beings and the only defence against it is to “Know the God ye worship” through the Divine-Word bestowed by the Lord Master. It has been written:

**TATI WAO NA LAGAI PARBRAHAM SHARNAI
CHAUGIRD HAMARE RAM KAAR DUKH LAGE NA BHAI**

- Adi Granth : 819

(The realization of God all around us protects us from all the sufferings - caused by the army of vices of Satan.)

Again, to emphasize, spirituality is not the movement of the beads of a rosary or parrot-like recitation of the name of God. The movement of the beads of a rosary or parrot-like recitation of the name of God is merely a rigidity of posture while spirituality is the ease of constant consciousness of the Ultimate Truth. It accommodates flexibility of movement even while remembering God. As Baba Bulle Shah Ji has written:

HATH KAAR VAL DIL YAAR VAL

(Hand towards work and heart towards the beloved)

Spirituality is emancipation from the vices of hatred and belligerence, and guile and ego. When we realize the Super-Soul through the “Divine-Word” of the True Master, a logical enlightenment dawns that all human beings are humane

manifestations of the Super-Soul. It is true of human nature that we are able to love the other person to the extent we see our reflection in the other person. So, for example, I take into account the status of the other person before I befriend someone. And if the mindsets don't match, a bond of harmony and love is not forged. But when the Formless one is revealed to a person through the "Divine-Knowledge," a seeker is able to identify with the other person because he perceives his reflection in the other person. And the reflection is that of the soul that is the image in which God created man ("*God created man in His own image*"- The Holy Bible). As a consequence when we see ourselves in others, hatred, belligerence and guile vanish.

Getting rid of the vices and satanic tendencies through God-realization and living life in all its easiness without any rigidity and fanaticism is truly the rich flavour of being spiritual.

The gist of being spiritually awakened is accepting the fact that our body, mind and possessions belong to God, the Almighty because we do not have complete control over them. The nature, the human nature, organs of the body, etc. are constantly undergoing change. It simply means they are not under our control and, therefore, something that we don't and cannot possess. Then, what is it that we can offer to the True Master when we seek "God-Knowledge"? It is our ego, criminal and brutal instincts, wild fantasies and sins that belong to us. It is an epitome of the kindness of Satguru that he takes our vices and in turn blesses us with the "Divine-Knowledge," the source of all virtues. The following Shlok is relevant in this context.

**TARUVAR SARVAR SANTJAN, CHAUTHA BARES MEH
PARUPKAR KE KARNE, CHAARON DHARE DEH.**

(Just like the earth accepts the seed, manure, etc. and gives crops and fruits in return, the saint also accepts our sins and blesses with the divine knowledge instead.)

The True Master accepts the sins of the seekers of “God-Knowledge.” We, the human beings have wild instincts, is another fact which makes us believe that we have gone through the cycle of death, birth, and rebirth. For example, the evolution of the present-day man from monkeys is not just true of the structural and anatomical resemblances but also of the behavioural qualities. The True Master is generous enough to accept and forgive these atavistic and animalistic tendencies of human beings and bless them with knowledge of the Consciousness that surrounds us to make them human beings in spirit. As I once wrote:

**GUNAHO KE MERE NA THA ANT KOI
GUNAACHON KE BADLE HAI AMRIT PILAAYA.**

(There was no end to my sins; the True Master gave me nectar in exchange of my sins).

People amass wealth illegally. But, at times, there are schemes like Voluntary Disclosure of Income Scheme (VDIS) through which people can reveal their income disproportionate to their known sources of income. Sant Nirankari Mission has been consistently giving out a clarion call to the human beings to seek the refuge of the True Master – surrender your ego and vices and be blessed with the ‘Divine-Knowledge.’

But a dogging question that arises in the paranoid mind of man is: Do I really need to know God? “Isn’t serving our parents the true religion?” was the question asked to me by a squadron leader in a military hospital who was bed-ridden due to paralysis? I replied at the risk of sounding inhuman “with the paralysis taking its toll on you, how do you expect to be of any service to your parents. God forbid, but in this invalid state you are a liability for your parents? Because you deem religion to be serving your parents and doing just good deeds which you are incapable of doing, your life is in vain and therefore, you cannot serve your parents.” The truth is that God-realization makes you serve not just your parents but also the mankind at large. As a result one can serve one’s real Father and not just our biological parents.

Since the time I have joined Sant Nirankari Mission, I have been listening to a story about a cub being brought up amongst sheep. As a consequence, the cub of the lion started exhibiting sheepish and timid qualities. The mother of the cub was worried about her child who should have been more daring and bolder with each passing day. But the cub was turning more sheepish day-by-day. The real cause of worry was that the cub was ignorant of his true identity i.e. what he is and what he believes himself to be. One fine day, the lioness roared and to her great disappointment and dejection, the herd of sheep and her cub started running away in a cowardly manner. The lioness got so irked that she caught her own cub in her teeth and took it to a nearby pond. The cub saw its face in the pond and realized that he is not like the sheep that he lived with but like his own mother. This is the essence of “God-Knowledge.” It surfaces the real identity of the human being and puts to rest all misconceptions about one’s own identity. His Holiness Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj says:

**To see oneself one needs a mirror. Similarly, one can see
one’s soul in the mirror of God-Knowledge.**

The knowledge of the Lord is blessed in the company of the saints. Just like the cub of the lion imbibed the qualities of the sheep, the people in the company of God, in communion with the Almighty, imbibe the qualities of the Formless One and slough off their vices. This is how one becomes one with the Lord:

**AB TO JAYE CHADHE SINGHASAN, MILE HAI SARANG PANI
RAM-KABIRA EK BHAYO HAIN KOI NA SAKE PAHCANI.**

- Kabir Ji

(Ram and Kabir have become one (soul), both have merged seamlessly and none can differentiate between the two.)

The need for spiritual awakening is dire. It is a commonly experienced feeling that we need to thank a person from whom we borrow some money or avail his service. But to do that we should know who our benefactor is. I remember that

in the year 1974, I was posted at Rajhara mines in Chattisgarh (then a part of Madhya Pradesh) and I attended a religious ceremony marking the celebrations of holy festival Id. The Imam narrated a story of Ghaus Mohammed to the present.

Ghaus Mohammed's mother directed his son to go to the great land of Arab and study there. She gave him a lot of Dinars and kept it safely in the specially stitched pocket towards the upper edge of the pyjama. Before the mother bid farewell to her beloved son, she commanded him "hamesha sach bolna hai" (always speak the truth) and "hamesha halaal ka khaana hai." (always eat what rightfully belongs to you). En route to his destination when Ghaus was passing through a jungle along with a tribe some dacoits caught him. The dacoits asked him to speak the truth about the money he was carrying else face death. The commandment of his mother fresh in his mind, Ghaus fearlessly said that he had a lot of Dinars. The dacoits thought a small boy could not be, possibly, carrying such a large amount and that he was making fun of them (dacoits) by telling lies. So they thought of punishing him and presented him before their chief. The chief of the dacoits posed the same question to Ghaus who again gave back the same answer. The Chief asked the boy to show him the money. Ghaus unfolded his special pocket and showed to the chief the money he was carrying. The chief was delighted at this rare show of honesty and he ordered that the whole tribe be freed and the looted money returned to them. Ghaus moved on, reached Arab and started studying. But after sometime the money he was carrying was spent and he did not have any money to buy food. So, he went to a Mosque and sat there. Ghaus was extremely hungry and his mouth watered at sight of deliciously prepared food that someone was carrying. Just as his mouth watered he started beating his chest harshly and started crying too. The man who was carrying the food saw the child crying, approached him and asked why he was crying. So, Ghaus introduced himself and said that his mother had commanded "hamesha halaal ka khaana hai" and that he sinned because his mouth watered for food that was not his. The man revealed that he was the messenger of Ghaus' mother and she had sent some more Dinars for him. On the way he felt hungry, so he bought some food from that money. Therefore, the food for which his mouth watered actually belonged to him because it was bought from the money

sent for him by his mother. On hearing this Ghaus was happy that his mouth watered for the food that was his. Within a second, the undeserved food became deserved and legal because his ignorance vanished because of 'knowledge' he got from that man.

After the story, I approached the Imam and asked him "Tell me sach kya hai or halaal ka khaana kya hai." The Imam gave me the same symbolic answer that the story explained. Then he questioned me, "Are you a Nirankari?" I replied, "Yes." He remarked, "Only Nirnakaris put questions like these."

After this brief conversation, I shared with him that the "sach" (the Truth) is the Formless, Imperishable and the Eternal God while "halaal ka khaana" means realization of the Formless, Imperishable and Eternal God whom we worship and be grateful to Him because He is the nurturer and Father of all. If I do not recognize Him, we worship Him but do not realize Him, then whatever I eat, the things I use that is ingratitude and even illegal ("phir vo halaal ka nahin hai vo haraam ka hai") because that is equivalent to using things of some other person without his permission and without acknowledging his help. I am sure none of us wants to be titled as "unthankful."

Therefore, the need for self-awakening is for everybody because everyone is utilizing the services of the Almighty in the form of air we breathe, water we drink, the sunlight and even our material belongings which have been processed by man but actually created by God. Even the intellect and matter man but users the creations of the formless, imperishable and eternal God. If we realize Him, then whatever we eat is legal and deserved ("vo halaal ka hai"). If it is illegal we are accountable for it. Now it is for us to decide whether we realize the God as the Creator and Nurturer and whatever we eat and utilize is legal and deserved or not.

His Holiness Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj is dispelling the ignorance and telling man that whatever we eat or utilize belongs to the Almighty. Satguru is the treasurer of such a Gyan (Divine-Knowledge) and is dispelling the doubts

by blessing the seekers with the realization of the One Almighty. To be privy to this divine-erudition, one must pay heed towards the Holy Bible's divine calling:

Ask and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.

- Matthew 7:7-12

Just as physical health is necessary for our well being, our spiritual health too is equally crucial – rather more because it is the source and remedy of our peace of mind and soul. Just as we like to live in a posh locality, the soul enjoys dwelling in the Super-Soul. If we can spend any amount to keep our bodies in good health or to keep our houses clean and hygienic, then more important is to take care of the health of our soul that remains buoyant by realizing the Super-Soul, the Formless One. Such a realized soul is an asset to the whole world.

The gigantic task of the Sant Nirankari Mission is to create a world of realized souls. It is a clarion call to all to rise from the deep slumber of ignorance of worshipping God without knowing Him and as a consequence we do not know our true self. His Holiness says that if my body or my face is my identity then I have realized myself. But this is not true. Self-realization is the realization of the nature of our being which is the Formless One. "Know the God ye worship" is the wise and cautionary commandment of the scriptures. I invite, most humbly, one and all, to come and seek the refuge of His Holiness True Master Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj and be blessed with the knowledge of the God "ye worship" and accomplish the aim of life. The inquisitive souls can contact any follower of His Holiness and he would be more than glad to tell you the emissary to be contacted. And take my word for it; it will change your life.

**AAO RAB DE DARSHAN KAR LO SANDESHA HAI INSAANAN NOO
MURSHID BANDE PIA BANANDA MERE JEHE HAIWANAAN NOO**

- Avtar Bani(346)

(Come and see God, this is an invitation to the people; Here is the True Master who is turning persons like me with animal instincts, into true human beings.)

The Holy Bible too vouches for the importance of the True Master as the door to spiritual awakening in the following words:

**I am the Truth, the Way, the Life.
None can cometh unto Father but by me.**

* * * * *

BLOODLESS REVOLUTION

The history of mankind is dotted with revolutions. We know some of them while others may have been buried in the earth of obscurity. These revolutions have affected our lives in all the possible ways we can conceive – socially, politically, intellectually, spiritually, etc. And all these revolutions had cataclysmic effects on the societal structures, people, cultures, etc. Because they were violent, bloodshed was inevitable. Revolutions, conclusively, proved to be blood thirsty and parasitic. They have continuously sucked the blood of the innocent people led astray by dictators. And yet the coterie, which led the masses against the injustice, finally, ended to become the godfathers of the same injustice they had once rebelled against.

A revolution should be for a noble cause and should not result in bloodshed of innocent people or war mongering at any cost. It should enthuse people to work for the welfare of the mankind by dispelling their ignorance and alleviating their sufferings.

It is not just when we suddenly push the break-pedal that we get a jolt but also when we accelerate full throttle all of a sudden. The revolutions brought upheavals because their exponents tried to change and achieve too much in too little time and that too, by resorting to violent means. As a consequence, upheavals were experienced which resulted in fatal injuries and much bloodshed. Russia, Germany, France, and some other countries bore the gory brunt of the revolutions. It is estimated that the one-third of the former U.S.S.R.'s population was wiped off in the revolution that rocked the country. We cannot even imagine the magnitude of grief that would have struck the former U.S.S.R. when the death of single person is capable of soulfully depressing us.

The Sant Nirankari Mission is a spiritual movement that started in 1929 and is still gaining momentum. This movement is coloured with the enthusiasm of Divine-Knowledge bestowed by the True Master and not because of any bloodshed. The Sant Nirankari Mission is a bloodless revolution, which aims to

provide people with “God-Realization” with the blessings of the True Master and, thereby, establish universal brotherhood.

The Mission runs on the sacrifices of its disciples. Baba Gurbachan Singh Ji Maharaj, the head of the Mission, himself made the supreme sacrifice of his life for blessing human beings with “God-Realization” when religious fanatics assassinated him. It seemed, then, to many that the Sant Nirankari Mission, too, will get embroiled in vindictiveness and therefore, bloodshed. But the present head of the Mission, True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj did not reciprocate violently to this outrageously heinous crime against the Mission and humanity. They say, eye for an eye turns up making the whole world blind. To save his devotees from going astray and to keep them away from vindictiveness, His Holiness True Master Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj said in his first discourse:

If there is anyone who should be ready to take revenge for Baba Gurbachan Singh Ji’s assassination that should be I. But if I do so I will not be emulating the ideals of humanity set by Baba Ji (Baba Gurbachan Singh Ji) for which He laid down his life. If I tread the path of revenge, I would neither be his son nor his disciple.

Later, Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj also commanded his devotees to arrange blood donation camps saying that:

Blood is not meant to flow in drains but in human veins.

That was a turning point in the history of the Sant Nirankari Mission. The bloodless revolution was on the verge of being dragged into one of those bloody revolutions. Enlightened by the wisdom and directive of the True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj, cruel bloodshed was reciprocated by life-saving measures. Since then hundreds of blood donation camps are organized every year at the various branches of the Mission in India and around the world. No wonder, that the Sant Nirankari Mission today, is the largest donor of blood to the Indian Red Cross Society. The Government of India and the Indian Red Cross

Society have recognized the philanthropic efforts of the Mission and have commended Baba Ji, Pujya Mata Ji and the other Nirankari volunteers for the same. A Director of Red Cross uttered these solemn words: "The blood devoted by Baba Ji and Sangat will act as nectar for the removing the sufferings afflicting the human society at large."

What is this revolution about?

The Sant Nirankari Mission aims to establish universal brotherhood through the Fatherhood of the Almighty – the Formless One. And it firmly believes that it is possible only through God-Realization by each human being, which comes about with the blessing of the living True Master. The True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj is striving day and night to bless people with "God-Realization" which is not a lifelong process but is done almost instantaneously. His Holiness takes long tours tirelessly to spread "God-Realization" among people and lakhs of his devotees bear testimony to the "God-Realization" they have had from Him.

Many organizations aim to establish universal peace today and have been continuously unsuccessful. Especially, in view of the recent attacks on Iraq, the United Nations Organization was not able to convince Uncle Sam to eschew undertaking such a lethal war that finally killed thousands of people in cold blood. The point is that we cannot establish world peace without a common binding force when there is so much of diversity in this world. We need to pierce thread through each flower to make a garland. Similarly, a thread is needed to bind the mankind. "God-Realization" is that thread which is capable of binding people from diverse backgrounds. The Sant Nirankari Mission is gradually changing the mindset of the people with the "God-Realization" being blessed by the True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj. When we "Know the God ye worship" (and it happens in a trice with the Divine-Knowledge bestowed by the True Master) it is the dawn of good sense in life. We are able to realize the Omnipresence of God – in and around us, and in our fellow beings. When I see other human beings, myself and around me, I realize and perceive that three of us have the identical nature of the being. It's like having the same DNA as the Almighty. As a consequence, we realize and understand how do we have a

common Father and therefore realize the unity which is inherent in the creation of all human beings.

Today, His Holiness True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj is kindly bestowing the same “Divine-Knowledge” that Lord Krishna bestowed on Arjuna, the seeker which made him realize the formless nature of the Almighty. It is the same “Raaz-e-Haque” that Prophet Mohammed bestowed on the seekers. It is the same “Divine-Knowledge” of the Holy Spirit that Lord Jesus Christ bestowed on the implorers. And it is the same “Divine-Knowledge” that all the Gurus bestowed on their disciples. His Holiness True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj, is bestowing the “God-Realization” of that Formless entity that is mentioned in all the religious scriptures (for which Vedanta philosophy says “Void is fullness”).

But this is not to say that the Sant Nirankari Mission is only spiritually revolutionizing. The Mission proved to be a social revolution as well. Besides, the charitable hospitals, schools, colleges, dispensaries, and vocational colleges that are serving the society and the large blood-donation camps that are organized regularly, the Mission is also a unique epitome of the egalitarianism amongst men and women. His Holiness True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj, Rajmata Ji (Baba Ji’s mother) and Pujya Mata Ji (spouse of His Holiness) sit on the same stage, which is symbolic of the respect, and equality that is given to the women in the Sant Nirankari Mission and that should be given to the women in the world at large. One could ubiquitously see Baba Ji’s disciples (whether that be man or a woman) bowing at the feet of one another. This is unprecedented and unheard of not only in the present times but also in the history of the world. The “God-Realization” also serves to eradicate all the differences and ill will based on the pride of one’s learning, caste, community, gender, nationality, wealth, etc. Therefore, “God-Realization” is not just spiritually enlightening but also socially beneficial and philanthropic too i.e. multi-dimensionally benefiting.

The Annual Nirankari Sant Samagam, being held for over a half a century, is a concrete evidence of the wonders “God-Realization” can do. Lakhs of devotees

gather to sing the praises their True Master Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj and the Formless One – which they have realized with the blessings of the Beloved True Master. The devotees come from throughout India and all over the world and cut across various religions, cultures, communities, which is a wonder in itself. This is the bloodless revolution that has started to change the world in an unprecedented way. The Sant Nirankari Mission is constantly and continuously giving a clarion call to all the people of the world and cordially inviting them to be blessed with the realization of the God they so devotedly worship and with the blessings of the True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj, the philanthropy of blessing human beings with “God-Realization” is rapidly and enthusiastically progressing....

**Should one man die ignorant
who had the capacity for knowledge,
this I call tragedy.**

- Thomas Carlyle

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IFS AND BUTS

Devotion is not a subject of paranoia or apprehensions and misgivings. And we have been stressing all this while that the Knowledge of the Almighty is highly logical. A devotee has strong belief (and it is not fanaticism) in the True Master and he has full faith in and no questions about the doings of the Lord Master. It is because a devotee has realized the Almighty with the blessings of the Lord Master. But for inquisitive readers of this book or seekers of “God-Realization,” there are many questions that must have been simmering in their minds. Though it’s all about faith, I will try to explain it you logically and therefore, you must read it without any prejudice in your minds. It is just like a kid who comes to know that who his parents are i.e. kids are told by the parents themselves to call them papa or mama and as the child grows up, he comes to know that his parents are who have taken care of him and brought him up. Similarly, a person who realizes God comes to know of the real entity that is not just taking care of him but the whole world.

Q. *How did only Nirankari Baba Ji get the Divine-Knowledge?*

Ans. Some people have time and again questioned me and other followers of His Holiness Nirankari Baba Ji that how do you say that you have the “Brahm-gyan” i.e. the “Divine- Knowledge” which immediately leads to “God-Realization.” And yet those people have just questioned us and never tried to seek and realize the Almighty that each follower of His Holiness would most humbly claim. And despite the fact that we say it won’t take more than a few seconds if they shed their ego and take the refuge of the Lord Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj, few people have been able to spare their time for such an invaluable thing that promises to change their lives and the world at large.

The only answer to how we claim that we have “Brahm-Gyan” is that we cordially invite everyone to come and see for himself or herself that what we most humbly claim is correct or not. Then, it is for you to decide. And it won’t change your

religion too. The Sant Nirankari Mission's aim is to make people realize the God they worship without effecting a change in their religious affiliation.

Q. How did Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji become so spiritually endowed overnight so as to become the spiritual master of the Sant Nirankari Mission?

Ans. Divinity is all about the supreme power – the Formless One. Just like the power of a union that is vested in the Central government is transferred to the next government, the power of the Formless one too does not take time to transfer. A spiritual master is not elected the way leaders are. His election or selection is of divine origin. Baba Gurbachan Singh Ji had himself verified that your next master would be Baba Hardev Singh Ji. Also, we are more concerned about knowing how he became the True Master. The actual curiosity should be how do I know whether he is a True Master. And the only touchstone to that is that the True Master bestows the seekers with the “Divine-Eye” which instantly reveals His imperishable consciousness pervading the whole universe. Actually, this question can be best answered if one has realized the omnipresence of the Almighty from the Lord Master.

This is the opportune moment for me to share with you an interesting incident. Long time back, an under-secretary in the Government of India at Naraina, Delhi, invited me to a tea party. The gentleman questioned me how did Nirankari Baba get this “Divine-Knowledge” (that leads to “God-Realization”), which nobody else claims to have. Truly, the question marks the curiosity of the uninitiated. But the trap is that we just want to know how His Holiness got the “Divine-Knowledge.” The sequence of inquisitive questions is, quite mistakably yet unnoticeably, wrong. The curiosity should be - and which is the right approach – what is this gyan and that I want to have it. The next question which is how did Nirankari Baba Ji get this Gyan has an esoteric answer which simply means that you need to realize God first with the blessings of the True Master and then the irrelevance of such questions becomes evident. So, once the approach is corrected the puzzle itself seems to take shape. So, all these answers are a puzzle because the approach is not correct. And when the approach is correct, the puzzle is no longer a puzzle but a logical built-up to the final picture.

The only and the satisfactory answer to this question is the “God-Realization” yet I tried my best to give the answer to that gentleman. I replied to him: “See, I have been invited to your house for a tea party. The party is good and the tea is tasty. I can say this because I have seen the party and tasted the tea. If I ask you that from where did you get the milk for this tea and from where did you get the tealeaves, it would seem funny and even irritating. If the tea is tasty it can be known by taking a sip. My job is to relish the tea and thank you for it and push off. But if I ask without even taking a sip that how tasty is the tea, you would simply ask me to have a sip. Similarly, when I ask you to realize the Almighty with the blessings of the True Master and you say that how did Baba Ji get this Gyan or how will it change my life, the only answer to this is to take a sip of this Divine-Nectar. The constitution of the tea and its effect on you will be known to you.”

So the answer is simple but we complicate situations by questioning or imagining too much. The approach should be to try it out. Just like we go to a shop to buy some clothes we try out the clothes to check if what the company claims is right or not.

Q. *How should one choose the True Master (Satguru)?*

Ans. The touchstone is that if you realize the Almighty in an instant, you have the True Master. If the guru is an impostor he will give you a “mantra” or ask you to recite a set of words on the count of the movement of the rosary beads or a *mala*. He won’t show you the Almighty because he himself has not realized the Omnipresence of the Almighty. Our scriptures have clearly mentioned the traits to recognize the Almighty. A seeker must be aware of these to test the authenticity of the True Master. Bhagvad Gita says that the God can neither be cut with the sword, nor wetted with water nor burnt with fire and so on. And the scriptures also vouch that God is beyond the comprehension of the five senses or other worldly methods because the imperishable and the unchangeable is not understandable or reachable through changeable or perishable means of five senses.

MAN BUDDHI TE AKLON BAHRE TAINOON LAKH PARNAM KARAN

- Avtar Bani(1)

(O' Thou, beyond the comprehension of mind, intellect and wisdom, millions of bows unto Thee.)

A Master who reveals such an entity to you is the True Master. His Holiness Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj is revealing to the seekers the same formless consciousness that is mentioned in the scriptures.

Q. *What does Baba Ji mean when he calls himself a daas (slave or servant)?*

Ans. Because I have been in service of the Lord Master for more than 24 years now, I have been privy to some very revealing traits of the consciousness of the True Master, which are hidden from the world. About a year or two back in Bikaner (a city in Rajasthan, India), Director of the All India Radio (Bikaner station) attended a very big congregation held in the divine presence of Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj. After the congregation got over, the gentleman questioned His Holiness that “you sit on a high stage and thousands of your devotees bowed in front of you and yet you called yourself a “daas” (slave). Is it just for the rhetorical effect and pull the masses? I don't see how you are a “daas?”

His Holiness replied that I call myself a “daas” (slave) because “I see in each and every human being a twinkling spark of divinity. Because I am the daas of the Almighty so I am a daas of his devotees.” The gentleman was satisfied with the simple and frank answer of His Holiness. And yet this answer said more things about the Mission. Where the Master is humble, the devotees too need to be down to earth irrespective of their social standing.

Q. *Are the True Master (Satguru) and God two separate entities?*

Ans. Another question that is mooted in the context of the Mission is that how is True Master an embodiment of the Formless One or how is the True Master a

Manifestation of the Formless One. The thought is tricky because our thinking is not logical. When we say that the Infinite, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Formless One or Almighty has no parallel, it is understood that only the God himself can reveal His own identity and it is not within the realms of human intellect and comprehension. So, the True Master who reveals to the seekers the Formless One or the Almighty is actually a manifestation of the God whose knowledge He imparts.

Q. *Can rites, rituals, pilgrimages, etc lead to God-realisation?*

Ans. Many have also questioned about the rites, rituals, pilgrimages, fasting, et cetera as the alternative means to achieve God. But these are the inventions of the human intellect. Scriptures say otherwise; that God can be known only by the grace of the True Master. Rites and rituals, pilgrimages, etc. are good insofar they signify theistic bent of mind that is a good sign for a seeker of the Truth.

Q. *Is God to be found within us?*

Ans. A few years back I went to Germany. I went to a restaurant where one of the waiters of the Indian origin was informed of my visit because he was told by a disciple of His Holiness that Mr. Sharma was coming from India and those who wish to realize God can be blessed with the "Divine –Knowledge." The waiter, prima facie, was confused. Because he had expected a person endowed with the realisation of the Almighty to be having an unkempt long beard and wearing saffron-coloured clothes (that's the way people in India think of religious people). But I was wearing a three-piece suit, was clean-shaven and also wearing a tie. Having come to terms after sometime that there could be a well dressed man endowed with the realization of God, the waiter insisted that he wanted to "see" his soul and not the all-pervading formless God. I questioned that gentleman if he had ever seen his face. The person replied affirmatively. I again questioned him that how he saw his face. And the obvious answer was that he saw his face in a mirror. "Right," I said. "Just as you see your face in the mirror, you can see your soul in the mirror of God-Knowledge i.e. by realizing the Super-Soul first." His Holiness Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj has said that:

“The human eye can see everything except itself. To see it one needs a mirror. Similarly one can see one’s real self in the mirror of God-Knowledge.”

Now that gentleman, a waiter by profession, agreed to be a seeker of the “Brahm-Gyan.” I, with the blessings of the True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj, shared the “Divine-Knowledge” with that soul and he, too, became ecstatic by realizing the imperishable formless God.

Q. *A word for atheists.....*

Once I accompanied His Holiness to Mussoorie. I was standing outside the Nirankari Bhawan (congregation hall) on the Camel Back road when I met a Canadian couple having a leisurely walk down that road. Because I wanted to pass on the message of the Lord Master about the realisation of God to that couple, I talked to them about the precious gyan of His Holiness True Master Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj. But they said that they did not believe that God exists and that they were atheists. Therefore, realization of God is an irrelevant subject for them. To a disciple like me who realized the omnipresent God with the blessings of the True Master, such a remark was simply unacceptable, discordant and out of tune. I wished that they accepted not just the existence of God but realize Him too. So, I started to help them out with this. I questioned them “Do you believe in consciousness?” And they replied they did. So, I explained to them that the fact that they say God does not exist is their reasoning and consciousness. And the all-pervading consciousness is the divinity or God. The couple was satisfied with the answer and believed that God existed. Even otherwise, God has to exist. If Theory of Relativity is applied to spirituality, we are able to understand that all things exist in relation to each other (i.e. have correlatives) and have effects on each other. The matter has to have anti-matter or non-matter i.e. insentient ought to have a sentient correlative. We know that the whole universe is in momentum but is working in a proper fashion. The planets do not run into each other, the stars do not create a havoc all the time i.e. all the celestial bodies are functioning in programmed way. It requires

unfathomable intelligence to coordinate such expanse, which is not possible without an all pervading entity or consciousness, which is also the energy behind the momentum. Such consciousness is God. When we see some coins scattered on the floor, we say they are disorganized. But when the coins are heaped in different denominations, we say that the coins have been arranged by someone who has intelligence and consciousness to do so because the coins are organized in different heaps or columns. Similarly, when we see that the whole cosmos or for that matter different organs of our body are functioning in an organized and coordinated way, we ought to believe that an entity is governing them and that entity is the Formless One – God. However, God can be realized only, as mentioned time and again, when the True Master bestows the “Divine-Knowledge.”

... .. **AND**

I know there may be many more questions in your mind. However, my humble request to you is to take the refuge of the True Master of the time, Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj and dispel your ignorance about the whereabouts of God and also all such questions, which may arise in the mind of the seeker.

The Sant Nirankari Mission aims to spread the message of the True Master not on the basis of any miracles and I request you to take them out of your mind as soon as you read them. The only basis of spreading the message is that His Holiness is blessing people with “God-Realization.” If you miss it, human life is such that it does not even give a chance to repent or atone.

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