The Great Path

Talks given from 11/9/74 to 20/9/74

Original in Hindi

CHAPTER 1

The Darkness Inside

11 September 1974 am in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

[Note: This is a translation from the Hindi series Shiva Sutra, which is in the process of being edited. It is for research only.]

OM! I BOW DOWN TO LORD SHIVA – THE ONE WHO IS SELF-LUMINOUS, DELIGHTING IN HIS OWN BEING.

AND NOW, THE BEGINNING OF THE SHIVA SUTRA.

CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE ATMAN, THE SOUL; KNOWLEDGE IS BONDAGE. THE BODY IS THE UNION OF RAMAN, NATURE AND RAMAN, THE EGO, THE DOER. THE SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOR IS RAMAN. ONE WHO APPLIES HIS TOTAL ENERGY, FOR HIM THE WORLD EXISTS NO MORE.

Two ways exist of searching for the truth. One way is that of the male – aggression, violence, the scramble for power. Another is that of the female – surrender, withdrawal. Science is the male path, aggressive; religion is a female path, bowing down, submissive. Make this distinction very clearly.

All scriptures of the East begin with a salutation to God. This salutation is not just a formality; it is not merely following a tradition or a convention. The salutation is indicative of the fact that the path ahead is of surrender. Only the humble will attain. Those who are aggressive and full of ego, those who wish to attain even truth by grabbing at it, those with the attitude of conquering nature will be defeated. They can possess the trivial, but that which is so immense, so vast, can never be theirs. They may succeed in grabbing the worthless, but nothing meaningful can ever become part of them.

Hence, a scientist discovers all that is unessential, but misses the essential. He succeeds in gathering details about the soil, the stones, matter, but an understanding of the soul and God

escapes him. It is like one attacks a woman passing by. One may become successful in raping her, one may even have her body in one's control, but one can never have her soul; one will never be able to win her love.

So those who approach God aggressively are the rapists. They may bring the physical body of God under their control; they may dissect and analyze nature manifesting all around, they may discover some of its secrets, but the discovery will be as trivial as someone attacking and raping a woman. The man may succeed in securing the woman's body, but such an achievement is not worth a straw because he won't be able to even touch her soul. And if the soul has remained untouched, the possibility of love that is hidden within her, the hidden seed of her love can never sprout. Her love can never shower upon him.

Science is an act of rape. It is an assault on nature – as if nature were some kind of an enemy, as if it has to be conquered, defeated. That's why science believes in cutting things into pieces. Analysis, destruction; it believes in dissection.

If you were to tell a scientist, "The flower is beautiful," he will immediately sit down and start pulling apart the flower, dissecting it, analyzing it. He has no idea that in the very tearing of it into pieces, the beauty of the flower disappears. The flower looked beautiful in its wholeness, but when divided into parts, it lost its beauty. Of course, in doing the analysis the scientist can find out the chemical elements contained in the flower; he may show the substance, the minerals the flower is made of. He may place them in different bottles and label them accordingly. But he won't be able to say, "Here is a bottle which contains the beauty once present in the flower," because the beauty will have disappeared already. By making an assault on the flower, you will only come upon its body, not the soul.

This is the reason why science doesn't believe in the soul – how can it? Even after making so much effort, not even a glimpse of the soul becomes available to science – it never can... not because there is no soul, but because the scientist has chosen a wrong method. The method he uses is not the way to discover the soul. The very means applied to its discovery is the means good for finding the trivial. That which is of great value cannot be attained through aggression.

You will be able to find the mystery of life only if you enter through the door of surrender. If you bow down, if you pray, you will be able to reach the center of love. Courting God is almost as good as courting a woman. One needs to approach Him with a heart full of love, gratitude and humility. And there is no hurry! Any haste on your part, and you miss. A great deal of patience is required. Your haste... and His heart will be closed. Even rushing things is an act of aggression.

Hence those who set out in search of God, their life-style is contained in two words: prayer and patience. So the scriptures begin with prayer and they end with awaiting. The search therefore, begins with the prayer.

The first line of this scripture says:

OM! I BOW DOWN TO LORD SHIVA – THE ONE WHO IS SELF-LUMINOUS, DELIGHTING IN HIS OWN BEING.

And now, the beginning of the Shiva Sutra.

Let this salutation penetrate deep in you because if you miss the door, you will not be able to understand me when I start describing the palace. Push aside the male within you, a little. Drop your aggressive attitude a little. This understanding is not going to come out of intellect, it is going to rise from your heart. This understanding will not depend on your logic, it will depend on how much love there is within you.

You will be able to understand this scripture; but this understanding will not be the same as following a mathematical problem. The understanding will be similar to the one you have from appreciating poetry. You don't pounce on poetry. You enjoy poetry leisurely, sip by sip, just as you enjoy drinking tea. You don't swallow it just in one shot as if it were some kind of bitter medicine. Rather, you relish its taste bit by bit; you let its taste dissolve slowly.

In order to appreciate even a single poem you need to read it over and over again... which is not the case with a mathematical problem. You don't need to go over it again once you have understood and solved it – then the problem is done with. Poetry never ends, because the heart is limitless. The more you love, the more it unfolds.

That's why in the East we don't study scriptures – we read them over and over. Scriptures can't be studied anyway. To study means: once you have understood, you throw the book away in the garbage. Now that you have understood it, what is the need to go through it again. So you feel you are done with it.

Patha, reading over and over means you will need to go over this scripture savouring in unhurriedly – reading and re-reading. Who knows how many times, but knowingly or unknowingly, you'll have to repeat it in your different moods, in different states of mind. Sometimes, when the sun is on the horizon, or when night covers everything under its darkness, when the mind is cheerful, or sometimes when the mind is sad. You'll have to enter this scripture in different moments in different conditions, only then by and by will its facets become apparent to you. And yet it will remain inexhaustible.

No scripture can ever be used up. The more it will appear you have found what you were looking for, the more you'll realize there is much more left undiscovered. The more you dive deep into it, the more it grows deeper. No reader can ever exhaust a scripture. Patha, means reading over and over again – many times.

People in the West fail to understand this. It is beyond them to figure out why people have been reading the Geeta for thousands of years. They wonder, "the same man reads the same Geeta every morning – has he gone crazy or something?" They have no idea that the whole technique of patha, reading and re-reading is to let the scripture penetrate the heart. It has more to do with enjoying the taste of it rather than understanding it.

It is not even remotely connected with logic and calculation. It's main purpose is to dissolve the distance between the reader and the text. The idea is that eventually the text of the Geeta and the reader of it should merge into each other. That no distinction be left between the Geeta and its reader. This is the feminine state. This is the way of surrender. Keep this in mind.

So these sutras of Shiva can be understood if we follow the path of humility. Let them sink in you. Make no haste in arriving at a conclusion whether they are right or wrong. As far as these sutras are

concerned, make one thing clear to you: it is not up to you to decide of their rightness or wrongness. How can you? One who is living in darkness, what judgement can he pass about light? And the one who has never known what it is like being healthy, one who has always been confined to a sickbed, how can he understand what it means to be healthy.

One who has never been stirred by the feeling of love – who has lived all along a life of hate, jealously, enmity – he can, of course, read love-poems, because he will follow the words easily: nevertheless, that which is hidden in the words, which is interwoven in the words, access to that will always remain closed to him. So don't be in a hurry to judge what is right and what is wrong.

You simply imbibe these sutras – I am not saying understand them – simply drink them, soak yourself, absorb the whole taste of it. And if this taste could help unfold the secrets hidden within you, and if in the savouring of these sutras a new flower may blossom within you releasing its fragrance and making you realize even for a moment your stinking life has disappeared forever, and if with the kindling of a lamp inside, you could come to recognize you are not the darkness and if the sutras could create an impact of a lightning inside you offering just a glimpse – then this alone will cause the understanding to emerge, it will not come through your intellect or reasoning. Even a flash of experience will be enough to cause the understanding to arise in you. Hence, I say, treat these sutras with humbleness.

Secondly, a sutra means: the most concise, quintessential, telegraphic. Each and every word of a sutra is highly condensed. A sutra is never long and elaborate, it is crystallized, encapsulated, very small like a seed. Even if you wished to see, you can't find the tree inside the seed. You need penetrating eyes – the kind of eyes which can see the tree within the seed, which can see in the present what future will be like, which can see today what tomorrow will be, which can discover the invisible in the visible – you require very sharp eyes indeed.

You don't have such sharp eyes yet. Right now you will see nothing but the seed. The only way you can see the tree is by sowing the seed. Only when the tree will break open and sprout will you be able to see the growing tree. These sutras are the seeds. You will have to sow them in your heart. So hold your judgement, because, if you reached a premature conclusion about these seeds, you may throw them away as trash.

Actually, there is not much difference between a seed and a rock. In fact, sometimes, rocks are more colorful, shining, beautiful, precious than seeds. And yet there is a difference between the costliest diamond kohinoor and a seed. Nothing will sprout if you sowed the kohinoor. Regardless of how costly the kohinoor is, the diamond is dead. No matter what price the fools may assign to it, the stone is lifeless – just a corpse.

Irrespective of how ugly a seed may look, it may not cost even a penny, but it contains life. If you sow it, it can produce a huge tree and then one seed can create millions of seeds. One small seed can give birth to this whole universe, because a single seed causes millions of seeds to appear, and again one of these millions of seeds can create yet other millions of seeds. A small seed can contain the entire universe within.

So the sutra is the seed – you can't be impatient with it. Only when you have sown the seed in your heart and it has sprouted and flowered, will you be able to know. Only then can you come to a conclusion.

The third thing – before we went the sutras – is that, religion is a great revolution. Whatsoever you have learned in the name of religion has almost nothing to do with religion really. Therefore, Shiva's Sutras will surely startle you. You will be scared, frightened too because your religions will be shaken up. Your temples, your mosques, your churches will simply collapse if you understood these sutras. Don't make any effort to save them because even if they are saved, you won't get anything out of them.

You breathe in these places and yet you are as good as dead. The temples are very festively decorated but there is not a ray of festivity in your life. There is plenty of light in your temples, but it doesn't eradicate the darkness from your life. So don't be afraid of these sutras, although they are sure to put you in difficulty. Because Shiva is not some kind of a priest. A priest's language always seems satisfactory to you. The priest is basically interested in exploiting you, not in transforming you. His interest lies in keeping you as you are. His business is to see that you remain as you are – sick, diseased.

I have heard. A doctor's son returned home after completing his education. The father had never been on a vacation so he told his son, "I want to go on a vacation for three months. In the meantime, you carry on my practice. I have spent my whole life earning money without a break. So now you look after the business for a while."

Having completed a world tour, he came back at the end of three months. He asked his son how things were going, the son replied., "Everything is going just fine. You will be surprised, but the patients you couldn't cure your whole life, I cured them in three months." The father couldn't believe his ears. He said, "You fool! They gave us the business. I could have cured them too but then how could I have paid for your education? Those patients made it possible. I could have helped the schooling of other children as well. You ruined the whole thing!"

The priest likes you to be the way you are – sickly, unhealthy. That's what helps them run their business. Shiva is not a priest. He is a teerthankara. Shiva is an avatara. He is the seer, the paigambara. His words are like fire. Come near him only if you are ready to be burned; accept his invitation only if you are ready to disappear as you are. Because, the new will be born only when you would cease to be as you are. Not until you have turned yourself into ashes, will the new life emerge. So keeping these things in view, now try to understand each sutra.

The first sutra is:

THE CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE ATMAN, THE SOUL.

Although conscious we all are, yet we never come to know the soul. If consciousness is indeed the soul, then we should all have the knowledge of it. We all possess consciousness, but what is really the meaning of, "consciousness is the soul?"

The first meaning is: in this world, only consciousness is yours. The word atman means: that which is your own. Regardless of how much the rest may appear to you as your own, it is alien. All of that which you otherwise claim as yours – friends, loved ones, family, wealth, fame, high position, a great empire – it is all a deception. Because one day death will snatch it all away from you. So death is the criterion for determining who is your own and who is the stranger. That which death can separate you from, know that it didn't belong to you, and that which it can't, was indeed your own.

So atman means: one's own. But the moment we think in therms of "mine", the other comes in. "Mine" in itself means, "Someone else who belongs to me." It never occurs to you that except your own self, there is no one who can be yours. And the longer you will remain swayed by the idea that the other belongs to you, the greater will be the loss of time on your part, you will have wasted that much life. That much time you gave in for dreaming. You could have awakened in the meantime – you could have attained moksha. But all that time you only collected garbage.

So this is the first sutra: you are all by yourself; that means, there is nothing by way of either relationship or possession that you can claim as yours. No one and nothing except yourself belongs to you really. This is indeed a very revolutionary sutra. It goes against the very nature of society. Because the society exists on the very premise that others are mind – the caste people are mine, the countrymen are mine. A whole array of possessive attitudes in on display: my country, my caste, my religion, my family. The society survives on the concept of "mine". Religion is essentially antithetical to society – it is a freedom from society, it is a freedom from the "other".

According to religion, there is no one you can claim as "mine" except your own self. If seen superficially this statement looks selfish. Because, if I alone am for myself then one immediately surmises this as a selfish attitude. But there is nothing selfish in it. The truth is, this feeling alone will cause the attitude of altruism and universal goodness to arise in your life. Because one who has not yet become aware of the fact that essentially only his being is his own, cannot follow altruism,

When you call others as "mine", what do you do really? You exploit them. Your "mine" is nothing but a part and parcel of your exploitation of them. Whosoever you identify as "mine", you turn that person into a slave. You convert the person into one of your possessions. You say, "my wife, my husband, my son, my father...", what goes on behind the backdrop of this "my-ness"? What is the basis of your relationship made evident by calling someone as yours? You exploit the other, you take advantage of the other, you take the other for a ride. And if this is what you call as altruism then you are indeed carrying a false notion.

An emperor had three sons. As he grew old he became concerned as to which of the three sons would be worthy of inheriting his kingdom. Because all three of them were equally capable and qualified, and that made the choice very difficult. One day he called his sons and said, "Tell me about the greatest act you may have done the whole of last year."

The eldest son reported, "Before leaving for a pilgrimage, the richest man of this city left with me his precious diamonds and jewelry worth millions of rupees without counting them or making a list of them with his signature on. He asked me to save them until his return. If I had wished I could have seized all his treasure, for the man had neither made any documents nor were there any witnesses to prove the treasure belonged to him. Since the man had not kept any count, I could have easily saved at least a few diamonds for myself. But instead, I handed him over the pouch left in tact."

The father said, "You did right, but let me ask you this, wouldn't you have been besieged with the feelings of guilt, shame, embarrassment if you had kept some of the diamonds for yourself?" The son replied, "Indeed I would have."

Then the father said, "You can't call this an altruistic act. What you did was nothing but simply saving yourself from your own feeling of shame and guilt. What good did it do? Since saving diamonds

would have pricked your conscience, you preferred to give them back to the owner. It was a kind act alright, but there was no altruism involved in it. You were only being kind to your own self."

Hearing all this, the second son got a little worried. He said, "Once I was passing by a lake. It was evening, no one was around. I heard someone was drowning. I could have easily ignored his screams and walked away but instead I immediately jumped into the lake and saved the man at the risk of my own life."

The emperor said, "You did the right thing but if you had walked away without rescuing the man, wouldn't that man's death have followed you the rest of your life? Outwardly you could have ignored, but inside you his screams would have continued to echo, don't you think his ghost would have haunted you forever? It was out of this fear that you jumped in the lake and risked your life. But this should not give you the excuse to carry the misunderstanding that you did some altruistic act."

The third son narrated, "As I was once passing through a forest, I saw a man asleep on the cliff of a mountain. Just one turn on his side and he would have been finished, because there was a great abyss on the other side. I went close to him to see who he was and found that he was none other but my sworn enemy. Having recognized him, I could have quietly gone my way. Even if I had passed him slowly, mounted on my horse, perhaps my passing itself – without my doing anything – might have caused him to turn his side and fall into the valley. But instead, I went near him very quietly, crawled on the ground lest he might fall with my approaching sound. I knew very well he as a wicked man; that in spite of my saving his life he would go on cursing me. Nevertheless, I shook him gently and woke him up. And the very man is now blaming me all over the place. He says 'I had gone to commit suicide; this man followed me even there. He does not allow me to live peacefully, of course, but he didn't let me die either.'"

The emperor said, "You are better than the other two; but what you did was no altruism either. Why? Because you are filled with ego, as if you have accomplished something great. The glimmer in your eyes. Your whole demeanor is boastful and self-serving. And any act that creates the ego can no longer be an altruistic act. You have used very subtle means to feed that ego. You think you acted like a religious person, that you did something good. I can only say that you are simply better than the other two but I'll have to look for someone else, the fourth person who can become the ruler of my kingdom."

When you think you are being of service to others, in fact you are not. How can one serve others when he doesn't even know who he is? Serving the poor, attending the sick in the hospital, gives you the idea you are rendering some kind of service. But if you'll look at the whole thing very closely you'll find somewhere along these acts fulfilling your ego. And if it is your ego that ultimately feeds upon such acts of service, then this service too is exploitation. Until one has attained self-awareness he can't be altruistic; because, only after one has known oneself, can such a great transformation take place.

I have heard, Mulla Nasruddin's wife was having a fight with him. She said to Mulla, "This matter has to be settled once and for all. Why do you hate all my relatives?" Mulla said, "This is totally wrong, the facts don't support your accusation. I have the proof for it, and the proof is that I love your mother-in-law more than I do mind."

This is how the ego finds its ways through. Superficially it looks as though you are doing service to others, but deep down it is your ego that is being serviced by you. And the more subtle the way of the ego becomes, the more it gets out of reach. The others are unable to gauge it, of course, but even you yourself fail to have a handle on it. Others are deceived by you, of course, but even you become the victim of your own deception. Even you get lost in the enigma, the puzzle, you create for others. We have created our respective mazes with the intent and purpose of befooling others not realizing that someday we may ourselves be duped by it – and in fact we already are.

So remember one thing: no one belongs to you except your own self. The moment this remembrance becomes crystallized within you that consciousness is the being, that except consciousness nothing else is mine – all the rest is extraneous, disparate – the first ray of transformation enters your life. With that, a crevice appears between you and the society, between you and your relationships. But the man doesn't want to take a look at himself. It is difficult to talk such a look because it requires one to go through a process that is extremely arduous.

One marwari businessman fell in love with a film actress. It was undoubtedly an unusual happening – a marwari businessman falling in love! Ordinarily, this kind of a person would always stay away from love. But sometimes even the impossible happens. He fell in love of course, but his was a very suspicious mind., So he hired a detective in order to keep an eye on the actress and find out if she was of a lose character. He wanted to have this in black and white before his proposing to her for marriage.

The detective went ahead and did a lot of investigating. After a week he sent his report. The report stated, "The woman is absolutely clean, innocent and without blemish. There is not a trace of evidence which can place her character in doubt, except that she has been seen in the last few days moving with a suspicious looking marwari." The businessman himself was that suspicious looking marwari.

The eye sees the other. Hands touch the other. The mind thinks of the other. But you always remain in the dark. Your situation is similar to that of a lamp – the light of which reaches all around except underneath, except itself. That's how you function. In the light of your own lamp, in the light of your consciousness, you wander around and look in all directions; only one remains unknown, unseen, and that is none other than yourself.

So the first sutra is:

CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE SOUL. Let this sutra penetrate deep in your heart. Your voyage to the whole world is meaningless if you remained unaware of your own self. If you earned knowledge of all the rest but remained ignorant of yourself, even the entire sum of that knowledge will equal to nothing.

You may have seen the whole universe, scanned the moons and the stars, but if you have failed to see yourself you remain a stranger among all. Because he alone can claim to have eyes who has seen himself; he alone can claim to have attained knowledge who has known himself. He alone is purified who has cleansed himself in the self-luminous consciousness. Consciousness alone is holy, purifying. Except consciousness, there is no other holy place for pilgrimage.

Consciousness is your innate nature. You have not been away from it even for a moment. But the fact is, it is dark underneath the lamp. You can't go too far away from the lamp, the illuminating consciousness – even if you wished to. You can, of course, have an illusion of having been moved too far apart from it; you can be in a dream world. But a dream cannot be the reality. Consciousness is your inherent nature and that is the only reality there is.

Consciousness is the being. And so the first thing is: no one, nothing is mine except the consciousness. Should this feeling become crystallized in you, it will give birth to sannyas. Because, essentially, samsara means to carry the feeling that someone other than myself can be mine.

Hence, the first sutra is tremendously radical; it can spark off a revolution in your life. It's a provocation for making you realize for the first time the truth that you alone belong to yourself – there is no one else for you. This realization will naturally depress your mind; because you have built great relationships, you have saved lofty dreams around other people. You are carrying a lot of hopes from them.

A mother is carrying high expectations from her son. A father is hopeful of his son. They are completely lost in their hopes. Your father, for example, died carrying similar hopes. What did he gain from you? The same will apply to you; you too will meet death and gain nothing from your son. And your son will continue to follow the same stupidity – he will keep expectations from his son.

No, this won't help. Look at your own self – neither at someone who will follow you, nor at anyone who preceded you. No one is yours. No son can ever fulfill you. No relationship can ever be a substitute for your soul. You alone are your own friend. A realization of all this creates fear, because it makes one feel as though he is left all by himself.

Man is so scared of being lonely that even as he passes through a deserted lane, he begins to sing in a loud voice. Just by listening to his own voice he feels he is not alone. The fact is, he is listening to his own voice, there is no one else around. Similarly, when the father builds his dreams around his son, the son is not a party to it. This is the father whistling alone in a deserted alley. He is bound to face unhappiness, because throughout his life he did nothing but weave dreams assuming his son was having the same dreams too. He is wrong. The son is engaged in his own dreams, the father in his own, his father cherished some other dreams – but they don't meet anywhere.

Every father dies unhappy. What can be the reason? Because, the fact remains that whatever dreams he creates, they all fall apart. Moreover, everyone here is to see his own dreams – not your dreams. And if you wish to attain an ideal situation, a satisfaction, then never create your dreams around someone else; otherwise, you are sure to get lost.

Samsara simply means: the boat of your dreams is tethered to others. Sannyas means you have awakened; and that you have accepted one fact – regardless of how painful, how hurting, how terribly tormenting it may feel in the beginning – that you are alone. That all relationships, all companionships are pseudo. This does not mean however that you should escape to the Himalayas. Because, one who is heading to the Himalayas shows that he still looks upon his relationships, his ties as real – that they haven't become false and meaningless to him yet.

Once it becomes evident that something is false, then there is no point in running away from it. After waking up in the morning and having realized the dream was false, one doesn't start running away

from home. Once the falsity of the dream is recognized, the matter is over – what is there to run away from? And yet we come across a man escaping from his wife, children. His very fleeing shows he must have just heard the dream is false – he himself has no realization of it. Until yesterday he rushed toward his wife, now he is running away from her – in either case, the wife remains crucial.

A Jaina monk – Ganeshvarni – had for years renounced his wife. After twenty years of his becoming a monk, he received the news of his wife's death. The words he uttered hearing the news are worth noting. He said, "Good riddance!" His disciples interpreted these words to mean non-attachment. But if you will give a little thought, it would be clear this is not non-attachment. Because the very idea of getting rid of wife shows she was still being seen as a botheration even after twenty years.

The arithmetic is quite clear. The wife left behind twenty years ago must have been following like a shadow. She must have been haunting him all the time – weighing upon him. Even after twenty years he had not been able to free himself from her thought. His mind must have been debating all along whether what he did was right or wrong. The words, "Good riddance" at the instance of wife's death say nothing about the wife, they speak for the husband. Although this man did run away from his wife, but could not leave her.

And Ganeshvarni was a holy man. So beware, holy men can also live in great delusion. He was indeed a man of impeccable character – unerring, virtuous, upright. And yet something went wrong, he took the very problem with him when he left for the Himalayas.

There is yet another thing in this regard that needs to be understood as well. The fact that at the death of his wife the first thing which occurred to him was "good riddance" shows that knowingly or unknowingly, the desire for her death must have been lurking somewhere in the unconscious. This requires to take a deeper look at it.

At some level he must have wished that she be dead, finished forever; but this shows violence. Every word that we utter doesn't just come from out of the blue, without a reason. Every word comes from our innermost parts. And in such moments when the news of wife's death has just arrived, you don't react through the everyday normal attentive state. After an hour or so you become aware of it and then you begin to rationalize what you said, you patch it up. But that would all be a falsehood.

In that very moment Ganeshvarni was given the news, he missed. In an instant he forgot about the whole facade of holiness he had created all around him for the past twenty years. If this could happen to Ganeshvarni, it can easily happen to you too.

Running away won't do any good. No one has ever been able to escape just by running away from something. But the disciples can never recognize this. Thinking that the words uttered by Ganeshvarni showed what a man of non-attachment he was, they consider them of great significance in the whole story.

You can hardly ever know what "non-attachment" means. Since you live in the world of attachments, you only understand what renunciation is. You understand when someone does something contrary to what you do. You know very well you can't leave your wife, whole this man did – you obviously find him greater than you. The man is certainly opposite to you, but not different from you. You are standing on your feet while he is standing on his head – but there is not an iota's difference between

his mind and your mind. Take a look for yourself. You all think the wife is a trouble. Can you find a single husband who can say the wife is not a pain? But please don't ask him in front of his wife, ask him when he is alone, confidentially.

Mulla Nasruddin said to me, "Once I was a happy man too. But this I came to know only later – after I got married. It was too late by then, the happiness had already slipped through my hands."

If you probe deeply, you may hardly come across a single husband who may not have thought of killing his wife, who may not have dreamed killing his wife. He may even wonder in the morning what a ridiculous dream he had, but deep in the unconscious his desire was indeed that. It's a simple logic, the mind wants to destroy the cause of trouble. But the truth is, the other is never the cause of trouble.

Who can stop you if the wife was indeed the cause of your trouble? If that were the case, all of you would have escaped to the Himalayas by no. The wife is not the source of your troubles. Because even in the Himalayas you'll find a wife for you. The trouble is within you. You can't live alone. You need the other. You are scared when left to yourself, but when someone else is around, you feel safe and confident. Why? The presence of the other makes one feel assured that in the time of need there will be someone, in life or death there will be someone he can rely upon. But the fact is that aloneness is one's nature. And one who has realized that only the soul belongs to him, he has indeed experienced his aloneness.

So there is no need to escape. Once you stop running away, the trouble disappears on its own. Remain wherever you are, there is no need to make even the slightest change. But be alone inside you. Experience the aloneness within you; feel you are alone without any friend or companion. But please don't repeat this, there is no need to repeat every morning, "I am alone, I have no friends, no companions." This won't help at all. Such repetition will only show that you haven't got it yet. Please understand this.

You are alone is a fact. The problem is in having an understanding of it – that is the real tapascharya, the real spiritual practice. It does not mean standing under the hot sun. Except man, all other animals and birds live under the sun – none of them is on the way to moksha. Also, spiritual practice does not mean abstaining from food, going on fast; as it is, half of the world is starving to death. Fasting does not lead anyone to moksha. Nothing will come out of tormenting, torturing the body – it is self-destruction and the greatest sin ever. Only stupid people enter into such sins. Those who possess even a little bit of awareness would not do such foolish things.

If forcing the other to starve is wrong, how can starving oneself to death be right? If torturing the other is violent, how can self-torturing be a non-violent act? Violence is in the very act of torture – it makes no difference who the victim is. Those who are courageous, they inflict pain on the other; while those who are weak, hurt themselves. Causing pain to the other is risky, he can take revenge. No such risk is involved in inflicting pain on oneself – who will avenge it? Hence, the weak torture themselves.

Has it ever occurred to you, when the man gets upset he beats his wife, but when the wife gets upset she beats herself. The wife symbolizes the monks. So the helpless hurts himself – what else can he do? The powerful hurts the other. One who is powerless always faces the danger as to how the

other might react, what the other might do to him. The one who is weak is self-destructive while the powerful is other-destructive. A religious person is non-destructive – he neither hurts the other, nor himself. The whole idea of hurting and torturing is meaningless.

Tapascharya, spiritual practice means: accepting the truth that you are alone; that there is no way one can have a friend, a companion. No matter how much you long for it, regardless of how much you close your eyes and dream of them – you will still remain alone. For lives you built a home, you built a family, and then you lost it – and all through that you have always remained alone. Not even slightly has your aloneness been ever affected. So one who has known, one who has accepted that he is alone, for him there is an indication in this sutra: CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE BEING. Only being is yours, nothing else.

Secondly, the sutra says: THIS BEING IS THE CONSCIOUSNESS.

Your being, your soul is not some kind of a doctrine which you can read in a scripture and believe in it. It is not something like a theory of gravitation. The soul is not a matter of theory, it is an experience. And the experience is that of the intensity of consciousness. Hence, the more you will become conscious, the more you will come to realize the soul. The more you will become unconscious, the more you will fail to know yourself – and you are almost unconscious.

One who wants to realize his own being doesn't need to go through any philosophical treatise, rather he needs to know the technique of awakening his consciousness. He needs a method which can help him become more aware. For example, when you dig through the ashes, when you dust off the ashes, the hot coal begins to shine. Similarly, you need to have some kind of a technique which can dust off the ash and allow your amber to shine. Because only in the glimmer of that amber will you be able to recognize you are a consciousness.

And the more conscious you are, the more centered you become. The day you will find you are the supreme consciousness, you will have attained the divinity. The very degree to which your consciousness grows will be the extent to which you will have realized your being. However, right now, you are almost unconscious. You are almost in the state of intoxication. You are walking, moving, working, but all as if in sleep – you are not aware.

Has it ever occurred to you while reading a book that after having read the whole page you come to realize, "Heavens, I read the whole page and don't remember a word of it – how did that happen?" You can indeed read a book in a state of sleep. As you read, your mind wanders around. After going through the page you become aware. You come to realize you read the whole page in vain. Similarly, you walk down the whole street without being aware that you are walking. You go on doing your job without the awareness that you are working.

Although your consciousness is the being, nevertheless, you go on living in unawareness. And then you ask, "What is being? What is soul?" You want someone to give you a concluding proof or at least someone to explain its existence rationally. Otherwise, you may turn into an atheist. Atheism is a natural consequence of unawareness; theism is the result of awareness. As your awareness will go on increasing, there won't be any need for you to believe in soul.

Many fools believe in soul, but that's of no use. In this country everyone believes in soul, what difference does it make? It doesn't bring any transformation in your life. Perhaps you believe so

because such belief is being repeated for thousands of years. Your ears have become sore hearing it. You have completely forgotten you need to think about it. Hearing the same thing over and over again you become hypnotized. Hearing the same thing you forget that it is subject to doubt, that it needs to be thought over.

Hearing that there is a soul brings you great satisfaction. You know pretty well that the body will die; it gives you much courage when you are told the soul won't die. You find great solace hearing, "The soul will never die; that fire can't burn in, the weapons can't pierce it, death can't cause any harm to it." But such consolation is not the truth. Neither one can accept the soul as theory, nor can one let himself be hypnotized by the repeated assertion of its existence. Only they can know what soul is who are able to raise their consciousness.

So live in such a way that the ash doesn't gather on you. Live in a way that the amber within you remains burning, shining. Live a life where you are not unconscious, where you are aware every moment.

A child was born to Mulla Nasruddin. That was his first son. He was immensely happy. He invited his friend to celebrate the happy occasion and both went to a tavern. You only know one way to celebrate the happiness – becoming unconscious.

This is very strange. Shiva, Mahavira, Buddha go on proclaiming, "There is only one joy in the world. The joy of awareness. And you only know one kind of pleasure – the pleasure of being unconscious." Either you are right or they are right – both can't be.

So instead of going to the hospital first to see his newborn son, Mulla Nasruddin went straight to the bar. He thought of having some fun first, after all a long time dream had come true. Both drank heavily. When they reached the hospital and Mulla looked at his son through the glass window, he began to cry. When asked by his friend why he as crying, Mulla said, "The first thing is, he doesn't look like me." He didn't know who he was really, he couldn't have recognized even his own face, but he was quick in saying the son didn't look like him. "Secondly," he said, "the boy looks very small to me. What will I do having such a small child? Do you think he will survive?"

Mulla's friend said, "Don't you worry, when I was born I also weighed three pounds." Nasruddin said, "Did you survive?" The friend thought for a while, he too was unconscious, and said, "I can't tell you for sure."

Man is unconscious. His entire perspective of life is filled with unawareness, his entire vision is blurred. You can't see anything right. And you know only one pleasure and that is of forgetting yourself – whether by watching the movie, listening to music, or through sex. Whichever place helps you forget yourself, you feel that's where you found the pleasure. You call forgetting yourself a pleasure. There is a reason for it. Because whenever you become aware, you find nothing except misery in your life. Even a little bit of alertness on your part shows how much you are surrounded by pain, misery, and ugliness.

I have a friend who remained a bachelor. I asked him, "What happened? How did you miss?" He said, "There was a big problem. Whichever woman I fell in love with looked to me beautiful when I would be drunk. At that time I would be willing to marry her, but she would refuse. When I would

become sober and conscious, she would be willing to marry me but I would refuse. This is how I missed. What to do – there was no way out."

Whenever you'll open your eyes, you will find nothing but ugliness and misery all around you. Everything looks fine when you are in an unconscious state. This is the reason why you find it difficult to conceive: CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE BEING. You say, "Impossible!" That's why one needs to go through pain. That is called tapascharya, spiritual practice. Whenever one begins to become aware, first he will have to go through suffering. For lives you have created misery around you, who else would pass through it if not you? That is what we have called the karma.

Karma simply means: the misery created all around by you for life after life. Knowingly or unknowingly you have sown the seeds of misery, now who will reap the crop? So whenever you come to your awareness, you see the crop – long and wide. You will have to pass through this farm. But you sit there out of fear. Looking at the field and realizing what a great bother it is, you close your eyes and get drunk. But the more you become drunk, the more the crop grows. Each birth of yours adds something into the chain of your karmas, not reduce anything. It takes you deeper and deeper into a pit, the hell comes closer and closer.

As soon as you are filled with awareness, the first thing that will happen is you will begin to see misery, the hell around you. Because you are the one who has created it. However, if you remain courageous and pass through the misery consciously, you will have cut the crop. You won't have to go through the same miseries again. Once you have gone through this chain of miseries – the chain of karmas, the chain tied around your soul.... If you could pass through it without losing your consciousness, courageously, unworried; if you could determine, "whatever misery I have created, I'll go through it, I'll go to the end of it. I want to arrive at that initial moment when I was innocent and the journey of suffering had not started yet, when my soul was absolutely pure and I had not gathered any misery – I am determined to penetrate up to that point regardless of any consequences, pain, or sorrow."

If you could show this much courage then sooner or later you are bound to cross your misery and reach the very point where this sutra of Shiva, CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE BEING, will become clear to you. And once you have become centered in your consciousness, no misery will ever be caused by you. Only an unconscious man creates misery all around him.

Have you seen a drunkard walk on the street staggering along? That's how your life is. You take a step in one direction and the foot lands in another direction. You set out to go at one place, but reach somewhere else. You leave home to talk about one thing but end up speaking something else. You see this happening every day, and yet you fail to understand why it is so. You go out to ask someone an apology, but return home after having squabbled more. Are you in your senses? You begin with a loving talk but end up with hostility.

One man, drunk, was walking down the street looking at the sky. A car passed by him. The driver barely managed in saving the accident. He stopped the car and said to the man, "Sir, if you won't look in the direction where you want to go, you might end up going where you are looking now." And we are all....

You have no idea where you are going, why you are going, where you are looking, why you are looking. You are constantly on the move, because there is a restlessness within which does not

allow you to sit down. The energy inside keeps you going. Then whatsoever you do it produces contrary results.

People come to see me and they say, "We never did any wrong deeds, we were always good to others but received wickedness from them in return." But it is not possible that you may do good but receive evil back from them. It is impossible that you may sow the seed of mango and the tree would give in return the bitter fruit of a neem tree. This is impossible. The only thing possible is that in your unconscious state instead of sowing the seed of the mango you must have sown the seed of the neem tree. Because why would the tree lie? You must have mistakenly sown the wrong seeds. So even when you do good, your intention is never the same.

Even when you speak the truth, you do so to hurt the other person. You speak the truth to insult the other person. You speak truth as if to use it as some kind of a deadly weapon. Your truths are bitter. Truth doesn't have to be bitter too. But you find pleasure in making the truth sound bitter. You have no interest in the truth itself really. Your lie is always sweet; your truth is always bitter. What's the matter? Is bitterness the nature of truth? Is sweetness part of a lie?

No, the fact is, you want to make your lie passable, therefore you make it sound sweet. You know very well it won't work otherwise. You know that in the first place a lie is difficult to promote unless accompanied by sweetness. It works the same way as giving a bitter pill but sugar coated, to a child. He swallows it taking the pill to be a candy. Before he can feel the bitterness, the pill goes already in.

You make the lie sound sweet because you want to promote the lie. You make the truth sound bitter because you are interested not in promoting the truth but in using it for the purpose of hurting others. You speak the truth only when you want to use it in a way so as to make it even worse than a lie.

You are unconscious. You are totally unaware of your actions. You need to look at yourself with a little more alertness. Did you speak what you intended to say, or was it something else? Was what you said on your mind really?

Mark Twain returned home one evening. His wife asked, "How did your speech go?" He said, "Which one? The one I had prepared, or the one that I delivered? or the one that I had wished to deliver?"

The speech one prepares and the speech he delivers are always very different. Moreover, while coming home the speech he thinks he should have given is altogether different.

Are you in your right senses? You go on missing all the targets; have you ever hit a single target in your life? Even a man with a blindfold may sometimes manage to hit his arrow on the mark, but not you.

I have heard it said that even a stopped clock shows correct time twice in twenty four hours, but you can spend a lifetime without being correct even twice. Are you worse than a stopped clock? A man may someday succeed in hitting the target even if he were to go on throwing his arrows in the dark. You throw your arrows with open eyes, in the light, and yet never do you ever hit the mark. What could be the reason?

Mulla Nasruddin was fond of hunting deer. When he reached the lodge on his third hunting trip and opened his suitcase, he found a large photograph under which his wife had written, "Mulla, this is how a deer looks." Mulla loved to hunt, but had no idea how a deer looked like. His wife wanted to make sure he didn't kill any odd thing and bring it home as a deer, hence the photograph.

You have missed at every instance, and that's the cause of your misery. And the only reason why you have missed is that, you are not aware. I say, therefore, whatsoever you do, do it with awareness. Walk with awareness, talk with awareness.

Mahavira has said, "Remain alert when you walk, when you sit, when you take your food, when you speak, even in sleep." When Mahavira was asked who is a sadhu, who is a holy man, he said, "One who is aware." When asked who is a non-sadhu, he replied, "One who is unaware." A man who lives as if asleep is the non-sadhu; one who lives in full consciousness is the sadhu.

This is exactly what Shiva is saying: CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE SOUL. Raise your consciousness and by and by you are bound to see the glimpse of soul in your life.

The second sutra is: KNOWLEDGE IS BONDAGE. This is a very strange sutra. 'Knowledge' has many meanings. One, as long as you are filled with the knowledge that "I am", you will remain in ignorance, because, the very sense of the "I", the ego, is ignorance. The day you are filled with the soul, the 'am-ness' will remain but the 'I-ness' will disappear. From "I am", the 'I' will drop and simply 'am' will remain.

You can experiment with this. Sometimes sit quietly under a tree and look within yourself, see where is the 'I'? You won't find it anywhere. The 'am' you will of course find everywhere in the existence, but never the ego. The ego is your creation, it is of your making, it is false, untrue. There is nothing more unauthentic than the ego itself. It comes out handy.

Although it is required in the world, as such it nowhere has any place in truth.

So, there is this knowledge that 'I am', which is the cause of bondage. The awareness that I have of the 'am-ness' is pure and limitless. When you say 'am', can there be any distinction between your 'am-ness' and the am-ness of a tree? Would there be any difference between your am-ness and my am-ness? When you only are, then you, the rivers, the mountains, the trees all become one. However, as soon as you say "I", you become separate from the whole. The moment you say "I", you break away, you alienate yourself, you disconnect yourself from the existence.

Am-ness is Brahman and "I" is man's state of ignorance. When you know simply that you are, then there is no separate center within you. Then you become one with the existence. Then you become like a wave which is lost in the ocean. Right now you are like the wave which frozen into ice, which has broken itself away from the ocean.

Gyanam bandaha So the first thing is: KNOWLEDGE IS BONDAGE – the knowledge that "I am." The other kind of bondage is all the knowledge that you have gathered from outside, which you have stolen from the scriptures, the knowledge which you have borrowed from the great Masters, the knowledge which is stored in your memory – all of this is bondage. You won't be able to free yourself from it. That's why you cannot find a man more enslaved than the pundit.

All kinds of people come to me – all kinds of patients. But no one among them is more afflicted with cancer than the pundit, the scholar. There is no cure for him – he is beyond treatment. The trouble with him is that he knows. Hence, he can neither listen nor understand. Before you say anything to him he has already understood the meaning of it; before he has heard you, he would have formed his own theory. A mind filled with words is incapable of knowing. He knows so much without knowing, because all his knowledge is borrowed.

If knowledge could be attained through scriptures, everyone would have attained it. Knowledge is attained when a person has become silent, when he has dropped all the scriptures, when he returns to the world all the knowledge which he has borrowed from others, when he goes on a search of that which is his original existence – the one which he has not attained from other people.

Try to understand this a little. You have received your body from your parents. You have nothing in your body that is actually yours. One half of it is a contribution from your father, and the other half from your mother. Then the body is made of the food you eat every day. And further, the body contains the five elements – the air, the fire, and so on. You can't claim any of these as yours. But your consciousness consists of neither of these elements, nor have you obtained it from your parents.

Whatsoever you know, you have learned it from your schools and universities, you have heard it from your scriptures, you have obtained it from your gurus. But all of that is a part of your body, nor of your soul. Your soul is that which you have obtained from no one. So your true nature consists of that which you have received from no body – neither from your mother, nor father, society, guru, or scripture. Until you have discovered that pure element which is innately yours, you won't be able to realize your true being.

So knowledge is the bondage because it doesn't allow you to reach up to your true nature, your true being. It is the knowledge that has divided mankind. You call yourself a Hindu, or a Mohammedan. Have you ever thought why you are a Hindu or a Mohammedan? What is the difference between a Hindu and a Mohammedan really? Can a physician ever find out on the basis of a blood test whether the blood belongs to a Hindu or a Mohammedan? Can anyone determine whether a particular bone has been taken from the body of a Hindu or a Mohammedan? There is no way.

You won't know anything by investigating bodies because the bodies of both – the Hindu and the Mohammedan – are made of the same five elements. But if you examine their minds you will surely know who is a Hindu and who is a Mohammedan. For the simple reason that their scriptures are different, their principles are different, their words are different. The difference between the two consists of words. You are a Hindu because you received one kind of knowledge which is labelled as "Hindu". Somebody is a Jaina because he received a different kind of knowledge which is named as Jaina. All the differences between you, all the walls, are the walls of knowledge – and all your knowledge is borrowed.

Raise a Moslem child in a Hindu household, he will grow to be a Hindu. He will wear the sacred thread like a Brahmin does. He will quote from the Vedas and the Upanishads. Similarly, let a Hindu child be brought up in a Muslim household, he will begin reciting the verses of Koran.

Knowledge binds you. It makes a wall around you. It makes you fight your fellow beings and it brings malice, enmity in your life. Just think for a while, if you were not brought up as a Hindu,

a Mohammedan, Jaina, or a Parsi, what would you do? You would grow up as a human being – without any walls around you.

There are about three hundred religions in the world – three hundred prisons. Each man is made to be locked up in one or the other prison as soon as he is born. And the priests try their best to have their control lover the child as early as possible. They call it ”religious education,” but there is nothing more irreligious than this. The child is caught young, before his is seven, because after that it would be difficult each day to exercise control over the child. If the child were to gain even a little bit of understanding, he will begin to raise questions. And the pundits have absolutely no answers to the childs questions.

The pundit can satisfy only the idiots. The less intelligent a person is, the more quickly he is satisfied by the pundit. He asks a question, and the answer is given to him. You ask a pundit, ”Who created the world?” He answers, ”God created the world.” You come home happy and satisfied without asking him, ”Who created God?” The pundit would have been annoyed had you asked this second question because even he doesn't know the answer to it. The answer is not given in the book. And it is a bothersome question – who created God? You can go on and on asking questions on the same line endlessly no matter what the answer may be.

If you look at it closely, you'll find that your first question was not answered at all – the pundit merely satisfied your curiosity. Seeing you are not so intelligent. Children are innocent. Their faculties of reasoning and thinking are not developed as yet. They are not in a position to ask questions. Whatever garbage you may dump into their brains, they will accept it. Children are open to everything, because they feel whatever is given to them must be right. A child can't raise many questions. In order to raise a question one requires some degree of maturity. That's why all religions grab the children and virtually strangle their spirits.

This strangling looks very beautiful, very ornamental. One has the Bible hanging in his neck, another his samayasar, while someone has the Koran in his neck, and someone else has the Geeta around his neck. These ties are so endearing that it requires a tremendous courage for one to get rid of them. And whenever you will try to drop them, one danger will come facing you: doing away with these books would mean you know nothing, only the books contain all the knowledge. Hence you become anxious to guard these scriptures with your life. This is the only way you can hide your ignorance.

It would be a very simple matter if one could do away with his ignorance just by hiding it. The fact is, ignorance grows more when you hide it. It is like hiding a wound. But hiding a wound won't cure it; instead, it will grow inside deeper and deeper. And the pus will spread throughout within the body.

Shiva says: KNOWLEDGE IS BONDAGE.

Any knowledge – whether learned from somebody or borrowed from somewhere – the knowledge is the cause of bondage. Hence, drop all that which you have acquired from others. Go in search of that which you have received from no one. Set out in search of the face that is authentically yours. There is a spring of consciousness hidden within you, which no one has given to you. It is your very own nature, your own treasure, your very soul.

The third sutra is: YONIVARGAHA KALASHARIRAM

Yoni means the nature. That's why we call the woman, or the female element, prakriti or nature. The woman gives birth to the body, she represents prakriti. And kala means the will to do. There is only one art, and that is: the art of entering this world. And this comes through the will to do, to be a doer.

Your body is made of two things: your will to do, your ego, and the physical form you have received from the prakriti, the nature. If the will to do is present within you, then the nature will go on providing you with an appropriate body. This is how you have been born again and again. Sometimes you were an animal, sometimes a bird, a tree some other time, and sometimes a man. Whatsoever you wished to achieve, it has happened. Your desire to achieve becomes the actuality; thoughts become real things. So beware when you desire, because all desires are fulfilled – sooner or later.

If you are of the habit of watching the birds fly in the sky and wonder, "How free the birds are, I wish I were a bird." it will not be long before you become a bird. You see dogs mating, and if that moment a thought arises in you, "What freedom! What happiness!" – soon you will become a dog. Whatever desire you keep within you, it becomes a seed.

The nature only gives birth to the body. You are the artist, you are your own creator. So the meaning of kala is: you have fashioned your own body. No one else gives you the body – it is your very desire that gives it a form.

Has it ever occurred to you that the last thought before your falling asleep at night becomes the first thought on waking up in the morning? All night long, while you remain asleep, the thought stays within you in a seed form. And so, that which is the last thing at night becomes first in the morning. At the moment of your death all your desires will come together and become a seed. That very seed will consequently be the new life in the womb. You start fresh from where you left off.

Whatsoever you are is of your own making. Don't blame others. As a matter of fact, there is no one whom you can blame. Basically it is the cumulative effect of your own actions. Whatsoever you are – beautiful or ugly, happy or unhappy, man or a woman – it is all a result of your actions. You are the architect of your life. Don't blame on your stars – you'll be simply fooling yourself. This way you are dumping the responsibility on to someone else.

No need to say God has sent you – don't dump the responsibility on God. That's just a strategy to avoid your own responsibility. You alone are the cause for being imprisoned in this body. One who understands perfectly that he himself is responsible for being in this world, a transformation takes place in his life.

Shiva is saying: the body is a product of nature and your will to do. The nature is merely the source, the womb. Your ego functions like a seed in it. Your will to do this or that, to achieve this or that, to become this or that – acts like a seed. And the moment the art of your doing meets the womb of nature, a body is formed.

Therefore, buddhas say: "Give up all desires, only then will you be liberated.: If you desired for heaven, you will become an angel, but that won't be liberation either. Because as long as desires persist, there can never be any liberation. All desires lead to the formation of bodies.

So as long as you have not attained to desirelessness, as long as you have not renounced desires completely, you will go on taking births and wandering in different bodies. And howsoever different the forms of the body may be, their basic condition is always the same. The ills of the body are the same, regardless whether it's a bird's body or man's. There is no difference in their miseries, because the fundamental misery is only one: the soul becoming confined in the body, the entering of the soul into the prison of body. A prison after all is a prison; it makes no difference whether its walls are circular or angular no matter what you think.

A friend of mine is a drawing teacher. He was sentenced to prison for three years. When he came out I asked him how his stay was. He said, "Everything was alright except the corners of my prison cell were not set at right angles to each other." This was the brain of a drawing teacher – he was upset the corners were not made at ninety degrees. This is what troubled him all three years – staying in the same prison cell day in and day out staring at the corners which were not at right angles.

Now what difference does it make if the corners were set at ninety degrees or not? A prison is a prison. Whether the body is that of a bird or a man does not make much difference. The fact is, you are imprisoned – and that's the misery. You got tied down – and that's the pain. Desire binds. The desire is the rope that binds us. And remember, except you, no one else is responsible for it.

The fourth sutra is: UDYAMA IS BHAIRAVA. Udyama means the spiritual endeavor by which you attempt to come out of this prison. And this endeavor is bhairava. Bhairava is a technical term: 'bha' means that which sustains, that which maintains, 'ra' means that which destroys, 'va' means that which expands. So bhairava means: the Brahman – that which is upholding and sustaining us, that in which we are born and in which we will eventually disappear; that which constitutes all the expanse and will ultimately come to shrink; that which is the origin of all and in which all will come to an end. The total existence is bhairava.

Shiva says: UDYAMA IS BHAIRAVA. The day you begin your spiritual endeavor, you start becoming bhairava – you start becoming one with God. Your first rays of endeavor, and the journey toward the sun has begun; the first thought of liberation, and the destination is not far off. Because the first step is almost half of the journey.

Spiritual endeavor is bhairava. It will take time for you to attain it; it will be a while before you reach the destination. But as soon have begun the effort and the seed is sown: "Let me get out of this prison and be free of this body, let me be relieved of all desires, let me not sow more seeds and increase my involvement in this world, let me not desire more births." As soon as the feeling intensifies within you to overcome your unconsciousness, you start becoming bhairava, you start becoming one with Brahman. In fact, you are already one with Brahman, just that you need to remember it. Basically you are that – a stream of the same ocean, a ray of the same sun, a tiny part of the same vast sky. Once you begin to remember this and the prison walls begin to crumble, you become one with the infinite space.

UDYAMA IS BHAIRAVA – a very intense effort is needed. The sleep is very deep. Only a consistent hammering will be able to break it. So being lazy won't help. You may destroy the sleep today but create a new one tomorrow. This way you will continue to wander from one birth to another. It would not do any good if you broke the sleep on the one hand and went on creating anew on the other – all your effort will be in vain. So udyama means you must make an all out effort.

People come to me and say, "We make the effort but nothing happens." I look at their faces and I find that either they make no effort at all, or even when they do it is always so lukewarm. Their efforts are spiritless, that's why nothing happens. But they come to me complaining as if they are doing a favor to God and yet nothing is happening. They feel something is wrong, otherwise why is it that things happen to others, but never to them? They think it to be unjust.

No injustice ever takes place in this universe. Whatsoever happens is always just and right, for there is no human being sitting up there doing either justice or injustice. The universe is ruled by certain laws, and these laws constitute religion. If you walked around scatterbrained, you are bound to fall and break your leg. In that case you won't be able to blame the law of gravitation for it in the courts. Gravity is neither interested in causing you to fall, nor in guarding you from falling. When you walk straight it guards you from falling; when you don't, it brings you down. As such, the gravity has no vested interest of its own either to see you fall down, or saving you from falling.

The universal law is always neutral. Religion is the name of this neutral law. The Hindus call it 'rita' – its the supreme law. It shows no favoritism – making someone fall, lifting someone else – nothing of the sort. When you walk correctly, the law protects you; when you wish to fall down, it helps you to fall. The law works under all conditions. The law is always available. You can use it whichever you like, its doors are always open to you. If you want to hit your head against the closed door, it will not stop you. If you want to walk through the door, it will let you. The law is absolutely neutral.

So UDYAMA IS BHAIRAVA. A great effort is needed. udyama means: an intense effort. An effort that would require you to involve your total being is udyama. Then your becoming a bhairava will not take too long.

The fifth sutra is: ONE WHO APPLIES HIS TOTAL ENERGY, FOR HIM THE WORLD EXISTS NO MORE.

And if you have made the right effort, if you have harnessed your total energy into searching the truth, God, or soul, then the circuit of your energy becomes complete. Right now it is not a whole – it is torn and split.

Scientists say that even the most intelligent person in the world does not use more than fifteen percent of his intellect – the remaining eighty-five percent goes to rot. If this is true about the genius, imagine what it must be in case of a fool. Perhaps he never uses his intellect at all. Even our physical energy we don't use more than five percent. So if you live an apathetic, spiritless life, whose fault is it? You never live totally. You are afraid lest the flame of life might engulf you. Hence you live apprehensively, scared, so the energy circuit within you never completes.

Your life is like a car which moves sometimes with jerks caused by the dirt in its gas as if it has hiccups. That's ordinarily how you live – piecemeal. Your energy moves in fits and starts, bit by bit, it never comes to an integrated whole. It's a matter of utilizing your full energy – in anything. For example, if you are a painter and if you were to devote your entire energy into painting a picture – without holding back even a bit – you will attain liberation there and then. Such application of total energy is udyama. As soon as the circuit is complete, you become bhairava. If you are a sculptor and have poured into your sculpture all that you have – so much so that only the sculpture remains, you disappear – the energy circuit completes. So when you use your total energy in any work – it becomes meditation. Then the bhairava is close, the temple is nearby.

The fifth sutra says: ONE WHO APPLIES HIS TOTAL ENERGY, FOR HIM THE WORLD EXISTS NO MORE.

Whenever the circuit of your energy becomes complete, total – not broken in pieces, but whole – that very moment the world ceases to exist for you. You become God. You become bhairava. You become free. Then there is no bondage for you – no body, no samsara.

So remember, you have to apply your total energy. If you will bring into effect your whole energy in this meditation camp, if you did not meditate superficially – but instead gave all your energy – you will experience that very moment suddenly that the world has disappeared and you are facing God.

Transformation takes place the moment you apply your energy totally. Then you stand with your back to the world and face toward God. One flash of this experience and you are never the same again. Just a glimpse of it is enough to set your life on that journey.

So remember, drown yourself here completely – only then will something happen. If you will hold back even a little, all your effort will prove useless. Until the effort has become udyama – a total effort – you will not be able to attain to bhairava.

Enough for today.

CHAPTER 2

The Stars Mirrored

12 September 1974 am in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

[Note: This is a translation from the Hindi series Shiva Sutra, which is in the process of being edited. It is for research only.]

JAGRATSWAPUASUSHUPTBHEDE TURYABHOG SAMVITA

GYANAM JAGRAT

SWAPNOVIKALPAHA

AVIVEKO MAYASOWSHUPTAM.

TRITIYA BHOKTA VIRESHAHA.

KNOWING WAKEFULNESS, DREAMING AND DEEP SLEEP-EACH SEPARATELY – THE FOURTH STATE IS ATTAINED.

CONSTANCY OF KNOWLEDGE IS THE WAKING STATE.

CHOOSING IS THE DREAMING STATE.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS AND LACK OF SELF-AWARENESS CREATE THE ILLUSION OF DEEP SLEEP.

HE WHO IS AWARE OF ALL THREE IS THE SUPREME HERO.

KNOWING WAKEFULNESS, DREAMING AND DEEP SLEEP – EACH SEPARATELY – -TURIYA, THE FOURTH STATE, IS ATTAINED.

Turiya, the fourth state, means supreme knowledge. The fourth state means that there is no darkness of any sort within. All the inner landscape is illuminated; no area of darkness remains. Nothing of ourselves, neither within nor without, is unknown to us. The light of wakefulness makes everything visible.

As we are now, we are either awake or dreaming or in deep sleep. We have no idea of the fourth state. When we are awake we see the outside world, but we ourselves are in darkness. Objects become visible, but we have no knowledge of our inner self. The world lights up but not the soul. This is the state of semi-wakefulness, half-wakefulness.

What we call waking up in the morning, is just this half-wakeful state. This is not really worthwhile because it is the useless which is visible; the useful remains hidden. We see the rubbish, but the diamonds remain in obscurity. We cannot see our own selves though the whole world is made visible to us.

The second state is the state of dreaming. In dreaming we lose not only ourselves, but also the outside world. All we see are images floating in the mind, reflections of the external world. We see these reflections as we would see the moon or the stars mirrored in a lake. On waking we see things distinctly; in dreams we see them as reflections.

The third state that we are acquainted with is deep sleep. In this state, first the external world, the world of objects is lost to us; then the reflections fade, dreams disappear and we are left in total darkness. This is known as deep sleep. In this state we have no knowledge either of the outer world or of the inner world.

In the waking state we have knowledge of the external world. In the dream state, which is between wakefulness and deep sleep, we have knowledge only of the reflections formed in the wakeful state, but no knowledge of the objects without.

The fourth state is turiya. This state is the goal we are striving to reach. All meditations, all yoga, are endeavors to reach the fourth state. The fourth state means knowledge of both, what is within and what is without - complete wakefulness; there is no darkness within or without. This is what is known as buddhahood. Mahavir called this enlightened state, jinatva. The light spreads everywhere, inside and out; and in this light we know objects and also know our self. These sutras show how the fourth state is attained.

The first sutra says:

KNOWING WAKEFULNESS, DREAMING AND DEEP SLEEP –

EACH SEPARATELY – TURIYA, THE FOURTH STATE IS

ATTAINED.

We know, but we do not know that we know, each of these states. When we dream, we do not know we are dreaming; we are completely identified with the dream. It is only on awakening in the morning that we realize we were dreaming; but by the time we know it, the state has long since gone. While we are in this state we are not aware of it, apart from it, because we are identified with it. In the dream world we become the dream. By the time we realize it was a dream we have identified ourselves with the waking state.

You say: I am awake. You have forgotten that again, that very night, you will drop your identity with this state and become one with your dreams. You become one with whatever appears before your eyes - but the truth is that you are apart from all of them.

It is just as when the rains came, you feel that you are the monsoon; when summer comes you feel that you are summer, when winter comes that you are winter. The three seasons are all around you; you are totally separate from them. In childhood you thought you were a child; in youth you think you are young; when old age comes you will think you have become old. But you are beyond all three. If this were not so, how could the child become the youth? There is something within you that could leave childhood behind and continue into youth. That something is separate, apart, from childhood and youth.

You are lost when you dream. On waking you know the dream was false. There is some element of consciousness within you that is the voyager; waking, dreaming and deep sleep are just stoppages along the way. As soon as you become aware of the fact that you stand alone and apart from them, the fourth state is born within you. This separateness, this apartness, is the fourth state.

Mahavir has coined a beautiful word for this state. He calls it the science of discrimination. He says that the whole science consists of making careful discriminations of spiritual secrets. And this is also what the Shiv-Sutra aims at: you should realize that each of these states is separate. As soon as this realization is reached you will also know your separate identity. You will have learned the art of making distinctions. Right now your mental state is such that you identify with whatever appears before you.

Someone abuses you: you become angry. In that moment you are one with the anger. You completely forget that a moment ago there was no anger, but you existed; and in a moment the anger will pass away, but you will remain. So anger is the smoke that momentarily engulfs you; it is not your nature.

In anxiety, the cloud of apprehension pervades; the sun is hidden behind it; you forget completely that you are separate. In happiness you dance with joy; when sorrow comes, you cry. Whatever happens, you are one with it. You are not aware of your separateness. You must start learning how to separate it by and by. At every stage you have to disidentify yourself. While eating you must know that it is the body that feels the hunger, not you. You are only the knower. Consciousness feels no hunger. When you feel hot and you perspire, be sure you realize that it is the body which perspires. This does not mean that you should sit in the sun and get drenched with sweat. Let the body be comfortable, but maintain your awareness that the comfort is being provided for the body, you are only the knower.

Little by little, stand apart from everything that happens around you. It is very difficult; the gap is small and hard to see, the boundaries not clear at all. For millions of lives you have learned to

identify. You never learned disidentification. You learned to identify with every situation. You have totally forgotten the art of disidentification, and this is your unconsciousness – that you have learned to identify.

One morning found Mulla Nasruddin at the bedside of his friend who was in the hospital. The patient opened his eyes and said, "What happened, Nasruddin? I haven't the faintest idea."

"Last night you just had a little too much to drink," said the Mulla. "Then you stood in the window and said, you can fly. You tried to fly out of the third-story window. And this is the result – your broken bones!"

The friend was shocked. "But you were with me, Mulla. Why did you allow it to happen? What kind of a friend are you?"

"Let's not talk about that," said Nasruddin. "At the time I was convinced that you could do it. If the cord of my pyjamas had not broken I would have taken off with you. But how could I keep my pyjamas on while I was flying? That is all that held me back. You weren't the only one drunk."

The meaning of unconsciousness is to be one with whatever comes to the mind. If the drunk thinks that he can fly, he cannot discriminate. There is no ability to discriminate left within him. He becomes one with the thought.

Your life is exactly like this. Granted, you do not fly out of windows and break any bones and land in the hospital, but if you observe very, very minutely you will find that you are in the hospital with all your bones broken. Your whole life is one long illness, which gives you nothing but pain and suffering. At every step you fall. At every step you have fallen. At every step you have hurt yourself, and behind all this devastation, there is only one reason: your unconsciousness. You fail to create a distance between you and your surroundings.

Just stand back a little. Move step by step. It is a long journey, because what has been built up over millions of lives cannot be so easily destroyed. However, it can be done. Whatever you have created is false. The Hindus call it maya. Maya means: the world which you are caught in is false. This does not actually mean that the sun and the stars, the mountains and the trees are false. it only means that your identification with your perception of them is false. You live with this identification. That is your world!

How can you break this association? First, start from your waking state. Because only in the waking state is a slight ray of consciousness. How can you start with dreams? It would be very difficult. And you do not know deep sleep at all, because all consciousness is lost there. Begin with the waking state, that is where your spiritual path begins. That is the first step. The second step is the dream state, and the third is deep sleep. The day you complete all the three steps you will naturally have stepped into the fourth: turiya, the state of self-realization.

Begin with the waking state. That is the path; that's why it is called wakefulness. Otherwise it is not wakefulness. What kind of wakefulness can it be when you are lost in the objects and you have no awareness of your own self? This is wakefulness in name. But it has been called the waking state. Actually we have called the buddhas "the awakened ones."

This is, however, a waking state in the sense that there is some possibility of awakening in this state. So start with the waking state. When you are hungry eat, but always remember that it is the body that is hungry, not you. If you hurt your leg, wash and clean the wound, apply medication, but always remember that it is the body that is hurt, not you. This much remembrance – and you will find that ninety-nine percent of the pain has vanished. This slight knowledge, this little awareness removes so much of your suffering. One percent is bound to remain because the knowledge is not total. When knowledge becomes total all of the suffering disappears.

Buddha said that an awakened person is beyond suffering. You can cut off the limbs of such a person, you can throw him in the fire, you can kill him, but you cannot make him suffer, because he stands apart from all that is happening around him.

So start with the waking state. Walk on the road, but remember that you are not walking – the body is walking. You have never walked. How could you? The soul has no feet to walk on. The soul has no stomach, how can it be hungry? The soul has no desires; all desires are of the body. The soul is desireless, therefore it does not walk. It simply cannot walk. It is only your body that walks. Try to keep this awareness as long as possible. Eventually you will get a joyous experience: walking on the road with full awareness that the body is walking and not you, you will suddenly feel that you are divided into two parts. One part is walking; the other part is not walking. One part eats; the other does not.

The Upanishads say: Two birds are sitting on the same tree. The one on the upper branch is quiet. It neither moves nor cries nor flies; it neither comes nor goes, it only sits serenely. The one on the lower branch is very restless. It moves from one branch to another branch. It jumps from one fruit to another. It is very restless. Both these birds are within you. You are the tree. The bird that is serene is called the witness.

Jesus says that you sleep in one bed, but there are two of you; one is dead and the other is eternal. You are the bed. When you sleep at night, within you there are both a lifeless corpse and eternal consciousness. Differentiate between the two; maintain the distance. It means hard work.

Start with the daytime. With the first ray of consciousness as you wake up in the morning, start the experiment. After a thousand attempts, perhaps one may succeed but even if one attempt is successful you will realize that the thousands of attempts were worthwhile. If even for a moment, you came to experience that he who walks is not you but he who is unmoving is you; he who is full of desires is not you, but that he who is forever desireless is you; that that which is perishable is not you, but the fountain of eternal nectar is you; – if you become Mahavira or Buddha even for a moment or attain the state of Shiva, if this knowledge dawns on you for even a moment, you will have opened the doors of the supreme treasure. After that the journey becomes easy. After the taste, the journey is easy. All the difficulty comes before the taste!

Start with the daytime, and gradually you will succeed in carrying it through into your sleep. Gurdjieff used to teach his disciples to practice awareness during the daytime, and then he would tell them that just before going to bed they must remember: ”This is a dream.” You are still awake. There is no dream yet, but you have to keep repeating to yourself: ”Everything I see is a dream.” Touch the bed and intensify the feeling: ”Whatever I touch is a dream.” Touch one hand with the other, and experience: ”All that I touch is a dream.” You go to sleep sinking deep into this feeling. There will be a constant stream of feeling moving inside.

After a few days you will find that in the middle of a dream you will suddenly become aware that it is a dream. As soon as you remember that it is a dream, the dream breaks, because the dream works only in the absence of consciousness. Then you will be filled with bliss such as you have never known before. Your sleep will vanish, dreams will disappear, and a deep light will surround you. The dreams of an enlightened person disappear, because in sleep he also remembers that they are dreams.

Shankara's Vedanta propounds the concept that the universe is an illusion. This philosophy is an experiment of the same kind.

The sannyasin has to remember constantly that whatever is happening is a dream. While getting up in the morning, walking on the road, in the midst of the marketplace, he has to remember: "Everything is a dream." Why? Because this is the method. It is a process. If you experiment constantly for eight hours, this remembrance will penetrate so deeply that you will remember it even in the middle of the dream; you will remember that it is a dream.

At present you are unable to remember. Actually, you are doing it even now – but in the reverse order. All your waking hours you feel and understand that whatever you see is real. And that is why dreams seem real at night, because the feeling is very strong.

What can be more false than dreams? How many times on waking up have you realized their falsity, their uselessness? Yet every night you make the same mistake. Why? There must be a very deep reason behind this folly. The reason is: in your waking state you take everything to be true. If you take everything you see to be real, then how can the dreams you see at night appear to be illusory? You take them to be real.

The maya experiment is just the opposite. Whatever you see during the day, you remember that this is unreal. You forget again and again, but once again you pull yourself together. You remind yourself that everything you see is nothing but a huge drama in which you are only a spectator. You are not the actor, not the doer, but only a witness.

If you nurture this feeling, it becomes a constant flow within. Finally the dream disappears in the night, and this is a great attainment. If the dream is shattered, you are ready to take the third step. If the dream is shattered, you can take the third step of retaining consciousness in deep sleep. But right now this is difficult for you. It is not possible to do it all at once; you must proceed step by step.

When the dream breaks down, there is nothing to see. But in the daytime when the eyes are open, objects are very much visible. No matter how much you believe that it is illusory, the objects will go on existing. No matter how much Shankara says that the world is an illusion, you must use a door for exit, you cannot walk through walls. In spite of everything being an illusion, you will eat food and not pebbles. No matter how much you maintain that all is illusion, it requires your presence to pronounce these words. If you do not exist, who will utter them?

So no matter how much you strengthen the feeling that the outside world is illusion, the world of objects is going to remain. If someone hits your head with a stone, you will bleed. You may not feel sorry, you may not complain, you may say that it is maya, but the incident has occurred nevertheless.

But there is a uniqueness about dreams: they are all illusions. So an extraordinary experiment is carried out with dreams. The moment you come to know that dreams are illusory, they are lost; there is nothing to be seen. When the seen is lost, the seer comes into focus. As long as there is something to see, you look outside because the scene attracts. When the scene is no more and the screen is empty – when even the screen is not there, you are left alone. This is why people meditate with closed eyes. To call the world maya, illusion, is a method.

The world is real. It does not depend on what you think. Even if it is a dream, it is the dream of Brahman, and not yours. But there are your personal dreams which take shape at night; therefore, when you shatter your own dreams a very revolutionary thing happens: the space then becomes empty. There is nothing to see. The play is over and it is time to go home. Now what will you do sitting there? This is the moment that the eyes suddenly turn in, for there is nothing left outside. So the energy that flowed out to the objects now turns inwards to the observer.

Meditation is energy turning towards oneself. And the moment energy turns inwards you can be conscious, even in sushupti, deep sleep. Because in deep sleep you exist but the world does not exist, the dreams do not exist. Your attention was entangled in observing the world and your dreams; you remained unconscious in deep sleep. Now this entanglement is uprooted. You have no connection with the seen and you can be without it. When the lamp burns, it does not care whether anyone passes through its light or not. Now your consciousness will turn inwards, and you will be awake even in deep sleep.

The experiment you have to make after you wake up from the dream is that do not to open your eyes when the dream disappears, because once the eyes open, the world of objects is present all around. The 'seen' comes back. So when you wake up from the dream, do not open your eyes. Keep looking intently at the void within. The dream has vanished. There is nothing now. So go on observing the void intently. In doing this you will find that your consciousness has turned inwards. Then you are awake even in deep sleep. This is what Krishna means when he says in the Gita that the yogi is awake even when everyone else sleeps. What is sleep to others is no sleep to the yogi. He is awake even in deep sleep.

Thus, when you see each of these states separately you invariably step into the fourth state. 'Turiya' means "the fourth" – simply that! There is no need to give it any other meaning. It is enough just to refer to it as 'the fourth', because all meanings bind; all words are bondages. Only a gesture is enough. Because it is boundless and infinite.

As soon as you step outside the three states, you become God. Because you have entered the three, you are constricted. It is just as if from an open space you enter a tunnel and the tunnel gets narrower and narrower. By the time you reach the five senses it has become very narrow. Now you have to go backwards. As you go further and further back, your space increases. The day you find yourself outside the three, you are the great expanse of space. Then you are God Himself.

Take another example: You look at the sky through a telescope. Through a very small opening you concentrate your attention on something outside, and you become one with it. When you take your eyes off the telescope, you realize that you are not the telescope. Similarly, you are not the eyes, but you have concentrated on the eyes in millions of lives. You are not the ears, but you have been listening through them for infinite lives. You are not the hands, but you are so used to touching with

your hands. You are tied to your telescope! You are like the scientist who carries his telescope everywhere and refuses to see without it. He is moving everywhere with his telescope fixed in his eyes. You keep telling him, "Throw away this telescope. You are not that!" But he can only see through a telescope and does not know that he can see otherwise. This is the state of forgetfulness. The method of destroying this forgetfulness is: start from the waking state and let it culminate in the deep sleep state.

THE WAKING STATE, THE DREAM STATE AND DEEP SLEEP – KNOWING THESE THREE STATES SEPARATELY, THE FOURTH STATE IS KNOWN.

Start with the first and proceed gradually. The day you realize that you are fully conscious in deep sleep, then there is no difference between you and Mahavir or Buddha or Shiva.

Right now you are doing just the opposite: even in your waking state you are not fully awake. How will you be awake in deep sleep? You are under the illusion that you are awake, but you are awake in name only. You manage to carry out your day-to-day activities. You ride your bicycle or drive your car and think that you are awake.

But have you ever realized, how automatic your actions have become? The cyclist does not even have to think: now I have to turn left, now right. He can be completely wrapped up in his thoughts and the bicycle wheel turns automatically, out of sheer habit. The bicycle turns left, then turns right and he arrives home! There is no need to be aware while you ride the bicycle. Everything has become mechanical – a habit. You are bound to reach home. The automobile driver goes on driving the car. He does not have to pay any attention to the car.

Our lives are ordinarily very routine. We go on treading the beaten path. We are no better than oxen at the oil mill. We walk the same track day in and day out. At the most, the tracks may be a little wider for one, and a little narrower for others; somewhat ugly for one and a little beautiful for the other, but they are tracks all the same. Your life circles around like the bullock of an oil mill. You get up in the morning and start on the track; by night you complete the circle. Again you get up in the morning... and the same rut! So regular is the repetition that you no longer have any need to be conscious about your activities. Everything happens as if in a trance. At the set moment you feel hungry; at the fixed time you feel sleepy, you go shopping at the appointed time. In this way you are spending your life on a fixed course without any consciousness.

When will you awaken? When will you shake yourself out of this? When will you give up the beaten track? When will you declare, "I am not going to follow this monotonous circle?" The day you consider wiggling out of it, you will have started the journey towards God.

Going to temples does not make you religious. That is also a part of the same rut. You go there because you have always gone; because your parents have always gone, and their parents have been visiting the same temple, too! You read the scriptures simply because your forefathers used to read them. It is the same rut again. Have you ever gone to a temple in full awareness? If you do, there is no further need of going to a temple; because wherever there is awareness, you will find His temple.

Consciousness is the temple. We see the Christian going regularly to church, the Sikh to the

gurudwara, the Hindu to the temple. They are all tied by their tethers. No one can break this slumbering state of yours except yourself.

It is important for you to know that your waking state is just a stupor, whereas the deep sleep of a yogi is a fully awakened state. You are a yogi – upside down! The day you become the reverse of what you are today, the quintessence of life will come within your grasp. Know the three stages separately, and the knower becomes separated from the three stages; you are sheer knowledge, nothing else. You are sheer consciousness – but only when you break away from the three states.

I was reading about a Sufi fakir, Junnaid. When a person abused him he would say, "I shall answer you tomorrow." Then the next day he would say, "There is no need for any answer."

The man who had abused him would ask, "I abused you yesterday, why did you not reply yesterday? You are very strange." No one waits for a second when you abuse him. He retorts immediately."

Junnaid answered, "My master taught me not to hurry in anything. Take some time. I must wait a little when someone insults me. If I were to give an immediate answer, the heat of the happening would catch hold of me; the smoke would blind my eyes. So I have to wait and let the cloud pass. When twenty-four hours have passed and the skies are clear again, then I can give my reply in full consciousness. Now I realize how tricky my guru was. Because I have never been able to answer my opponents since then."

Is it possible to hold on to anger for twenty-four hours? It is impossible to maintain it for twenty-four minutes or even twenty-four seconds. The truth is that, even if you hold back and watch for a single second, the anger vanishes.

But you do not wait even for a moment. A person abuses you – as if someone switches the button, and the fan starts whirring. There is not the slightest gap between the two, no distance! And you pride yourself in your alertness! You have no control of yourself. How can an unconscious person be master of himself? Anybody can push the button and goad him into action. Someone comes and flatters you, and you are filled with joy; you are happy. Someone insults you, you are full of tears. Are you your own master or anyone can manipulate you? You are the slave of slaves. And those who are manipulating are not their own masters either! And the irony is that everyone is expert in manipulating others and none of them is conscious. What greater insult can there be for your soul than the fact that anyone can affect you?

Mulla Nasruddin worked in an office. Everyone was dissatisfied with his work. Most of the time he was either dozing or was fast asleep. Everybody in the office was fed up with him. People started rebuking him. The boss also called him in and scolded him for his behavior. Finally, due to the trouble and humiliation, the Mulla thought it best to resign, because it was easier to resign than to change his ways.

Many people who run away from the world and embrace sannyas are actually resigning from the world for this very reason. Transformation is difficult, resigning is easier. Everyone in the office was relieved to hear the news. However, since he had been there for a long while and he was leaving of his own free will, they decided to give him a farewell party. They were so troubled by him and they could not get rid of him. He had become a burden. So they were really happy. They made elaborate

arrangements, complete with sweets and refreshments. Each colleague spoke a few words of praise for the Mulla. After all, he was leaving. The Mulla was so overcome with emotion that tears came to his eyes. When it was his turn to speak he got up and said, ”Friends, I am indeed touched by your love and affection. I did not know how much you cared for me. I cannot leave you now. I withdraw my resignation.”

We are being manipulated. Often, all around, the whole world is manipulating each and every person. And the climate goes on changing. There are thousands of kinds of people. As a result there is a deep confusion inside you. This is bound to be, because you are not motivated by one person. Only he who is awakened within is motivated by one. There is a clarity in the life of such a man, a transparency. His life is clear and purposeful; it has a direction.

There is no direction in your life. There cannot be. You behave as if you are in a crowd that pushes you any way it pleases. Such a person has to keep moving. He cannot stand still for a moment. Someone pushes him to the right, he goes right; someone pushes him to the left, he goes left. Your whole life passes in this way, driven by the crowd. Ponder over this and you will come to understand. Somebody says something; you do accordingly. Then somebody else says something else and you do it. And then you are filled with a number of contradictions.

One of my acquaintances fell from a rickshaw and hurt himself. Then he was released from the hospital. Six months passed. When he was completely well, he still used the crutches. When I asked him whether he still was experiencing difficulty in walking, he said, ”No.”

”Then why don’t you discard the crutches?” I inquired.

”You see,” he said, ”the doctor says I no longer need them, but my lawyers says I do, at least until the case has been decided in court. So you see my dilemma!”

Your lawyer says one thing and your doctor says something else; the wife says one thing and the husband says something else; the son says one thing, the father another – all around there are millions of masters who drive you on. There are infinite masters, but you stand alone! You listen to one and all. You listen to anybody who suppresses you. And your personality fractures into thousands of pieces. Until you begin to listen to the inner voice, you cannot be an integrated whole.

I call him a sannyasin who has begun to heed the inner voice and is ready to stake everything on it. But you cannot hear the inner voice as long as you are unconscious. Until then whatever you might take to be the inner voice will not be the inner voice; it will be a voice from outside. The unconscious man doesn’t know anything of this voice. Otherwise all politicians sitting in Delhi would have talked of this inner voice – Indira, Giri: The voice of the soul! How can a sleeping person know it? How can you know which is the inner voice? The voice that satisfies you is the voice of your desires, but you call it your inner voice.

Only the awakened person has an inner voice. Once this voice comes within range of your hearing, all that is sinful, all that is impure and dirty, all the chaos and confusion within you, will cease at once. You will then realize what a collection of personalities you have been. You were not one but many, like a crowd in a marketplace or a stock exchange. You are the stock exchange of Delhi – all kind of nonsense is going on! One cannot understand anything. A stranger won’t be able to figure

out what you are. There are all kinds of voices. And amidst all that din your own voice is completely lost.

The fourth state means recognizing the soul. Only when you break away from the first three states can you recognize the soul. Start with very small experiments. When anger arises, stop! What is the hurry? When you feel hatred, wait! There should be some interval. Reply only when you are fully conscious – not until that. You will find that all that is sinful in life has fallen away from you; all that is wrong is banished forever. You will suddenly discover, there is no need to respond to anger. Perhaps you might feel like thanking the man who insults you. Because he has obliged you. He gave you an opportunity to awaken.

Kabir has said stay near the one who is critical of you. Look after him and serve him who is abusing you because it is he who gives you the opportunity to awaken.

All the occasions that drown you in unconsciousness can be turned into stepping stones to awareness if you wish so. Life is like a huge boulder lying in the middle of the road. Those who are foolish, see the stone as a barrier and turn back. For them the road is closed. Those who are clever, climb the stone and use it as a step. And the moment they make it a stepping stone greater heights are available to them.

A seeker should keep in mind only one factor, and that is: to utilize each moment to awaken awareness. Then be it hunger or anger or lust or greed, every state can be utilized towards awareness. If you go on accumulating awareness bit by bit, eventually you will have a good store of fuel within you. In the flame this fuel creates, you will find that you are neither awake nor dreaming nor in deep slumber; you are beyond and apart from all three.

CONSTANCY OF KNOWLEDGE IS THE WAKING STATE. TO BE AWARE OF EVERYTHING AROUND YOU IS THE WAKING STATE.

CHOOSING IS THE DREAMING STATE. The web of thoughts in the mind, the expanse of imagination and phantasy is the dreaming state.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS AND LACK OF SELF-AWARENESS

CREATE THE ILLUSION OF DEEP SLEEP.

These are the three states. When we pass through the first state, we are one with it. When we reach into the second, we are one with that. When we reach in the third state, we become one with that. Therefore we cannot see these three separately. To see, we need a little distance, a perspective. There must be some space between you and the object. If you stand right against a mirror, you will not be able to see your reflection. A little distance is necessary. But you are so close to the waking, dreaming and sleeping states, that you become in fact one with them. You are colored by them. This habit of becoming one with others is so ingrained that we are not even conscious of it – and this habit is being exploited.

If you are a Hindu and you are told to set fire to a mosque, you will think a thousand times about whether it is right to do so, because the mosque is dedicated to the same God to whom your temple

is dedicated. Perhaps the mode of dedication is different, the method is different, the way is different – but the destination is the same. And yet we find a Hindu mob setting fire to a mosque. If you are one of them you do not wait to think. You become one with the crowd and help burn the mosque. If you are questioned later, you yourself wonder how you could have brought yourself to do this. Alone you never would do it but in a crowd you will. Why? Because in a crowd you tend to lose yourself; it is an old habit.

No Muslim is as bad and ruthless alone as he is when he is in a mob. No Hindu alone is as bad and evil as he is in a mob. No one man has ever committed such sins as have been committed by crowds. Why? Because a crowd colors you. If the mob is angry you feel anger arising within you. If the crowd is weeping and wailing you begin to weep and scream also. If the crowd is happy you forget all your woes and become happy with the crowd.

Now observe: you go to a household where someone has died. Many people are crying. Suddenly you find that you also feel like crying. Perhaps you might think you are a very compassionate person, filled with love and pity, or perhaps you might think the tears come because of sympathy. You are wrong. Reflect: you were at home when the news came that this man had died. When you were alone you felt no love or compassion for the bereaved family. It is more likely you were annoyed: so he has died – what's so special about that? Life and death happen all the time. But now I'll be expected to go to his house and show my sympathy, as if I had nothing better to do! And why did he have to die today, when I'm so busy?

That is the way you would have thought. But when you get to his house and find yourself amongst the mourning crowd, you find that your feelings have changed. You too will feel as the crowd does. But this feeling is not worth a penny; in fact, it is dangerous. It is the crowd that is affecting you. Beware of this feeling of sympathy that does not come from your heart.

You must have seen that people who are normally unhappy and weighed down with sorrow dance with joy at holi, the festival of colors. They dance, they sing, they throw colored powders at each other. What happens to these people who don't know what joy is in their ordinary lives? These same people normally move about like zombies, and they have started dancing. What has come over them? Once again, it is the color of the crowd.

The seeker should beware of the crowd. Search for your own voice, your own tune. The crowd has always been pushing and prodding you along. It can mould you into whatever form it wishes to. Why does this happen? It happens because you do not feel your separateness, and whenever you get the opportunity you promptly lose your separateness. You are forever ready to lose it. If sleep comes you lose yourself in sleep; if awake you lose yourself in wakefulness; if dreams come you lose yourself in dreams. If those around you are happy you are happy; if they are sad you are sad. Do you exist as a separate entity or are you just a center that gets lost in its surroundings? Do you have an existence, a center? Truly you have – and that is the soul.

Awaken your being! Save yourself from drowning! This is why all religions are against alcohol – which in itself is not bad – for the simple reason that it is a device of losing oneself. All religions are in favor of awakening. He who is drinking alcohol is drowning. Religion is against all those things that drag you into oblivion, that make you unconscious. As it is, you are almost unconscious. You have a little ray of awakening, and you are eager to lose even that on the slightest pretext.

It is very surprising that you become happy whenever you lose your consciousness. It is impossible to find a greater fool than you. You lose your consciousness and you say, "It was lovely, it was sheer joy!" Why? Because your small ray of consciousness helps you see the problems of life. It makes you conscious of life and fills you with anxieties. It makes you aware of the fact that you are not aware. This small ray of consciousness reveals the darkness within you, which is already thick enough. You want to smother this ray so that you are not reminded of the darkness. So you take to alcohol or drugs or you join politics or some other activity of the crowd – you lose yourself anywhere, in anything, in order to forget yourself.

In the West, psychologists advise people to forget themselves if they wish to remain healthy. In the East, the religious teachers tell you that you can be healthy only if you can awaken yourself. These are two contrary concepts, but both are meaningful. The Western psychologist accepts you as you are; then under these circumstances he tries to help you to live as best you can. So he is right when he says: "Forget yourself. To be more conscious is dangerous because you will be filled with anxiety because you will start seeing things as they are. And nothing in life is as it should be; everything is in confusion and chaos. So the best thing is to shut the eyes and forget about it. What is the need to look at all the problems?

But the Eastern master does not accept you as you are. He says: "You are ill, you are diseased, you are confused and bewildered. Even if your anxieties increase and you are more restless, it does not matter; this is the way to transformation, revolution.

It is just like this: a man suffers from cancer and there is no cure for him, so he is given morphine to help him forget the pain. But the Eastern teachers say that morphine cannot transform life. Awaken the person – then only is transformation possible. Man as he is, is in neither the initial nor the ultimate stage of his journey. He has not even started his journey; he is standing outside the gate. He has not entered yet. There is the possibility of supreme bliss, but not in the state in which are you now – sleepy, drowsy.

Understand the difference between happiness and bliss. Happiness is the state in which the faint ray of consciousness awakened within you, is also put to sleep. Then you are not conscious of any pain. Ananda, bliss, is the state in which the slight ray of your consciousness becomes the vast sun, and darkness is banished completely. Happiness is negative – insensitivity to pain. You have a headache; you take an aspirin. It gives you happiness, not bliss. This tablet helps you forget the headache; it makes you insensitive to the pain in your head.

You are ill; you are distressed; life is filled with problems. You take to drink – and everything seems to become alright. A troubled man's steps lead to the tavern; when he returns there is a song on his lips. This way you lose your small ray of awareness and purchase so-called happiness. But this will not give you bliss. Because happiness is the non-remembrance of sorrow, and bliss is the remembrance of the soul. And this is not forgetting but total remembrance. Kabir calls it surati, which is constant, continuous remembering.

This sutra will lead you towards total remembrance. So beware! Keep away from all that makes you drunk or insensitive or unconscious. There are so many easy ways of becoming unconscious, and we are so thoroughly possessed by them, that we are not even aware of them.

One man is mad after eating; he keeps on eating. It may not have occurred to you, but he is making the same use of food as another makes of alcohol. Excess food brings on sleep. The more you eat, the deeper you sleep. The day you fast, you cannot sleep well. Food brings on drowsiness. So a man who indulges in eating all day long, is seeking forgetfulness through food.

One man's obsession is ambition. He will not rest until he has amassed millions of rupees. Till then he is like a madman. Day and night, may it be dawn or dusk, it does not matter, there is only one calculation in his mind – ten million! He is completely dedicated to his calculation. He is not bothered by anything else. His eyes are focused on the millions. Till the day he reaches his target, he will be gripped by anxiety. Then he will discover that it was all in vain. He has attained his millions. What next?

Three men were locked in the same cell in a lunatic asylum. They had been friends previously and all became insane at about the same time. It was quite possible that they were affected by one another's company. A psychologist came to study them. He inquired from the doctor in charge what was the trouble with the first one. He was told that this man was trying to undo a knot in a rope. He was unsuccessful, and he lost his head.

"What about the second?"

"He succeeded in untying the knot, and that is how he went mad."

"And the third?" the psychologist asked.

"He is the one who tied the knot."

One is busy tying the knot, another is untying it. Some succeed, some fail, but this is not the question, because all are mad. Why are people involved in such useless activities? To avoid encountering one's own self! These are tricks to evade one's own self. If you are not ambitious, if you do not want to fight the elections or hanker after wealth, how will you avoid meeting your own self? At some point you will have to encounter yourself. Everyone is afraid of this encounter. This fear makes you tremble.

You hear a great deal about knowing the self, the soul. But if you understand yourself, you will realize how many tricks you employ to avoid encountering the soul. The buddhas say: When the soul is known bliss reigns and nectar showers. Kabir says: Clouds of nectar thunder and nectar showers on you. But this happens at the very end. In the beginning you have to go through a lot of pain and suffering. You have to destroy every deception you have created over infinite lives, and each of them is difficult to part with, because deception had given you an illusion of comfort, a sweet drowsiness in which we lose ourselves. And now we have to shatter it! Shattering it is very painful. Without shattering it you will never be able to reach there, where clouds fill with nectar and bliss pours in torrents.

This journey towards the goal is called tapascharya, practice. Begin with the waking state. Then carry your practice into the dream state and then into deep slumber.

Choosing is dreaming. When the mind is filled with dreams that is the dream state. Do not think that you only dream at night; you also dream in the daytime. Sitting here and listening to me does not

necessarily imply that you are hearing what I say. You hear but you are also weaving dreams inside. A constant stream of dreams keeps flowing within you. Even when awake, dreams keep turning within you. Close your eyes and look inside and you will always find something going on.

It is just like we see the stars at night, and they disappear in the daytime; but it is only the light of the sun that hides them. So do not think that they disappear during the day. They are very much there. If you go down a deep well and look up you will be able to see them. You need darkness to see the stars. They are not visible because of the sunlight.

The same is the case with dreams. It is not that dreams are seen only at night, but at night the eyes are closed, darkness comes, and the dreams stand out against this darkness. In the daytime the eyes are open and all your attention is taken up by a hundred other things. But the dreams keep happening none the less. You simply do not see them. Shut your eyes and you begin daydreaming at once. There is a constant under-current which has to be broken. And only if you succeed in breaking it in the daytime, can you break it in the night; otherwise it is not possible.

All mantras are devices to break this under-current. A person is given a mantra by his guru. He tells him, ”Repeat it within while you go to the market, sell your goods. Let the sound of the chanting resound inside.” So this man attends to his daily business but lets the mantra flow within at the same time. What does this mean? The energy which previously was being used up in creating dreams is now converted into a stream of Ram-Ram. So now the chanter creates his own dream within himself. Outwardly he attends to his worldly duties; inwardly he keeps up a constant remembrance of Ram-Ram... This does not lead him to Rama, but it will help him break the dream chain. The day you find that there is an incessant flow of Ram-Ram instead of dreams, you will know that you have succeeded in breaking the chain of dreams during the daytime.

So the success of the mantra can only be gauged in dreams, never during the day. How is it possible? If you repeat the mantra throughout the day, there will not be any dream at night, the chant will flow into your sleep. It will be much more intense than you can imagine.

Swami Ram used to repeat this mantra Ram-Ram. Once he was a guest of his friend Sardar Puran Singh. They were alone in a small hut high up in the Himalayas. There was not a soul around for miles and miles. One night Sardar could not sleep well because of the heat and the mosquitoes. And what did he find? The sound of Ram-Ram hovered in the hut. He was a little frightened. Could there be someone apart from himself and his sleeping friend in the room? Swami Ram was fast asleep. The Sardar got up, took the lamp and looked everywhere inside and out. There was no one. He came back into the hut, and to his surprise he realized that the sound was louder in the room than outside. He raised the lamp and held it over Swami Ram’s face: Is he awake and chanting the mantra? He was fast asleep. In fact he was snoring. And, wonder of wonders, the sound became louder as he approached the swami. He brought his ear closer to Swami Ram and found that each pore in his body was vibrating with the sound Ram-Ram.

This happens when remembrance becomes very intense. A great deal of energy is used up in creating dreams. You do not get them without a price. Dreams are worthless in themselves, but the price you pay is immense because you spend the entire night in dreaming. Recently, in the West there has been a lot of research on dreams. The scientists say that a normal, healthy person dreams eight dreams each night. Each dream lasts around fifteen minutes. This means that every

night, at least two hours are spent in dreaming. But this is the case in a completely healthy man who has no mental disorder. Such a healthy person is not easy to find. Generally people dream for six out of the eight hours they sleep. The constant flow of dreams eats up a large amount of your energy. It is not for free! You purchase it at the cost of your life.

The mantra centralizes this energy around Ram, Krishna, Christ, Om, or whatever you like. Any word will do. It is not necessary that it be God's name. Your own name can be equally useful.

The English poet, Tennyson, writes in his memoirs that he stumbled upon a method in his childhood. When he could not sleep at night he would repeat over and over to himself, "Tennyson, Tennyson, Tennyson..." and he would fall asleep. As he grew older, he realized that it was a wonderful device. Whenever he was restless he would repeat to himself, "Tennyson, Tennyson, Tennyson..." and his mind would regain its peace and equilibrium. So he used his own name as a mantra.

Your own name can yield the same result – but it won't, because you don't have that much faith in your name. Whether you say Ram or Rahim, it makes no difference. The question is not one of names; words make no difference. All words are the same, and all names are the name of God, including yours. When any name is thus repeated, it produces a musical note within and the dream energy dissolves in it. Mantras are instrumental for destroying dreams. Nobody has attained God only by repeating a mantra, but destroying dreams is a great step towards the attainment of God.

Mantra is a method, an instrument, a hammer to shatter dreams. And what are dreams? They too are nothing but words, and that is why a hammer of words can break them. There is no need to use an actual hammer. Dreams are unreal, so a pseudo-hammer will do the trick. A genuine medicine is dangerous for pseudo-ailment; only an imaginary medicine will help remove the false disease.

What are dreams? They are thought-waves. And what are mantras? They are willpower, which is also a form of dream. But dreams are impermanent, changing; whereas the mantra is constant and one. Gradually the dream energy is absorbed in the mantra. The night you find that there are no dreams and you hear the constant music of the mantra in your sleep, you will know that you have conquered the dream state. The illusion is now broken and truth has begun to unfold. Then you can enter the deep sleep state.

But you do just the opposite. You strengthen your thought-waves. You are seized by worthless thoughts and you co-operate with them. You are sitting alone, there is nothing to do and you start thinking of fighting the coming election. The dream begins! Nothing will please you short of reaching the president's chair. You have become a president in your dream. There are felicitations and you are enjoying them thoroughly! You never stop to think – what kind of stupidity is this! What are you doing? You are just giving energy to worthless fantasies. Your mind is filled with useless illusions of this kind.

If we examine human life in detail, we will find that ninety-nine percent of the life is lost in fruitless dreams like this. Some dream of wealth, others of power, and others of various conquests. What will you gain even if you attain them all?

There was a great President of America, Calvin Coolidge; he was a very serene person by nature. It must have been a total accident that he became president because such serene people can never

reach such a turbulent position, which can only be won after a mad race. The greater mad defeats the lesser mad and makes it to the top. How Coolidge reached there is a miracle. It is said that he was so quiet by nature that he hardly spoke at all. It is said, that there were days when he would not utter more than five or ten words!

At the end of his term his friends implored him to run for office again. Everyone was eager to have him there again. He refused. People asked, "Why? All the countrymen are in your favor." He said, "The first time was a mistake. What have I gained from it all? I will not waste another five years of my life. And there is nothing ahead of the president. I have experienced that position. There is no further to go. Had there been something, my dream would have continued."

You do not realize it, but no man is a greater failure than the one who has realized his dreams. Because at the very edge of success he finds that all he struggled for, all that he toiled so hard to reach, had nothing to offer. But the successful man hides his disappointment and defeat from others who, being equally foolish, are struggling to reach where he stands. If all the people in the world who have attained success were to be honest and declare the futility of their attainments, many of these mad races arising from their dreams would stop instantly. But the successful man cannot do that, for it would hurt his ego to declare that he had attained nothing after a life-long struggle. Instead he exaggerates the pleasures of his achievements. He whose tail is cut, arranges for others to lose theirs too; otherwise, he would be ashamed of himself that he is the only one without a tail.

Whenever the dream current begins, become awake and alert, and watch: What am I doing? All stories of Sheikh Chilli in the children's books apply to you. Your mind is Sheikh Chilli, and as long as you keep dreaming you will remain Sheikh Chilli. The meaning of Sheikh Chilli is one who dreams useless dreams and then takes them to be true. God forbid that these dreams ever come true! They will demand tremendous energy.

If your dreams are realized you will find that you have not achieved anything. Your hands are full of dust. All successes of the mundane world turn to ashes. By the time you have attained them, your life has passed by and there is no way to turn back. And you are left with no alternative but to hide your failures; that your life was not spent in vain, you have attained something. Your life was fruitful.

Thought-waves are nothing but dreams. Do not strengthen them. When the dream starts running within, shake yourself and break the dream as quickly as you can. Mantras can be useful. We shall talk in detail later how they can be tools for breaking dreams. Mantra definitely shatters dreams.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS AND LACK OF SELF-AWARENESS IS DEEP SLEEP.

In it, everything is lost. There is no discrimination, no wisdom, no awareness – either within or without. You are like a rock, in deep trance. Just think of it, how restless your life must be! It is only when you sleep deeply, do you get up in the morning and say what an enjoyable sleep you had. Just think about it: what hell your life must be that you find happiness only in the oblivion of sleep, when you are unconscious. The rest of the time you are filled with pain and suffering.

You only feel at ease after a good sleep, and sleep means nothing but unconsciousness. But you are right. For you, it is more than enough, because your life is one long tale of worries, anxieties, tensions and turmoil. You rest for a while and you feel fulfilled, but in reality there is nothing to feel fulfilled about.

Sleep means where there is nothing – neither the world within nor the world without. Everything is lost in darkness. Yes, you certainly feel rested, but of what use is that rest if the next morning you fall in the same rut? The energy you gain by the night's rest will be used in creating fresh tensions, fresh anxieties. You will rest every night and you will create new tensions every day. If only you were to realize this small fact – in unconscious slumber you get so much pleasure, because there is no tension, no anxiety there. You forget all your problems when you slip into this unconscious state. Imagine how much pleasure and joy will be attained on the day that your worries and confusions fall away and you are filled with awareness. This is what is referred to as moksha, nirvana, brahmananda.

Sleep gives you the feeling of having rested and fills you with pleasure, because all chaos and confusion subsides in it. Then, when these are actually dissolved and you remain in complete relaxation all twenty-four hours of the day – the place you sometimes reach in deep sleep – imagine what bliss you will experience. It is a state of perpetual serenity! Just think about it! Because samadhi is like deep sleep with a slight difference: there is awareness. In sleep there is no awareness; in samadhi you are fully aware. The fourth state is like deep sleep – with only one difference: in deep sleep there is darkness, while in the fourth state there is light.

Suppose you are brought to this garden in an unconscious state, on a stretcher. The rays of the sun will touch you, because they are not unconscious, because you are unconscious. The breeze will play over you, caress you because they are not unconscious, you are unconscious. The flowers will spread their fragrance. The freshness of early morning dew-drops will touch you because they are not unconscious, you are unconscious.

Everything will happen around you but you will be unaware of it; yet when you regain your consciousness you will say, "How restful the sleep was." All these factors contribute to your restfulness – the sunrays, the fragrance of the flowers, the cool breeze – you have no knowledge of them. Yet you say: What restful sleep!

Now consider the other way. Suppose you are sitting in the garden in full awareness. The morning sun sends down its cosy warmth, the flowers fill the air with breath-taking perfumes, the cool breeze creates music in the leaves of the trees as it rustles through them, the dew glitters on the petals. Amidst all of this, can you imagine the joy, the bliss....!

In deep sleep we reach exactly where Buddha, Mahavir and Shiva reach in full awareness. Even from your deep sleep you bring back the message: How blissful! Although you cannot express this happiness clearly – what it was like, how it was. You cannot define it, you cannot bring the taste with you. So after a good night's rest, you get up fresh and cheerful. You get a little glimpse of buddhahood on the faces of people who sleep very deeply, especially little children, for their minds are not yet filled with tensions. As your worries increase, your sleep decreases. Watch a little child as it is about to get up in the morning. His face bears the freshness of the Buddha. Something blissful has happened within him, though he is unaware of it.

All tensions fade in deep sleep but there is no wisdom. In samadhi – that is, in the fourth state – all tensions fade, but wisdom remains. Wisdom plus deep sleep equals samadhi.

HE WHO ENJOYS ALL THREE IS THE SUPREME HERO.

He who is the experiencer of all three states – waking, dreaming and deep sleep – and who is apart and separate from them; he who passes through them, but does not identify himself with them; he who goes beyond the three and considers himself different and apart – he is a warrior, a conqueror.

Viresha means the warrior of warriors, the conqueror, the supreme hero. Viresh is one of the names of Shiva. Mahavir also means the great warrior. We have called 'Mahavir' only those who attained samadhi. We do not call a person a conqueror just because he has scaled Everest or reached the moon, it is a courageous act but these are not the ultimate heights to be reached. We call him a Viresh, a Mahavir, who has attained the soul. What Everest can be higher than God? He who attains the ultimate is a Mahavir, a great warrior. We accept nothing less. What if you have reached the moon? It has merely opened new vistas for exploration: Mars, Jupiter, and so on and so forth. The universe is boundless!

We call him Mahavir who has reached where there is no further to go. Why do we refer to him as Mahavir? Because there is no act more courageous than the act of attaining one's own self. There is no journey that calls for such courage and fearlessness as the journey to the self. Because the path is full of difficulties that are encountered nowhere else. It requires the maximum austerity.

The journey to the self is the most difficult journey. It is like walking on the razor's edge. This is perhaps why you run away from the self and get involved in mundane things. And this is perhaps why, even though knowledge of the self attracts the mind you do not have the necessary courage. Some fear grips you.

It is very difficult. You will have to walk alone. The most difficult part of it is that in this world, everywhere you can go with others. However, there is one place where you will have to go alone. No wife, no brother, no friend, not even the guru, can go along with you. At best the guru can show the way. Buddha shows the way. That is all! You must go alone!

We are afraid to be alone. There are so many people around us, so many dreams. Some of these dreams are very pleasant, very interesting. A few outstanding people break this web of dreams and set out on the path. Of these, many turn back halfway. One in a million proceeds on the journey, for it is an arduous, difficult path. Among all of these, perhaps one person reaches. That is why such a one is called Viresh, warrior of warriors.

The fourth, that lies hidden beyond the three, and within you, is the Everest. That is where you have to reach. And the way to reach it is to be wakeful in your waking state. Right now you are in a lukewarm state. Become a burning flame of awareness so that its heat enters your very breath. Be awake in dreams so that dreams may break. Be so alert in the dreaming state that a ray of your awareness pierces the state of deep sleep. The day you enter deep sleep, with this little flame of awareness, you will have opened the doors of the state of Viresh; you will have given your first knock on the temple door.

The bliss is infinite, but you will have to cross the path in between. You must pay the price. The greater the bliss, the greater the price. There are no bargains.

Many look for bargains (compromises?). They seek short-cuts, and they find the gurus to exploit them. The guru tells them to wear this amulet and everything will come to pass, or that it is enough

just to have faith in him, or demands that they give a certain amount to charity, perform good deeds or build a temple. These are 'bargains' that lead nowhere; they merely mislead you. You must follow the path.

There are some who try even cheaper methods. They take hemp or hashish and believe they are in samadhi, that they have attained knowledge. There are thousands of sannyasins and sadhus who take drugs, like opium and hemp. The West is very much influenced by them, and they have discovered even better drugs, like l.s.d., hashish, marijuana. They also have injections that take you into samadhi. Like instant coffee, they now make instant samadhi.

If only it were so easy! If only someone had attained under the influence of drugs, then the world would have become an enlightened place. It is not that easy, but the mind hunts for cheaper ways. The mind wants to bypass the long, arduous journey and enter directly into samadhi. That cannot be, for salvation lies in the traversing of the path. The path is not a readymade path; it is also your development.

So this is the difficulty. In the outside world the journey can be shortened. The plane flies directly from London to Bombay, with no stops in-between, but the man who boards at London is the same as the man who gets down at Bombay. This man is the same as he was before. No growth has taken place in him during the flight. But this is an outward journey. In the inner journey, one cannot reach the destination without growing from what he was at the point of departure. Those who say that it is possible are simply deceiving you because it is not a journey from one place to another place, it is a journey from one state of being to another state of being. You have to grow in the process of the journey because it is in that growth that you will be cleaned, purified and transformed. It is in the agony of the process of the journey that you will grow. This pain, this agony is indispensable. If you seek short cuts you are only deceiving yourself.

There is a great search for short cuts in the West, therefore people like Mahesh Yogi make a big impact there. The reason for this is that Mahesh Yogi says, "Whatever I am saying is like a jet-speed." He gives a small mantra which the seeker must repeat for fifteen minutes daily. This is all there is to be done and you attain. There is no need to change your behavior, your lifestyle, nor is it necessary to give up anything in the outside world. This is all: relax every day for fifteen minutes and repeat the mantra. The mantra is everything.

The mantra is valuable, but it is not everything. The mantra can destroy dreams but it cannot give the truth. Destruction of dreams is part of the way to the destination of truth, but if anyone thinks that repeating the mantra is sufficient, that telling of beads is enough, he is only childish. This person is not yet worthy even to talk about the path, let alone attain the goal.

The path is difficult, but it has to be travelled. Therefore the sutra says that enormous effort is the path. Will is required to undertake such a mighty effort. You must be willing to stake your own self in the effort. Liberation can be bought only if you stake yourself totally. Nothing less will do. If you give something else, it will not do; you have not paid the full price. Only when you give completely of yourself is the price enough and you attain.

Enough for today.

CHAPTER 3

Maxims of Yoga: A sense of wonder

13 September 1974 am in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

[Note: This is a translation from the Hindi series Shiva Sutra, which is in the process of being edited. It is for research only.]

A SENSE OF WONDER IS THE FOUNDATION OF YOGA. TO BE ESTABLISHED IN ONESELF IS STRENGTH. A TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC IS A MEANS TO SELF-REALIZATION. TO ENJOY THE BLISSFULNESS OF THE EXISTENCE IS ENLIGHTENMENT.

A SENSE OF WONDER IS THE FOUNDATION OF YOGA.

Try to understand this.

In the dictionary, ”wonder” means astonishment. But there is a basic difference between wonder and astonishment. If you fail to understand this basic difference, you may embark on a different journey altogether. Astonishment is the foundation of science, a sense of wonder is that of yoga. Astonishment is extrovert; wonder is introvert. Astonishment is about the other; wonder is about our own self. This is the first point.

Wonder is born out of that which we cannot understand, which makes us speechless, which our intellect cannot grasp, which proves to be bigger than us, before whom we are suddenly dumfounded – which destroys us.

If the same state of wonder – which is born when we are faced with the illogical, the incomprehensible – is diverted towards the external objects, it gives birth to science. When we start thinking about matter, when we start contemplating the world and try to investigate that mystery that

surrounds us all, science is created. Science is born out of astonishment. Astonishment means, it has embarked on the outward journey.

There is one more difference between wonder and astonishment: if we are surprised by something, sooner or later we will be fed up with that surprise, because surprise creates tension; hence the effort of destroying that which surprises us. Science is born out of this surprise. Then it destroys the surprise. It tries to find interpretations, doctrines, formulas, keys and it does not rest assured till it destroys the mystery, till it is in possession of knowledge, till science can claim: "Yes, I have understood!"

Science is bent upon eradicating the element of astonishment from the world. If it succeeds in achieving that, there will not be a single thing on earth that man cannot boast of not knowing. It means, this world will be godless, because God means that which we cannot claim to know even if we have known him. We may know him but he remains unknowable. We may go on deepening our knowledge of him, he cannot be exhausted. We are in the state of eternal wonder about him.

There are some objects which have become known to us. We can call them, the known. There are some other objects which we do not know but we will know them. Let us call them, the unknown. And the existence also consists of such objects which we have never known and about which we will never be able to know. We will call them, the unknowable. God is unknowable. This is the third element. Science does not accept God because it says that nothing is unknowable in the world. We may have not known it up to now, maybe we did not try hard enough, but sooner or later we will know. Some day we will know the world completely; nothing will remain unknown in it.

Science is born out of astonishment and then it begins to destroy the astonishment. Therefore, I call science patricidal: it tries to kill that which created it. Religion is just the opposite. Religion is also born out of a certain astonishment; this sutra calls it, "sense of wonder." The only difference is: when a religious seeker is filled with wonder, he does not set out on the outer journey, he goes on an inner pilgrimage. Whenever some kind of mystery envelops him, he starts thinking about himself: I must know who I am.

If the mystery becomes introspective, and the search and the journey is directed inwards, the arrow of the seeking points towards the self, the attention is totally absorbed by the thirst to know our own reality – then it is wonder.

And the second point to be understood is that the sense of wonder is inexhaustible. The more we know, the more it increases. That's why wonder is contradictory. As a rule, the sense of wonder should disappear the moment we come to know something. But Buddha or Krishna or Shiva or Christ do not lose their sense of wonder. When they attain the ultimate consciousness, their sense of wonder becomes ultimate! At that time they do not say that they have known everything, they say that after knowing everything everything remains to be known.

The Upanishads have said, "Even if you extract the whole from the whole, the whole remains." Even if you know the whole, the whole remains to be known. Therefore spiritual knowledge does not nourish the ego, scientific knowledge nourishes the ego. Spiritual knowledge will never make you a knower; you will always remain humble. And the more you know, the more you will feel, "I do not know anything." At the highest peak of knowledge you will be able to say, "I know nothing." At the moment of ultimate knowledge the whole existence fills you with a sense of wonder.

If science succeeds, the whole world will become known; if religion succeeds, the whole world will become unknown. If science is victorious, you, the knower, will be full of ego and the world will become ordinary because where there is no sense of wonder, everything becomes prosaic; where there is no wonder, there is no spirit; if there is no possibility of mystery, the process of evolution comes to a dead end. The thirst for knowledge has vanished, curiosity has died.

If science has its way, the world will be filled with such boredom as it has never experienced before. If Westerners are more bored, science has to blame for that, because people are losing their capacity to feel wonder. They are not amazed by anything. They have forgotten to be amazed. If you put a problem before them which has no solution, they will say, "Oh! It can be solved!" – because according to science, basically, there is nothing that can remain unknown forever; it can be unveiled.

The religious journey is, however, paradoxical. The more we unveil, the more we find that the mystery goes on deepening. The nearer you come, the more you come to know: it is very difficult to know. And the moment we penetrate the very center of the existence, everything becomes mysterious. For the Buddha, the stones and pebbles lying on the ground are as mysterious as the twinkling stars high up in the sky: It is not only the enormous that appears to be mysterious, the smallest happening holds the same mystery for him. A seed sprouting in the soil is as mysterious as the creation of the whole universe.

So, as the sense of wonder becomes intense, your eyes will become like those of a small child. A child is wonderstruck by everything. Watch a child walking on the street – everything surprises him. A colored stone looks like a diamond. You laugh at him because you are the knower; you know that it is colored stone. You tell him, "Don't be crazy, this is not a diamond." But the child wants to put it in his pocket. You will say, "Don't carry this burden. After all, it's a dirty stone lying in the mud. Throw it away!"

But the child grips it harder. You are not able to understand it. It is a wonder for the child. This colored stone is in no way less valuable than the diamond. The value lies in the sense of wonder. Stones are of no value. A tiny butterfly can mesmerize the child immensely, but you will not be mesmerized by the almighty himself even if he comes to see you! The child starts chasing the butterfly....

The highest state of wonder, of buddhahood is just like the innocence of a small child. One becomes childlike in that state. That's why Jesus has said: Those who are like small children will be able to enter the kingdom of God. Jesus is saying the same thing that Shiva has said in this sutra: the sense of wonder is the foundation of yoga. Wonder is the first stage of yoga. In that case you have to understand many things.

The more knowledgeable you are, the weaker will be the foundation of yoga. If you are full of the pride of knowing, the chances of your becoming a yogi are less. If your heart is burdened with the scriptures, your sense of wonder will be destroyed. You ask a scholar about God, and he starts answering as if God is a thing to be made an answer of... as if God can be explained. You ask a scholar and he has a readymade answer. No sooner did you ask than the answer was given. Even God does not make him speechless. All the formulas are definite, he explains them instantaneously.

But you go to the Buddha and ask about God, he does not say anything. Perhaps you will go back thinking that this man remained silent, and the meaning is clear: he does not know. But the reason

why this man remained silent is that this sense of wonder is the door to the divine. Had you been a little wiser, you would have remained with the man who did not answer. And you would have tried to understand him: you would have peeped into his eyes; you would have lived in his company, in his proximity because he has experienced something, and the experience is so immense that words cannot express it; he has seen something that cannot become an answer.

Questions and answers are alright for the school-children. Your question in itself is absurd. One cannot ask a question about God. How can one ask a question about the infinite? Both the question and the answer drop by themselves before the infinite. Your question is petty, that's why Buddha has remained silent. But maybe you will come back thinking that had this man known, he would have answered. He did not answer, that means he did not know. You recognize a scholar because your head is full of words, too. You will not be able to understand a sage because a sage is full of wonder. And your sense of wonder is dead.

The greatest calamity of the world is: destruction of wonder. The day your sense of wonder is destroyed, your possibility of liberation is destroyed. The day your sense of wonder is dead, your childlike heart is dead, frozen. You have become old.

Are you still amazed? Does life pose a question to you? Are you thrilled by the chirping of the birds, the sound of the running streams, the wind rustling through the trees? Do you feel joy? Does this life surrounding you everywhere makes you speechless? No, because you know that birds are making these sounds and wind is rustling through the trees – you have answer to every question. These answers have killed you. You have become knowledgeable before attaining knowledge.

A SENSE OF WONDER IS THE FOUNDATION OF YOGA.

A sense of wonder becomes a door for one who wants to enter yoga. Revive your childhood! Start asking again. Awaken your curiosity, your quest and the roots of life that have dried in you will start greening again. All the blocks will melt away and streams will start running. Open your eyes and look all around once again – all answers are false, because all your answers are borrowed. You have not known anything. But you are stuffed with borrowed knowledge, to the extent that you feel, you known it.

Awaken your sense of wonder. Your yoga-postures and breath-exercises are useless if there is no sense of wonder within you – because all the yogic exercises belong to the body. It's true that your body will be purified, healthy but purified and healthy body will not help you to attain divinity.

A sense of wonder purifies the heart. Wonder means: the mind is free of all answers. Wonder means: you have removed all the garbage of answers. Your question has become new, rejuvenated; you have understood your ignorance.

Wonder means: I do not know.

Scholarship means: I know.

The more you know, the more you are wrong. When you are simple enough to say: "I don't know" – although this too is not sufficient – when the understanding of your own ignorance settles deep into

your heart, you have taken the first step of yoga. After that, other steps are very easy. If you miss the first step, you may go on traveling endlessly, it will be of no use. One who misses the first step cannot reach the destination. If your first step is right, half of the distance is covered.

A sense of wonder is the first step.

Look closely, do you possess knowledge? If you observe deeply, you will realize that there is no knowledge, just garbage collected from scriptures, masters, saints and you have preserved it like a priceless possession! It has not given you anything, it has only killed your sense of wonder. Your sense of wonder is writhing, lying dead. Now you are not surprised. Nothing surprises you any more.

There was a Christian mystic, Eckhart. He has made a unique statement: one who is surprised by everything is a saint. Everything, very small happenings surprise him. A pebble falls in the water, creates noise, ripples start spreading – the saint is amazed. It is so wondrous, so mysteriousness! He breathes, lives, it is quite amazing.

Every morning while praying to God Eckhart used to say, "It is another day! The sun has risen again. Thy mercy is great. What would we do if the sun would not have arisen? Human being is helpless." Eckhart used to say, "Today I am breathing, tomorrow I may not; what can I do?"

You cannot draw breath from somewhere. It is not in your control. Breath is so close to you, and yet you do not own it. If it goes out and does not return, it will just return! We do not know or possess a thing which is so close to you. And we think that we know everything. This 'knowing everything' has killed you. Remove this garbage and unburden yourself. Immediately, when the blindfold of knowledge will be removed from your eyes, they will be filled with mystery.

The inner pilgrimage of this mystery is called wonder; the outward journey is called astonishment. If you apply those mysteries to objects, you will become a scientist and if you are able to apply that mystery to your own self, you will become a great yogi. And in both the cases the results will be different, because astonishment is violent, sense of wonder is nonviolent. Surprise applied anywhere, starts disintegrating, analyzing because surprise is restless, wonder is full of interest. Try to understand this difference properly. It is not written in the dictionary; it cannot be written because the compiler of the dictionary has no idea what wonder is.

Astonishment is violent, aggressive. When you are astonished by something, you become tense. That tension has to be dealt with. A certain restlessness will hang over you as long as your enquiry is not complete, you have not known. A scientist is engrossed in his laboratory eighteen hours a day... what for? He is restless, as if possessed by a ghost. And he will keep on investigating till he resolves it.

But the sense of wonder is not aggressive. And the sense of wonder is not a restlessness, on the contrary the sense of wonder is restfulness. Whenever someone is filled with wonderment one is at rest. You don't have to destroy the sense of wonder, you have to drink it, you have to taste it. You have to merge with wonder, you have to become one with it. Astonishment is involved in destruction, wonder begins to live. Wonder is a way of life, astonishment is a violent state of mind.

So science thinks in terms of victory – destroy, shatter, win. Religion thinks in terms of surrender – dissolve yourself. When the sense of wonder will enter you, it will dissolve in you the same way a salt-cube is dropped into water and the whole water turns salty. That day you will become salty with wonder. Every fibre will be filled with wonder. While walking, moving around the sense of wonder will be pulsating within you. You will be in a perpetual state of wonder. Every phenomenon will become mysterious. The smallest particle will be a part of the vast, because the sense of wonder envelops the small, it becomes vast. Then nothing remains known, you are surrounded by mystery. Then every moment is new and every moment is an invitation.

Mulla Nasruddin was contesting the elections. While he was on his door-to-door campaign, he went to the local priest. Even at that time he was drunk. The priest was a gentleman; saying something directly would have been impolite so he said to Nasruddin, "I want to ask you something. If you give me a satisfying answer, my vote is all yours. Do you ever drink?" There was no need to ask about it. Mulla was taken aback. He said, "Before I answer your question, I would like to ask you something: Is it an enquiry or an invitation?"

The sense of wonder is an invitation.

Astonishment is an enquiry and sense of wonder, invitation. The sense of wonder is an internal call. And as you enter inside, you go on immersing deeper and deeper. One day you will disappear and only wonder will remain. That day enlightenment has happened. If you follow the path of astonishment, one day only you will remain and astonishment will disappear. That is the culmination of science: ego will remain and astonishment will vanish. If you embark on the journey of wonder, you will vanish and wonder will remain, every pore of your being will be filled with its taste. Your existence itself will be a wonder.

Shiva has called it the foundation of yoga. Remove knowledge, become full of wonder. In the beginning it will appear difficult because you think that you know.

There was a great thinker, a very invaluable, important one: D. H. Lawrence. He was roaming in the garden with a small child. The child asked him, "Why are the trees green?"

A child can only ask such questions – so fresh! You cannot even think of such questions. You will say, "The trees are green because they are green! What is there to ask? What kind of a question is this? This child is stupid. But think again, why the trees are green. Do you really know the answer? Perhaps someone studying science may answer, "It is the chlorophyll that makes them green." But it will not resolve the question of the child. It will ask again, "Why is there chlorophyll in the tree? Why should it be in the tree and why not in the man? And how the chlorophyll has found the trees? The answer "chlorophyll" does not (answer?) any question.

All the answers found by science are of the same category. Those answers only push the question one step back, that's all. If you are a little wise, you can raise the question again. Science cannot answer any "why." That's why science cannot destroy the sense of wonder, it can only create an illusion of destroying it.

But D. H. Lawrence was not a scientist. He was a poet, a novelist. He had an aesthetic sense. He stopped then and there and started thinking. He said to the child, "Give me some time. I don't know myself."

Your child also must have asked many a time the same kinds of question. Have you ever said: "I don't know?" It hurts the ego. Every father thinks that he knows. The child asks and the father gives an answer. And because of these very answers the father loses his credibility later on, because one day the child comes to know that you know nothing. You were unnecessarily giving answers. You are as ignorant as I am. You were a little older so your ignorance was older, that's all. But you give answers to the small child. The child, too, accepts them thinking you may be right. But how long will he believe it?

D.H. Lawrence stood there. He said, "I will think over it. And if you go on insisting, I can only say that the trees are green because they are green. There is no other answer. I am myself overwhelmed by this mystery."

If you unveil the curtain of knowledge, you will find mystery all around. It is a mystery that the trees are green. It is also mysterious that the green trees have red flowers. And isn't it mysterious that a small seed contains a giant tree in its womb? You preserve a seed and plant it after thousands of years, the tree materializes. Life seems to be eternal. Every moment is throbbing with mystery.

But you have closed your eyes. You rest assured. But this state is your inertia. You do not even hesitate, for the simple reason that your ego feels a reassurance that it knows. If you know, you feel secure; if you do not know, all security disappears. Actually you do not know anything but it hurts to admit that you do not know. So you cling to anything. A drowning man clings to a straw, takes its support. The thing you are clinging to is not even a straw. Perhaps a straw may save someone from drowning but the thing you are clinging to is not even a straw, it is just a dream, empty words.

Someone strongly believes in God. It is absurd to say that I definitely know. 'Definitely' means, now you have unraveled the mystery of God! 'Definitely' means you have seen through Him, you have measured Him. 'Definitely' means: even He can be measured, you have weighed Him in the balance, you have investigated in the laboratory. What is the meaning 'definite'?

There is another man who definitely knows that God does not exist. Both are stupid and both of them have the same disease. One calls himself theist, another one calls himself atheist; and there is not an iota of difference between the two. Deep down both suffer from the same disease. Both of them believe that they know and both get into arguments.

Knowledge creates argument, wonder creates dialogue. When you are filled with wonder, your life will have a dialogue. If somebody goes to Mahavira and asks: "Does God exist?" He says, "Yes." Some atheist goes and says, "God does not exist," and he says, "No, he does not." And if some agnostic goes to him, Mahavira says, "God's existence is dubious."

Now, it is very difficult. We would want him to give straight and clear answers. They may be wrong, but they should be clear. And remember, this existence is so complex that clear answers will prove wrong. Here, if the answer is not contradictory, it is bound to be wrong. Here, only that answer will be right which encompasses its opposite because existence absorbs its opposite.

There is life and there is death. The path is not clear-cut. Here darkness exists along with light. Good and evil exist together. Here the saint and the sinner are not separate, they are living simultaneously. Both are two aspects of the same coin. God contains both the poles within Him. Existence is vast. It is not chiseled on the touchstone of logic, it is beyond logic. The duality is merged into each other.

One night Junnaid prayed to God: "I want to know who is the greatest sinner in this village because by studying him, by understanding him I will try to abstain from the sin. I will have a criterion that here is the greatest sinner, I have to avoid this kind of life." A voice said, "Your neighbor." Junnaid was surprised. He had never imagined that his neighbor could be the greatest sinner. He was an ordinary man, running his own small shop, how can he be the greatest sinner? He had thought that the greatest sinner will be someone like Ravana [a mythological character who represents devil], the greatest sinner will be someone devilish, a satan. This man is running a shop, rearing his children.... Junnaid was perplexed. He was an ordinary man, nobody would call him a sinner.

Next day while praying he said, "O.K., I accept your decision. Now I want one more criterion: I want to know about the greatest saint, a virtuous man in the village." God said, "The same man, your neighbor."

Junnaid said, "You are confusing me. There is already great confusion in me. Yesterday I was watching the man all day, I did not feel that he was a sinner. Now this adds to the confusion: he is a virtuous man, too!"

The voice said, "In my existence the opposites are interlinked. It is the intellect that splits them into two. Here the greatest saint has a shadow. And here the greatest sinner has a glow on his face. This very phenomenon makes it possible for a saint to become a sinner and a sinner to become a saint. This transformation is possible so easily because both are hidden in one person.

Darkness and light are not separate. Day and night are interrelated. Logic creates fragments and makes clear-cut paths. Logic is like a well-made, clean, cultivated garden. Life is like a forest; nothing is clear in it. Everything is entangled there.

One who wants to understand life should have the capacity to avoid readymade answers. If you cling to them, you feel secure because you feel reassured: Yes, I know! You feel confident and courageous enough to tread the path of life. That's why you are afraid of dropping knowledge. It is very painful. If someone robs you of your wealth, it does not matter so much. You can earn it again. And wealth was dirt. You knew that already. If you lose your position, you can take it in your stride. You yourself can renounce it some day. But knowledge...!

I have observed a very interesting phenomenon. Somebody renounces his society, his village, his house, his family but if he was Jaina he remains a Jaina in the Himalayas; if he was a Hindu he remains a Hindu; if he was a Mohammedan he remains a Mohammedan. It is the same society that he has renounced, that had given him this Mohammedan conditioning: that Koran is a true scripture, all other scriptures are false. He gives up everything but saves his knowledge even in the Himalayas. Nothing has changed in this man's life because he still believes in knowledge.

If you drop knowledge, the Himalayas will appear wherever you are. The Himalayas will appear wherever you are. The Himalayas signify that which is mysterious; where there are high mountain peaks, you cannot scale them; and where there are unfathomable valleys, you will not be able to explore them; which transcends all our measures.

The sense of wonder means: where your intellect fails, where your ego is crippled, where you become helpless. You may laugh or cry there but you cannot utter a word.

It is said that when Moses reached the mountain Sanai, he cried, he laughed but he did not speak at all. When he returned, his disciples asked: "What have you done? God was present himself. He said unto you, 'Remove you shoes because this is holy land and I am present here.' And you removed your shoes. You cried, you laughed but why didn't you say something? Why did you miss this opportunity? You could have asked whatever you wanted to ask. You could have at least asked for the key that opens all the doors."

Moses replied, "When He was present in front of me, my mind disappeared; only heart was throbbing. I laughed, I cried out of sheer joy!"

And this is the interesting part of life – happiness can make you cry and happiness can make you laugh, too. So do not think that people always cry out of grief. It is a calculation of logic. Life does not believe in logic. The river of life breaks all the frontiers and overflows like a total wave. One can cry out of happiness. Then one's tears have a different quality. Then bliss is reflected in the tears. He can cry, too! These opposites can express one principle. This is the mystery of life.

So Moses said, "Not only heart, I also lost my intellect. It seems that I dropped my conditioning along with my shoes."

And do not only remove your shoes outside the temple, drop your head, too! One who drops his head along with the shoes, can only enter the temple. And shoes and head get along very well! That's why when you get angry with someone, you hit his head with your shoe. A monk hits his head with his own shoes.

These are the two extremes, two poles. The head is on one extreme... you are at the center. And that central point is a meeting place of all opposites. Your head and your feet are uniting there. Your heart abides there.

So Moses said, "I cried, I laughed because I was filled with wonder. I became speechless. Now I will not be able to sleep. I cannot erase that which I have seen. That which has happened cannot be wiped out. The Moses who lived before is no more. Now I am a different man."

This is a new birth. Hindus call it 'dvija': twice born – when is born second time. All brahmins are not dwijas. Once in a while some brahmin becomes dwija. You do not become a dwija by wearing a sacred thread around your neck. Dwija means twice born. Moses said, "Now I am twice born. Now I am a different man. That person is dead."

If you experience wonder, your old will die and the new will be born. And if you perpetually remain in the sense of wonder, the new is born and the old dies every moment. Every moment the old disappears and the new appears. And your flow is eternal. Then you will never become old; then the eternal life pulsates within you.

Shiva therefore says, the sense of wonder is the foundation of yoga.

The second maxim: TO BE ESTABLISHED IN ONESELF IS STRENGTH.

The sense of wonder is the foundation. Wonder means an enquiry inwards. An internal search of the question: who am I? If you move outside, there is surprise. If you move outside, there is logic. If

you move outside, there is science. If you move inwards – sense of wonder, meditation, gratitude. It is a totally different method.

The sense of wonder will bring you inwards because the whole world will appear mysterious. And then only one question will seem to be important: who am I? This is the foundation of sense of wonder: who am I? As long as I do not know this 'I', this journey of knowing myself cannot be complete. How can I know these trees, how can I know you, how can I know the other if I myself am unknown to me, if I am myself ignorant; when I do not know who I am.

Therefore 'who am I' is the great mantra. And don't rush the answer because the answer is ready inside you. "Who am I" – and you answer from within: I am the soul. This answer won't help. You know it already. This has not changed your life. Knowledge is fire; it will burn you. When you ask: "Who am I" and an inner voice replies, it is your mind that is talking – the scriptures hidden inside the mind, the memory. When you say: 'I am the soul', it is useless, it is of no value because this answer has not transformed you. This is not fire, this is ash. There may have been an amber in it some time, for some sage, but for you it is ash. The person who possessed this amber, has departed from this world, now you are just carrying the ash.

You go on asking: Who am I? And do not give a borrowed answer. Whenever the borrowed answer will come, you say: "This is not my answer. I have not known it, how can it be mine? Only that which I know, can belong to me." That which you have earned through your own effort, is your treasure. Knowledge can neither be stolen nor can it be begged. You cannot steal it. You cannot beg it. Here, you have to create yourself by your own efforts.

The second maxim: TO BE ESTABLISHED IN ONESELF IS STRENGTH.

The moment a sense of wonder is born, move inwards, sink within and try to be established in the self. When you ask: 'Who am I', when will you get an answer? If you want the answer, you will have to be established within. We have called it health: to be established in the self. And one is able to see only when one is established within. If you are running, how will you be able to see?

Your situation is somewhat like this: you are sitting in a speeding car, you happen to see a flower, through the window. You have barely enquired about it, and the car has zoomed forward. You are speeding fast. And no vehicle is faster than your desire. If one has to reach the moon, even the spaceship takes time. Your desire does not even require this much time, it reaches this very moment. Desire has the fastest speed. And one who is full of desire shows that there is no depth in him. He is running, racing. And your pace is such that even if you ask: who am I, there is no room for an answer.

You will have to give up this running race and be established in the self. You will stop all the desire, all the running around, all the journey. But the moment one desire is fulfilled you create a number of new desires. You barely finish one journey, and various new avenues open up. And you start running again! You do not know how to sit down. You have not stopped for many lifes.

I have heard that one emperor employed a very intelligent man as his prime minister. But the prime minister was dishonest and within no time he stole millions of rupees from the treasury of the empire. When the emperor came to know about it, he called the prime minister and said: "I don't want to say

anything. What you have done is not right. I will not say much but I can only say this much that it is a break of trust. Don't ever show me your face again. You leave this kingdom and go elsewhere. And I would not like rumors to spread all around, so I will not tell anything to anyone about it and there is no need for you to utter a word about it.

The prime minister said: "If you command me, I shall leave. Certainly, I have stolen millions of rupees. Nevertheless, I would like to advise you as a prime minister that now I have everything: a big mansion, houses in the mountains and on the sea-shore. I have everything. My coming generations need not earn anything. You will remove me and appoint some other person and he will have to start from scratch." The emperor was intelligent, he understood.

You never come to such a point in your life, when you can say: I have everything. Your trip will end when such a moment comes. Otherwise every moment you will have to start from scratch. Each and every moment, new desire grips you, a new thief enters, an new robber comes to rob you of your treasure. And the robber is not one, there are innumerable desires. You are running in many directions simultaneously. You have never given it a thought that many of the objects are opposite to each other; you cannot have them both. If you get one, you will lose another; if you get the second one, the first is lost.

Mulla Nasruddin was on his death-bed. He told his son: now, before I die, I will tell you about two things. Remember them. There are two things: honesty and wisdom. Now you will look after the shop, take care of the work. A signboard is hanging on our shop: 'Honesty is the best policy'. Always practice it. Never cheat anybody. Never break a promise. If you promise, keep it.

The son said: "O.K., what about the other? What does wisdom mean?"

Nasruddin said, "Never give a promise to anyone!"

Such is life – divided in opposite poles. There is an attempt to manage both: honesty and wisdom. Honesty aims at keeping a promise. On the one hand you want to be worshipped as a saint and on the other hand you want to enjoy like a sinner. Strange! On the one hand you wish that your character should be praised like that of Rama's and on the other hand you are keen on kidnapping somebody's wife. You want to do the impossible. You would like to become like Ravana and you want to be revered like Rama. Then we are in a difficult situation. Then you move in two opposite directions and you create infinite goals in front of you. In their pursuit you become fragmented, torn to pieces. At the end of your life you will find that the treasure that you had brought with you is lost.

There was a great gambler. His wife, his family, his friends tried their best to convince him. He did not pay any attention. Eventually everything was lost. At last he came to such a point that he had only one rupee left with him. His wife said: "Now wake up! Gather yourself!"

The husband said, "When so much is lost and only one rupee is left, give me a last chance. Who knows, this last bit of a rupee may prove lucky." A gambler always thinks on these lines. And he said, "Now we have lost millions, this is the last rupee, why lament over it? And one rupee is bound to be spent, it cannot be saved. Let me stake it!"

His wife also thought: now that everything is lost, this is the last one; and one is going to be spent anyway, let him stake it!"

The gambler went to the joint. And he was amazed! He started winning every game. One became one thousand, one thousand were converted into ten thousand which became a hundred thousand eventually. At the end he staked those hundred thousand and said, "Now this is the last chance." And he lost everything! He returned home. His wife asked, "What happened?"

He said, "I lost that last one too!"

You can lose only that which you had brought with you. Why talk about thousands? He said: "I have lost one rupee. It does not matter. That stake was unfortunate." But he did not tell her that he had made one hundred thousand. He was right. You cannot lose that which does not belong to you. At the time of death you will find that you have lost the soul that you had brought with you. You will be deprived of 'one'. That's all! All your calculations of credit and debit, your losses and gains are of no value. The millions that you have won, will be dropped here at the time of your death. Only 'one' will be taken into account; and that one is – "YOU." If you establish in the 'one', you are a winner. If you return to the 'one', settle in it... Shiva is talking about this very phenomenon: TO BE ESTABLISHED IN ONESELF IS STRENGTH.

You are weak and wretched and miserable – not because you don't have money or house or wealth. You are wretched and miserable because you are not established in yourself. To be established in oneself is the source of energy. The moment one is established in it, one is flooded with tremendous energy.

Someone asked Jesus: "What should I do? I am very poor, sickly and miserable. Jesus said, "Don't do anything else, first seek the kingdom of God, all else will follow. If you lose 'one', you lose everything. That 'one' is none other than you, and that alone is your treasure because you had brought it with you. And in the final calculation you will be asked, whether you could save that which you brought with you or you have lost that, too!

TO BE ESTABLISHED IN ONESELF IS STRENGTH. To settle in oneself is to become immensely powerful. You already have that immense power within you, but you are like a bucket with thousands of holes. If you put the bucket in the well, it appears to be full. As long as the bucket is immersed in the water, it looks full; the moment you start pulling the bucket and it starts rising above the water-level, the water starts leaking through thousands of holes. When the bucket is drawn completely out of the well, there is nothing left inside.

Your thousands of desires are your holes. Your energy dissipates through them. As long as you are dreaming, the bucket is full. As long as you desire, the bucket is full. The moment the desire becomes action, you start pulling the bucket up; the moment you try to make the dreams come true, the energy starts leaking. By the time you take the bucket out, you are faced with nothing but holes, with no water at all. You remain as thirsty as ever. Every time you draw the bucket, it makes lots of noise in the well. You feel you are getting some water, as if a great storm is coming. But nothing comes actually. You remain empty handed. However, desire is very strange.

A traveler enquired of a fisherman how many fish he could catch. The sun was about to set, he had put his fishing rod in the water since morning. This passer by had passed through that road several times and had noticed it. At lost he could not contain himself, so he asked: "How many have you caught?" The fisherman answered: "If I catch this one I am trying to catch, and if I am able to catch

two more, the total number will be three!" He has not caught a single one so far. But he is imagining: if I catch this one, plus two more – they will make three.

You are perpetually in the state of this fisherman. The one you are trying to catch, and two more you are dreaming about. Even this one has not materialized. But the calculation consists of three! And you are utterly pleased. Whenever you pull the bucket out, you again find it empty. And remember, the more you throw it in the well, the holes become wider and wider. This is the reason why children look very happy. Old people look very sad. Their bucket is full of holes. They have put the bucket in the well and drawn it out innumerable times. The holes have become bigger, that's all! But they go on hoping against hope – some time we will be able to draw water because the bucket does look full! Water is leaking from the holes.

You have the energy of the infinite, but your mind is like a bucket with holes.

This maxim means: you will not go on a desire-trip. When you drop one desire, one hole is cemented. When all desires drop, all the holes are cemented. And then you don't need to put the bucket in any well, you yourself are the well. You have tremendous energy within you. If only your energy could be prevented from leaking, you are born with tremendous energy. You don't have to achieve anything. All that is worth achieving, is within you; be careful not to lose it. There is no question of attaining God, you have to avoid losing Him. You have already attained Him. How you lose, is the greatest mystery of this world.

The third maxim: DISCRIMINATION AND TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC IS A MEANS TO SELF-REALIZATION.

Each and every maxim is like a master key. First: the sense of wonder. The sense of wonder will make you turn in. Second: To be established in oneself so that you are available to tremendous energy. But how will you settle in yourself? The key lies in the third maxim: Transcendental logic and discrimination is a means to self-realization.

This word: transcendental logic has to be understood. We know what logic is. It is an instrument of logic. It is a sword that cuts wonderment. Logic cuts, analyses. Logic moves outside, transcendental logic moves inside. It does not make fragments, it unites. Logic is analysis, transcendental logic is synthesis.

There was one Sufi monk, Farid. One of his devotees brought him a pair of scissors made of gold. It was very valuable, studded with precious stones. And he said, "It has been my family treasure for generations together. It costs millions of rupees. I have no use for it. I present it to you."

Farid said, "Please take it back. If at all you want to present something, bring a needle and a thread because I do not believe in cutting, I believe in sewing. A pair of scissors cuts. If you want to present something, better bring a needle and a thread."

Logic is like a pair of scissors; it cuts. In the Hindu mythology Ganesha is the god of logic; therefore he rides a rat. A rat is a pair of scissors. It cuts, it is a live pair of scissors. It goes on cutting. Ganesha rides it. He is a god of logic. And Hindus have made him a laughing stock. If his appearance does not make you laugh, it is a matter of surprise. You do not laugh because you have got used to his appearance, otherwise he is humorous figure.

If you take a close look at Ganesha's structure, you will find that everything is shapeless in every way. Even his head does not belong to him, it is borrowed. A logician has a borrowed head. It is quite big, it's an elephant's head, but it is not his own. A borrowed head is useless, even if it belongs to the elephant. It will only make you look ugly. His body is bulky; rides a rat. This body of his is just a show-piece; his vehicle is a rat. However great a scholar may be, his vehicle is a rat – a pair of scissors: logic! Farid said it rightly, "If you want to present something, bring a needle and a thread because I believe in sewing."

Transcendental logic is an art of synthesizing. The Sanskrit word "VITARKA" means a special logic. Common logic analyses, special logic synthesizes. Buddha, Mahavir, Shiva, Lao Tzu – they all use logic, but it is a specialized logic.

There is one more kind of logic, which is a logical fallacy. There arr three possibilities. Logic fragments, analyses; but its intentions are not bad. The wonder has to be resolved. It is not interested in analyzing. Analysis is the process. It aims at achieving a doctrine which will dissolve the surprise, things will become crystal clear. The aim of logic is constructive.

When logic has no goal, only scissoring becomes the aim, it enjoys being destructive, then it is called "KUTARKA" logical fallacy. It is an insane state of logic. It becomes mad, it is bent upon destroying. Then there is no other motive, destruction gives pleasure.

Vitatka, special logic is an inward journey of logic. You have come home from your house; your eyes, your vision, your direction was focussed on me, towards me. You turned your back to your home. When you will go back home, the road will be the same – in what way the road could be different? – only the direction will change. You will turn you back towards me and you will face your home.

Logic and special logic tread the same road; that's why it is called special logic. The road is the same, only the direction has changed. First logic was moving towards the other, towards the object; now the logic is moving towards the self, towards home. Just a change in the direction changes the total quality. When it had to move outwards, destruction was the way. If you want to enter the other, it could only be done by analyzing, there is no other way.

If you go to the medical college, you will find the students dissecting. They are dissecting the frog because they have to know what is inside. There is no other way, one can know the insides of a frog by dissecting. it. But if you have to enter within yourself, there is no need to dissect. You are present inside! If you want to know the other, you will have to dissect him, destroy him because there is no other way of knowing him. If you want to know yourself, there is no question of dissecting or destroying because you are already there! If you want to know yourself, just closing your eyes is enough. Closing one's eyes is meditation. When the attention is withdrawn from outside and focussed inside, logic becomes transcendental.

The other name for vitark is vivek, or consciousness. It really means awareness. This awareness is a process of synthesis. As you go within you, you start becoming integrated. For example: imagine a circle with a wide circumference. Now take two points, far apart on the circumference. Join each to the point at the center of the circle. You will find that as the lines approach the center, they come closer and closer to each other, until they are one at the center. Now if these two lines are extended further outside the circumference, they will be further and further apart, until the distance between them becomes infinite.

In the same way, when you move outwards from yourself, things begin to fall apart, and the further you go the greater becomes the difference between them. Therefore, we find many different branches of science because the distance is becoming bigger and bigger. New theories are born every day, and scientists are facing a dilemma: one science cannot understand the language of the other. There is no such person on earth who can understand all the sciences, who can synthesize the different branches of science.

As it is, it is impossible to know a single branch of science. There is no dearth of knowledge in the world, but we have lost the power of synthesis. Religion is one, no matter how many names you give it, because no sooner does a man begin to go within himself than the distances decrease, and all things merge into the center. The center is the ultimate synthesis.

Vitark or vivek, intelligence or awareness, discrimination leads to self-realization. Do not dissect things. Do not go outwards; do not pay attention to 'the other'. Direct your attention inwards; synthesize! Move slowly towards the center, where your life-force is focussed. Become established at this point and great energy will arise within you.

The light we see around Mahavir or Buddha, the bliss we find around Krishna, Meera, Chaitanya – what bliss is this? What light is it? What does it signify? It indicates that these people have reached the point which is the source of infinite energy. They are no longer miserable, they are no longer poor. They are emperors in their own right. This is also your potential, but you have to proceed step by step.

First comes a sense of wonder; then being centered in the self; then intelligence as a way of reaching the self.

The fourth sutra:

TO ENJOY THE BLISS OF EXISTENCE IS SAMADHI.

When you have reached the self and are firmly established in it, you have reached the most profound state of existence. Existence is at its greatest density at this point, for everything is created out of here. Your center is not only your center but the center of all creation.

We are separated only at the circumference. 'You' and 'I' are separations of the body. As we leave the body and turn within, the distance gets smaller and smaller. The day you know the soul you will also have known God. The day you know your own self you will know the self of all creation, because at the center all is one. Distances only exist at the periphery.

Shiva says: By attaining this existence within one's self, the joy of samadhi is attained.

Samadhi-sukham, the 'bliss of samadhi'; these words should be understood. You have known many joys: the joy of a good dinner, the joy of good health and well-being. When you quench your thirst or enjoy sex – such bodily joys you know fully, but understand well that all these joys carry complementary sorrows with them. If you are not thirsty, water will bring no joy. If you are prepared to undergo the torment of thirst, only then will you enjoy drinking water. The affliction, the agony, comes first and is long; the ensuing joy is only momentary. As soon as the water slides down the

throat the thirst is quenched. The same is true with food. The more you suffer the pangs of hunger, the tastier is the food.

This is the irony of life; the people who are tormented by hunger, who could really enjoy the pleasures of eating, have nothing to eat. Those who do not know what hunger is, have plenty to eat, but they cannot enjoy their food; on the contrary, it is a source of distress for them.

As long as there is thirst in you, water can quench it; but you can live a kind of life in which you never feel thirsty; do not go in the sun, do no manual work, stay at home and relax and you will not feel the thirst. But then you will find no joy in drinking water. He who toils all day, enjoys the bliss of a good night's rest. This is ironical: if you want to enjoy the pleasure of a good night's sleep you have to work like a laborer all day. The trouble is that you want to spend your days like an emperor and your nights like a laborer.

In the external world, in the world of objects, joy and sorrow are intrinsically connected; therefore, the day you acquire a mansion, sleep will desert you. The day you obtain a feather bed you will find yourself tossing in your sleep all night. Look at the laborer; he sleeps under a tree on top of stones and pebbles. He sleeps like a log. Mosquitos bite him; he is so hot that his body is soaked with perspiration, but he is oblivious to it all. He has gone through such intense misery all through the day that he has earned the joy that he will have in the night.

We have to pay for our joy and comfort with toil and troubles in this world. Here each joy is connected with an equivalent sorrow. And human being is entangled in one dilemma: he wants to keep the joy and get rid of the sorrow. But this is impossible. We have been trying for thousands of years that the sorrow should be eliminated and the joy should be saved. But we have not been successful in our efforts. The sorrow is certainly eliminated, but at the same time the joy is reduced proportionately. We resent sorrow and desire joy. Hence the problem.

What is the meaning of the 'joy of samadhi'? That which has no sorrow attached to it. The bliss of samadhi is not quenching any thirst, it is not filling an empty stomach, nor is it the weariness after a hard day's work. The bliss of samadhi is not connected with sorrow and toil. This is the difference between spiritual joy and worldly joys. THE BLISS OF SAMADHI IS THE BLISS OF SIMPLY EXISTING. No desire, no longing or craving, is connected with it. It is simply the 'joy of being'.

Therefore Shiva speaks of the 'bliss of existence', lokananda. That you are – that in itself is a great bliss! It has nothing to do with desires and pain etc. Remember, the soul suffers from no hunger and no thirst; hence the question of hunger and thirst and the pleasure gained out of their satiation does not arise. All thirsts and hungers belong to the body, so when a person desires the pleasures of the body he should also be prepared for the pains. The more he is prepared to go through the pains and suffering, the more happiness he attains. The joy of the soul is the purest of joys. There is no place for sorrow here. But this occurs only at the center. At the circumference you are the body.

The body is the periphery. It is the surrounding wall of your vessel; it is not you. It is your outer circle. At the center you are the soul, and it is here that a completely new kind of joy unfolds itself. Here the joy is the joy of being – just being. There is no peak of happiness and abyss of misery here: no ups and downs; no gain or loss, no night or day, no toil or rest. Only you are there. There

you become eternal, and this state of being eternal is filled with joy. It is overflowing. Its juice never dries up. Therefore saints call it 'eternal', everlasting, always new.

Kabir says: the juice of nectar flows incessantly unhindered, without any variation. It rains in this world, too, but the rains must be preceded by heat.

When the summer heat reaches its peak – when there are cracks in the earth, when the trees start wailing, when the heat becomes unbearable all over – then the rains come. We may ask: Why this absurd law? Why can there not be rains without all this suffering? But then we have to understand the whole system of nature, the mathematics of nature. The clouds are formed only when the heat becomes suffocating, for water then turns into vapor. There will be no rains if there is no evaporation. The vapor rises and forms clouds, and when the clouds are over-saturated – so much that they can't help showering, it starts raining. So unbearable heat is prerequisite for a good rainy season.

In the world of the soul there are no opposites, no duality. Therefore it is referred to as 'non-dual' or indivisible. Here there is only one, not two. But then it becomes difficult for you to understand what kind of joy this is, for you know of no joy without its ensuing pain.

Someone asked Sigmund Freud for a definition of madness. How do people become insane? Freud's answer was wonderful and very strange. He said, "Success and madness have a common definition. The path to success is the path to insanity." When you want to succeed, you become tense; when you want to succeed, you fight. Your days and nights are filled with anxiety. When you want to succeed, your each and every moment is overshadowed with fear: will you succeed or won't you? What if you don't? You are not alone. There are thousands of competitors. Night and day you are in a state of acute tension, and this is exactly the prescription for losing your sanity! So carefully observe the people you call successful; you will notice that they live in the same state of constant restlessness, tension and anxiety that the madmen live in.

When Krushchev was in power in Russia he went to inspect a mental hospital. While he was at the hospital he remembered an important message, so he rang up his office, but the girl at the switchboard paid no attention. There was a reason why she ignored him, which became clear later. Finally he was fed up. He shouted, "Young lady, do you know who I am?" This is common to all those who are successful, who are in power and have money – inwardly this thought is incessantly echoing in his mind: do you know, who I am? He may not speak loudly but inside, he is saying it over and over again. This is the reason why he has staked everything. At last he could not contain himself and said to the girl, "Do you know who I am ? I am Krushchev, the prime minister."

The girl said, "I do not know who you are, but I know where you are calling from – the mental hospital."

Now the fact is, all the prime ministers speak from the same place. There is no other place for them to speak from.

Once Krushchev went to London where he was given a very costly piece of cloth. The cloth was so expensive that he wanted the best tailor of the world to stitch it. He asked the best tailor of Moscow. He wanted to make a coat and pant, complete with waistcoat. The Russian tailor said the cloth was not sufficient for a three-piece suit. He could only make a two-piece suit. The material was so

expensive that Krushchev wanted three pieces to be made. He took the cloth to London. There he was told that he could easily get a three-piece suit for enough cloth left over to make something for his child also.

Krushchev was shocked. He asked, how his own Russian tailor could be so dishonest? He said, only two pieces can be made. The London tailor answered, "Don't be angry with him. In Russia you are a very big man. Here in London you are next to nothing."

When a man sets out to surround himself with pleasures of success and ambition, he will have to endure suffering and hardship exactly equal to the pleasure he pursues, and this hardship and suffering break him completely. Long before he can experience any feeling of success, he has almost become unsuccessful. In this world no one can be successful because the price for success is terrible madness, insanity. And by the time success knocks on your door, you are not in a position to enjoy it.

The pleasure of samadhi is entirely different. You do not have to pay the price for it, for what you set out to find is present now – at this very moment. It is not somewhere in the future, so that you have to sat out on a quest and toil and labour. It is present here and now. You possess it already. This treasure is your birthright, you don't have to pay the price of suffering in order to get it. In that case one wonders, what would be it like?

Whatever joy you have known cannot compare with, or even give you an inkling, of this joy, for all your joys are mixed with sorrows. All the nectar you have known has been mixed with poison. With the body this is bound to be; birth and death, nectar and poison are side by side. Each worldly joy carries its counterpart of pain. But the soul is only immortal. There is no death for the soul; it is eternal. There are no opposites; there is only existence, pure existence.

Perhaps, if you could visualize your physical pleasures without their pain and bitterness, just drop the bitter taste lingering in your mouth and you might be able to imagine this happiness or something like it; but this would be only a glimpse. It cannot give you a clear picture. The circumference can only give you a glimpse. No matter how much you contemplate, you cannot imagine or conceptualize that which you have never experienced. You have to experience it first.

These sutras are invaluable. Be filled with wonder. Turn towards the self. Become centered in your being so that great energy will be at your disposal. Let life be yours – the supreme life. Attain self-knowledge through intelligence – through awareness, the supreme awareness – and by breaking through your slumber you shall enjoy the bliss of existence. The bliss of samadhi is yours for the asking.

Something more about the bliss of samadhi: worldly joy depends on very many factors. It depends in your capability and incapability, your education or non-education, your strength, your natural gifts, your relations, your connections – it depends on all these and more. You are not alone there. If you are born to a poor household you will take longer to achieve your goal, perhaps a whole life-time. If you are born into a wealthy family it may take you less time. If you are clever, cunning, intelligent, you will reach early. If you are dull and stupid you will wander a great deal; it is doubtful whether you will reach at all. If the body is unhealthy or diseased it is difficult; if the body is healthy you are better equipped. So everything is accidental and depends on a thousand and one things.

The bliss of samadhi does not depend on anything, it is unconditional. It depends neither on your intellect nor on your body. It makes no difference whether you are worthy or unworthy, nor does it depend on your family, your education, your looks or your sex, or your casts or your religion or your age. It is absolutely unconditional joy because it is your very own treasure. It is within you already. You are born with it. It is only that you have not paid attention to it; that is all. You have merely forgotten it, not lost it. Just turn your eyes; look back and take a look at yourself.

It is not that a clever person will attain more bliss of samadhi and a dull person less. This is not at all the case. Even illiterate people reach there. Kabir, who was illiterate, unlettered, reached where Buddha reached. And when both reach, there is not an iota of difference between the two. The bliss of samadhi is the very nature of existence. Whether you are fair or dark on your periphery, ugly or beautiful, healthy or unhealthy – whether your brain is filled with the words of various doctrines or not – all of this does not matter at all. Your being is sufficient. That you exist is enough.

Therefore, all meditation is a quest to become pure. When you forget the body, forget the mind, then you will begin to attain the joy of existence, the bliss of samadhi. Just try to do one thing: try to forget the body and the mind for some time. As soon as they are forgotten you begin to remember the soul. As long as you are aware of body and mind you cannot remember the soul. The mind and body are on the periphery, whereas the soul is at the center. You cannot look at both of them at the same time.

In this meditation camp if you could forget the body and mind for a little while you will gain the taste of the bliss of samadhi. Once you get the taste, that is enough. Your life will take a different turn. It is the initial taste that is difficult. Once you know, once you have turned within and seen, then you know the trick. Then whenever you turn you will see. All the effort is needed in this initial turning in.

Once the key is in your hands, you are the master. Then you can taste this pleasure at will. You may wander fearlessly in the world now, and nobody can steal your treasure. Wherever you are, you may be a shopkeeper attending your customer, this bliss is with you and you experience it. One thing will start happening: you will stop seeking worldly pleasures. When the supreme joy is attained who cares about trivial pleasure? When diamonds and rubies are in your hands who will hold on to colored stones? They will drop by themselves; you need not renounce them.

For this reason I always say that a wise person renounces nothing; that which is useless, falls away by itself. Ignorant people renounce because renunciation is very painful for them. They have no knowledge of what is meaningful, and they are busy renouncing the meaningless. But the mind clings. The mind says: You are leaving what is in your hands, and how can you trust that which is not yet in your grasp? Besides, who even knows whether it exists or not?

So I tell you to give up nothing. I only tell you to have one taste of the bliss of samadhi. This simple taste will become the supreme renunciation in your life. Then you will know for yourself what is useless and once we know a thing to be useless, we feel no misgivings about letting go of it. Then it falls on its own.

There was a great saint of Bengal, Yukteshwar Giri. He was known as a great renunciate. A wealthy person once came to him and said, ”You are a great renunciate.”

Giri laughed out loud. ”Look at him!” he said, pointing to the man. ”Look at him! He is a great renunciate himself, and he is calling me one. Don’t try to trap me with your words, my good man!”

Everyone was shocked, even his disciples. They begged him to explain because there was no doubt that Giri was a great renunciate. Giri said, ”Suppose there is a pile of diamonds and a pile of pebbles. This man holds on the pebbles, while I hold on the diamonds! And he thinks I am a renunciate!”

Who has renounced, Mahavir or you, Buddha or you? You have renounced, for you hold on to rubbish. You have discarded the joy of samadhi in favor of the anxiety-ridden affairs of the periphery, and what have you got in exchange for your bliss is so flimsy. So coarse and crude! So stale and dirty!

The worldly man is a great renunciate, but he thinks the sannyasin is the renunciate. In fact, worldly men look at sannyasins with pity: ”Poor things, they have left everything. They have missed all of life’s pleasures.”

They revere sannyasins and deep down pity them, too: ”Poor things! They have renounced everything without enjoying anything. At least some things they should have enjoyed!” But worldly man have no ideas whom they are talking about. The sannyasin has experienced the greatest enjoyment. He has been invited by the vast existence to partake of the greatest of all enjoyments.

I do not ask you to give up anything. I only ask you to know, to taste. This very taste then will slowly displace all that is useless and trivial in your life. The useless just falls away; it needs to be renounced.

Enough for today.

CHAPTER 4

To Be Dead Do Nothing

14 September 1974 am in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

[Note: This is a translation from the Hindi series Shiva Sutra, which is in the process of being edited. It is for research only.]

CHITTAM MANTRAH

PRAYATNAHA SADHAKASH

GURUH UPAYAH

SHARIRAM HAVIH

GYANAMANNAM

VIDYASANGHARA TADUTTHASWAPNADARSHANAM.

THE MIND IS THE MANTRA,

EFFORT IS THE SEEKER.

THE GURU IS THE MEANS.

THE BODY IS THE OFFERING.

KNOWLEDGE IS FOOD.

WHEN KNOWLEDGE IS DESTROYED,

THE DREAM IS SEEN.

THE MIND IS THE MANTRA.

Mantra means that which creates energy by continuous repetition; the very repetition creates the power. If any single thought is repeated continuously it is translated into action. The thought that is repeated time and again begins to manifest in life. Whatever you are is the outcome of some thoughts that have been repeated over and over again.

A great deal of research has been carried out on hypnosis. Modern psychology has been able to penetrate hypnosis at its deepest levels. The basic principle of hypnosis is: if you want to convert any thought into reality, repeat it as many times as possible. By repetition a line is first drawn, which gradually becomes a path within the mind. It is just as if we dig a ditch and the ditch becomes a canal. Very soon the thought begins to materialize.

There was a great French psychologist called Emile Coue, who cured thousands of people with the help of mantra. Thousands of patients from all over the world used to go to him. His treatment was very simple. He would tell the patient to repeat to himself: "I am not ill. I am all right. I am becoming healthy." He was told to repeat this before going to bed, as soon as he awakened in the morning, and as many times as he remembered during the day. A single thought was to be constantly repeated: I am healthy! I am becoming healthier and healthier every day!

It seems to be a miracle. People with incurable diseases were cured by this small mantra. People came to come from far and wide. But the trick is very small.

Ordinarily when you are cured, psychologists say that ninety percent of the work is done by repetition. Medicine does only ten percent of the work. A patient takes medicine four times a day, eight times a day. Each time he takes it he feels: Now I am going to get better for I have taken the right medicine.

In homeopathic medicine the pills are no remedy in themselves, but all the same, they cure people just as effectively as allopathic medicines. If a doctor whom you trust gives you just water, you will be cured. It is not a question of medicine, but a question of your having faith in the doctor. The faith becomes the repetition. The doctor who charges higher fees cures more people than the one who charges less, for as your pocket gets lighter, your faith gets stronger. Besides, you feel that for someone like yourself, only the very best treatment is good enough. Repetition....!

Psychologists have experimented with placebos, false medicine, but when the doctor prescribes them, he pretends that it is regular medicine. The result of the experiments was amazing. Patients with the same complaint were divided into two groups. One group was given the regular course of treatment, whereas the other group was treated entirely with the placebo, plain water. Of course they did not know it. They presumed, it was a medicine. At the end of the treatment there were as many cures in the group which received the placebo as in the first group. This means that water was as effective a cure as the usual medicine. This is why so many people respond to a cure when it is first discovered; they are convinced that now the right cure has been found. Patients all around the

world are influenced. Then slowly the drug becomes less effective. Once in a while some person does not get cured, or a stubborn patient takes the drug and suffers, thus destroying the faith of others. Then the medicine becomes less effective. So every year new cures have to be found.

New drugs impress only if they are well advertised. So all media should be used: radio, newspapers, cinema, magazines, television. Advertising is more effective than the drug itself; it is the advertisement that hypnotizes. It becomes a mantra, a repetition. Open the newspaper... Aspirin! Switch on the radio ... Aspirin! Television ... Aspirin! Billboards by the side of the road ... Aspirin! Wherever you turn you are confronted by 'Aspirin'. It becomes a bigger headache than the headache itself. Only then is it effective in curing the headache.

Repetition creates energy. Mantra means to repeat something over and over again. This sutra says: THE MIND ITSELF IS THE MANTRA. The sutra says that you need no other mantra if you understand the mind The working of the mind is nothing but repetition. What is your mind doing? What has it been doing for infinite lives? Merely repeating. What do you do every day? What you did yesterday you repeat today, and you will do it again tomorrow if you do not change. And the more you repeat, the more intense will the repetition become and you will get so involved that you will find it difficult to get out of it.

There are people who come to me and say, "I cannot give up smoking." Smoking has become a mantra, they have repeated it so many times. If they smoke two packs of cigarettes a day that means the person is repeating something forty times a day, and has been doing this for years. Now if he wants to stop he cannot. You may stop smoking, but the mind will keep craving for a smoke; then your body will demand: I want to smoke! I want a smoke!

This is what we call addiction. Craving comes when you suddenly want to stop what you have been doing repeatedly. Now this addiction which has become a mantra has to be broken by an alternative mantra.

Pavlov has done a great deal of research on this subject. He is perhaps the only person who has cured patients with addictions. If you were addicted to smoking and wanted to give it up, Pavlov would use this method of repetition. He would give you a cigarette. No sooner would you have it in your hand than you receive an electric shock. Your whole body feels the tremor and the cigarette falls out of your hands. For seven days you remain in his clinic. Ever time you smoke you feel the electric shock. In seven days the mantra would be stronger than the urge, so much so that the very mention of a cigarette makes you tremble. You develop an aversion to smoking.

Pavlov cured thousands of patients in this matter. His argument was that unless a person be given an opposite habit, which is stronger than his addiction, he cannot be made to overcome his habit.

The pattern of your life, whatever it is, is a result of your mind. You go on repeating. Every day you want to get rid of your anger, and every day you get angry. The more you repeat the anger, the stronger it becomes. How often you vow not to get angry, but your vows are always broken. Now the confusion deepens. It was better not to take any oaths, for now the mantra is reinforced; it has become doubly effective. Now you keep repeating, "I shall not be angry. I shall not be angry..." knowing full well that your anger is much stronger than your vows. Vows have no value; they are not worth a penny no matter how many times you take them. Now this also becomes hypnosis. Now you will swear you will not be angry, knowing full well that it is not going to be effective.

Never take any vows that you cannot fulfill. It is better to live with a habit than take a vow and break it. If it becomes a habit with you to take vows and break them, this will make you incapable of following any resolution in life. The so-called religious teachers have made you very irreligious. They give you vows so cheaply. you go to the temple, to a holy man or sage, and he tells you, "Take a vow." Now you are in a fix. Sitting in the holy surroundings of a temple you cannot say to the sage, "I am incapable of taking any vows." That would hurt your ego. Instead, you say, "From today on I will never smoke again."

I have a friend who is slightly eccentric – but he is much better than you! He went to a monk – he is a Jaina – and the monk said, "Take a vow!"

"Very well, I shall," he said.

The monk asked, "What have you vowed?"

He said, "I have vowed to smoke from today on." He never smoked before. He was slightly eccentric but he kept the vow faithfully! And I tell you, this man has gained a lot more than the man who takes vows of not smoking and fails to keep them. He broke his vow, he was filled with self-condemnation. This man at least kept his word. He may be eccentric but he is better than you. He could, at least, stick to his resolution.

Whenever you break a vow your self-esteem drops and you are filled with guilt. Each time you fail, your guilt increases ad you become more and more miserable. You will lose your soul in this state of wretchedness. To gain your soul you need the self-respect of a king; self-condemnation simply takes you further and further away from yourself.

Understand the nature of your mind and you will understand this sutra. The whole art of the mind, its structure, is built on repetition. The mind is a mantra. Whatever you repeated has become your habit. All that you keep repeating becomes a part of your life. For lives on end you repeat the same things over and over again and you attain it in each life – and you are addicted to the repetition of all that is wrong and false!

So what is to be done? One: do not be in a hurry to destroy the false. The best way to go about it is to start doing the right thing instead of fighting the wrong. Learn a new mantra! If you smoke, it is perfectly all right! Begin to meditate, and intensify the mantra of meditation every day. The day meditation pervades your being, you will be filled with self-respect. When this happens it will be child's play to give up smoking, for you have now begun a positive mantra.

Don't be negative in your approach or you will find yourself in difficulty. You will be caught up in remorse and guilt; you will be lost in pain and sorrow and despair. All your holy men sitting in the temples – how sad they look! There is no joy, no flowering in their lives; they use only negative mantras. Their quest is centered around negation – to get rid of whatever is wrong, bit by bit.

I tell you not to be in any hurry to get rid of your bad habits. Be quick to develop good ones. The day that the good habits become powerful, the bad ones are easy to give up. Don't fight with your illness; strive to attain health. That was what Coue used to tell his patients. He told them to practice auto-suggestion: "I am getting better! I am getting better..."

You can also do the opposite. You have a headache. You can repeat to yourself, "I have no headache." Now, as many times as you repeat this, you will be repeating the word 'headache'. If you have a headache, there is no sense in telling yourself there is no headache. The headache is! No matter how many times you repeat the contrary, you know that your repetition is a lie. Superficially you may go on saying that there is no headache but inwardly you know that your head is aching. You are repeating just for the sake of Coue. And the headache will be cured by an inner process – not by following the suggestions of Coue. Don't use a negative word 'no'.

Therefore, I say, don't be in a hurry to renounce the world; instead, strive to attain God! Therefore, I say, don't walk the path of renunciation; seek ultimate enjoyment! Don't concentrate on that which is wrong because in order to give up the wrong you have to look at it again and again. And the more you look at it, the more the mantra is being repeated. And you are hypnotized by the thing you watch constantly.

A great deal of research is going on about car accidents. Nowadays the number of people dying in car accidents is more than the number died in the world war. The number of people who die every year in car accidents is twice as high as the number of people who died in World War Two. It is not a small number. Something has to be done. In examining this phenomenon, it was discovered that fifty percent of accidents take place between midnight and three a.m. That is the period of sleep, and the mind is the most drowsy. When the mind is drowsy it gets hypnotized. The driver is hypnotized by the monotonous purring of the engine and the straight road without any curves for miles on end. And the psychologists say that thousands of people are dying because of the white line drawn in the middle of the road. The driver keeps on watching it and gets hypnotized. Then he is not in his senses, he is in a druggish state. The situation is: it is between midnight and three am; there is the monotonous sound of the engine; the long, empty road, everything enveloped in darkness; even the trees and shrubs are invisible; the driver sees only the road and the white centre-strip.

You can try a small experiment. Draw a straight white line on a table. Get hold of a hen and press its head down for some time so that it can see the line. Now let go of the hen. It will not budge from that spot for hours. It is hypnotized by the line. It will sit there for hours.

Psychologists say that drivers become hypnotized in the same way. They say not to make the road too straight and regular; they suggest to change the sound of the engine from time to time. Any change decreases the drowsiness, and thus many accidents can be avoided.

The number of accidents in your life can be decreased too. One: do not focus your gaze on things that are wrong, for what you see, slowly begins to penetrate you. You are addicted to fixing your eyes on the wrong; you pay attention only to what is wrong inside you. The angry man concentrates on his anger, and how to get rid of it. Though he wants to get rid of the anger, he is actually concentrating on that white line of anger within him; the more he concentrates the more he is hypnotized by it. Sexual people go on concentrating on the sex.

Mulla Nasruddin reached the age of one hundred. Journalists rushed to interview him because he was the only centenarian in the town. Among the many questions they asked him was, "What do you have to say about the fair sex?"

Nasruddin said, "Do not raise such a question. I stopped thinking about women three days ago."

A hundred year old man, and it is only three days since he stopped thinking of women! Thoughts of women will grip your mind because you want to get rid of them. This has become your negative mantra. You will find that whatever you try to break away from, grips you even more because it becomes the object of your concentration. If you keep looking at the wrong you are meditating on them more.

Mahavir said that there are four types of meditation; two are right and two are wrong. No person except Mahavir has suggested that the 'wrong' be used as an object of meditation. Psychologists will agree with him. Mahavir says that wrong meditation is also meditation. For instance, an angry person becomes meditative, because when he is filled with anger, nothing exists for him at that moment except his anger. In anger the mind is focussed entirely on one point. That is why there is so much power in anger.

Have you noticed? An angry person is able to lift someone twice his size. If he had been in his right senses, if he had not been consumed with anger, he would have thought many times before touching that person. Why invite trouble? A man can move a huge rock when he is enraged, something he couldn't even imagine in his wildest dreams. If a man is sufficiently angry all his reserves of energy are awakened. How does this come about? The energy which is dissipated all over the body becomes concentrated in one place. When the sunrays are concentrated on one point a flame is produced. In the same manner, when in the heat of anger all the mind's attention is focussed on one point, an explosion occurs. Mahavir refers to this as 'meditation'.

Mahavir says that there are two types of wrong meditations: one is full of sorrow, another is full of anger. In great sorrow a person also enters into meditation. If someone dies you weep and wail, and all your attention is concentrated on one point. Beware of the wrong kind of meditation. And you are totally engrossed in the wrong kind of meditation. This is the root cause of your troubles; the basic problem and disease is only one: you have fixed your attention on what is wrong. You have to drop it. You think you are doing it with the intention of avoiding them; but, because of this very concentrated effort, you are stuck with them.

I say to you: Don't be concerned with the world. Fix your attention on God! You are an angry man. Don't worry! Everybody is! Don't focus your eyes on the anger, but concentrate on compassion. Concentrate on what is right. As the right gets more and more energy, the strength of the wrong gets weaker and weaker. Ultimately it will disappear. This happens because energy is one; you cannot use it in two ways. If you have utilized your energy in becoming peaceful, you would have no energy for restlessness. All your energy has moved towards peace, and if you have had a taste of peace and serenity, why bother to become restless? You can maintain your restlessness only if you have never known the flavor of serenity. You can dive into the pleasures of the world only if you have not tasted the divine.

Understand this well. Avoid the negative; beware of saying 'no'. Do not be anxious to drop the evil, for then the evil will hypnotize you and you will never be able to get rid of it. Whatever you try to break away from, you find you are hooked to it all the more.

I have heard: Once a man was refused accommodation in a hotel even though there was a vacant room. The manager was apologetic but refused to give him the room. "The thing is", he explained, "the guest in the room below is a trouble maker. If there is the least sound he creates a fuss, so we decided never to rent this room when he is here."

”You don’t have to worry,” said the traveller. ”I will be out all day and won’t be back until eleven at night, and then I have to catch a train at three in the morning. I will hardly be here for three hours. There won’t be any chance to disturb your guest. There will be no problem, I will keep in mind what you said and be very careful.”

The man returned at midnight, tired after a day’s work. He sat on the bed and removed one shoe, which he let fall. When it hit the floor he suddenly remembered the finicky person in the room below, so he carefully placed the other shoe on the floor and went to sleep. After about fifteen minutes there was a knock at the door. He opened the door and saw a man standing there trembling with rage.

The traveller was afraid. He didn’t know what to do. ”Have I done anything wrong?” he asked.

”Wrong! I ask you! What happened to the other shoe! I have been waiting for fifteen minutes for you to drop it. You made it impossible for me to sleep. The other shoe is hanging on my head. I cannot be rest assured till I find out about the other shoe.”

Everyone sits with the other shoe dangling – the shoe of negation. You have to drop this, drop that. There are so many evils that one lifetime is not enough to eradicate them all. Evil is hidden in every corner, in every nook and cranny. Your whole life is filled with guilt. Your holy men and priests stuff you with the sense of guilt. They say to you, ”This is wrong! That is wrong! Everything is wrong!” They give you no information about what is right. They say, ”How can you attain the right before you get rid of the wrong!” Their argument seems logical. Their argument is that there can be no light as long as darkness exists.

And I say to you, if you listen to them and believe them, no matter how logical their statements, you will be stuck for lifetimes to come. It is they who have led you astray. It is not the devil who led you astray but the so-called saints because their argument is so logical: as long as the wrong isn’t dropped how can you achieve the right?

Have you ever tried to get rid of darkness? If you wait for darkness to disperse before you light your lamp you will never light it. I say to you, light your lamp! Don’t worry about the darkness because no sooner is the lamp lit than darkness is gone. Bring in light and darkness vanishes. Nobody in the world has ever succeeded in dispelling darkness by removing it. Similarly, evil cannot be eradicated, but good can certainly be brought in. The world can never be renounced, but the soul can be attained, and as soon as the soul is attained the world drops.

We hold on to the world simply because we have nothing better in view. And how can we leave the world unless we find something better than that? No matter how much you want to, you cannot leave it. You will fight. You will tire yourself out; you will even destroy yourself, but you will reach nowhere. Your life will be a senseless race that leads nowhere. Then you will return and take another body, and the vicious circle will continue. The only man who attains to the good is the man who gives up concentrating on evil.

The mind is a mantra – whether you use it for good or for evil. Repetition becomes energy. If anger arises, accept it! No matter how many times it raises its ugly head, don’t feel repentant. Don’t fight it either. All that is needed is that you act compassionately as many times as you are angry. Let

others profit from you as much as they have suffered from you. Savor the taste of compassion. Do not punish yourself for your wrongdoings. Treat yourself to a good deed; do not reproach yourself for your misdeeds. If you have abused someone, go and sing somebody's praises; make a list of his virtues. You have enjoyed cursing people, now enjoy appreciating the merits of others.

Don't get involved with the thorns; just let them be and concentrate on the flowers. If you are involved with the thorns you will never reach the flowers. There are so many thorns and you will be so badly bruised that, when you find a flower it will not give you any pleasure. You will be so filled with wounds that even the caress of the flowers will not soothe you. It will hurt!

Do not pay any attention to the thorns, focus on the flowers. Be drowned in the charm and the pleasure of the flowers, and you will find that the thorns no longer prick you. He who is overwhelmed by the beauty of the flower will not be affected by the thorns. The real thing is to drown in the essence of the flower. Be struck dumb by its beauty. Be enchanted by it. The real thing is to drink in the essence of God, and then the wines of the world will lose their charm; otherwise you will keep fighting worldly pleasures, and you will be defeated by the same pleasures.

He who fights the evil is defeated by evil, for such a mind makes a mantra of the evil because mind is mantra. Try to understand the process of the mind: it repeats and repeats and repeats!

Observe your mind for only seven days. Write down everything that the mind repeats. You will find it moving in a circle. If you observe carefully you will find that just as night follows day, just as mornings and afternoon and evening move in rotation, so also your anger, your love, your sex, your greed; they all have their allotted periods. Greed catches you exactly at its appointed hour, just as hunger grips you at the same time every day. You have never observed your mind closely. You can even make a calendar of your various moods; then you can warn your wife and children: "Beware of me on Monday mornings!" Then they will know that they should stay out of your way during the difficult periods. If you begin to observe yourself during these particular periods you will be able to locate the points around which the changing moods of your mind revolve. Not only is the body circular, but the mind also moves in a circle.

All movements in the world are circular. The moon and stars move in a circle; the earth moves in a circle and so do the seasons. Even the seasons of your mind go around in a circle. Scientists have discovered recently that there is a cycle of chemical reactions in the male body which is similar to the menstrual cycle in females. You must have noticed that women tend to become cross and irritable and restless during their menstrual periods. The Hindus were very clever. They evolved the custom of segregating women form the rest of the household during this time. A great many chemical changes occur in a woman's body at this time, and it is difficult for her to remain alert and aware of herself.

Exactly the same things happen to men. There is no outward flow of blood, but there is an internal flow from certain glands. If you observe carefully you will find that a man is also depressed, restless and in a black mood every twenty-eight days.

Observe closely and you will see that your mind revolves in one complete cycle every twenty-eight days. As you become more and more familiar with your cycle, you will be able to predict with great accuracy what moods you are going to have and when you are going to have them. You will be

shocked to discover that you get angry not because of any outside influence but because of what is going on inside you. The other person is merely an excuse. Then, if you lose your temper, you will not blame the other; on the contrary, you will ask his pardon. You will ask him to forgive you. You will explain that your outburst has nothing to do with him, that you always get angry at this time of the month. It was just accidental that he was there to provide an excuse for your rage. Anyone else would have done just as well.

By self-observation you will discover the circular movement of the mind. It is a mantra that is repeated over and over again. If you fail to understand this you will be revolving round and round for endless births. Therefore the Hindus have called the world samsara – the wheel that turns round and round. For endless lives you do the same things over and over again, and you are not the only one doing this. Everyone else also does it. When you fall in love for the first time you feel that such a wonderful thing has never happened before. But this happens every moment somewhere in the world, even in the world of animals and plants. It is not only to you that love is happening. It has been happening all along. And anger, too, is happening to everyone.

There is only one thing that is outside of this circle, and that is meditation. It is the only happening that does not occur by itself. Other happenings occur all by themselves; you do not have to bring them about. All that you have to do is keep sitting on the wheel, it is moving of its own accord, you will keep on moving tied down to it. Only by jumping outside this wheel can you get rid of it. There is only one thing which is out of this wheel and that is meditation! But this does not happen on its own. It happens to one in a million – to a rare Buddha!

According to Arnold Toynbee, the great historian, only six people have managed to jump out of this circle from the whole history of mankind. If it is sixty and not six, even then the number is too small. It is an unusual – almost impossible – phenomenon. Anger, love, greed are common, ordinary happenings; they occur not only to men but even to animals. These do not make you a human being. You will be truly human being the day you step out of this circle of the mind, you step out of the rotating movement of the mind. When the circle of the mind breaks and you stand outside of it – that is meditation!

Meditation is not circular. Meditation is a state of being, the mind is a movement. Meditation is a condition of no movement. The mind is another name for a wandering, and the places it wanders in are not new. It is caught in a rut. It wanders in the same places again and again, like an ox at the oil mill. If you observe this phenomenon consciously you will know that it is not just a concept, but truly a fact of life. It is not a doctrine of philosophy. The circular movement of your mind, that your mind being a mantra is a fact of your life.

Those of you who have tried to understand life have discovered this fact. It is not a principle, not a theory, but fact. A concept is only a circular movement in your mind. his is not a philosophic theory but a fact of life, and you can obtain it from your experience. don't believe it just because I say so, or just because Shiva says so. You have eyes to see. Look within; observe your mind. View your mind from within for a few days and you will be surprised at what you discover. You will find yourself chained and shackled to this wheel; and not only you, all of creation is captive to the wheel. This is not the assertion of your humanness, there is no dignity in this state.

The real dignity of your existence as a human being cannot be realized while you are captive to this

cycle of endless repetition; it is born only when you break away from the wheel and stand apart. It is then that you reach buddhahood; it is then that you attain shivahood.

The mind is mantra. Repetition is the very nature of the mind; therefore, nothing new is ever born in the realm of the mind. Nothing is ever original in the mind. Everything is old and stale – just remnants and scraps. And you keep chewing this cud! You are like a cow. With your mind you take something in, forget about it, and then after a time, you bring it up and chew it over. You read a book and it keeps on revolving in your mind. You hear me, and my words keep turning over and over in your mind. Your mind will start a new circle, but nothing original ever happens in the mind, whereas the soul is an original entity. And God is the supreme originality. It is ever new; there is nothing fresher than that. It cannot be attained through the mind; you will have to break the mind's circuit.

Understand the sutra well:

THE MIND IS THE MANTRA.

EFFORT IS THE SEEKER.

Effort, the next sutra, means an attempt to get out of the mind's circle. He who steps out of this circle is a siddha, one who has arrived; he who is still trying to get out of the circle is the sadhak, the seeker. Great must be your effort – in fact, the very best you are capable of. Only then can you step out of it. You will have to work as hard to step out of the mind as you did to get chained by it There is a major obstacle in your way: you see everything through your mind and whatever you see is coloured by your mind. This makes things very difficult.

I speak and you hear, but your mind stands in between. Whatever I say the mind will colour according to itself and give its own shade of meaning. The whole sense of my words is changed.

Mulla Nasruddin had drunk one too many. He caught a bus to go home He was reeking of alcohol, and the old woman who sat next to him felt pity for him. She said, "Son, do you realise what you are doing? You have embarked on a route that leads straight to hell!"

The Mulla jumped up with a start. He called out to the conductor, "Stop the bus! I have caught the wrong bus!"

The Mulla's alcohol soaked mind gave its own meaning to the old woman's words. He was convinced that the bus was heading towards hell. This is what the mind does all the time; therefore, the most difficult and complicated thing is to put the mind aside and listen. He who can do it is a Shravak the right listeners. This is right listening: Put the mind aside and listen directly.

EFFORT IS THE SEEKER. You will have to try, and try hard! You will have to make a Herculean effort. Laziness will not help you get out of the circle. How can you get rid of a circle by just lying in it? The circle will keep turning and you will have to hold on even harder for fear of falling.

If you have observed the bird catchers in the forest, you, will find that the method they use is very simple. The mind uses the same method to catch you. A string is tied across two branches. The parrot comes and sits on it. Because of his weight he turns upside down. Now he won't move,

because he is afraid of falling. He holds on tight to the string. Now he is in trouble. He feels, if he leaves the string he sure to fall down. You need not catch him, he himself gets caught. The bird catcher come and catches him. The parrot is so frightened that he forgets that he has wings; he forgets that he can't fall to the ground. If you hang upside down in a string, you will have the same fear You too are afraid, if you get off the circles you will be lost, that you will go astray.

One of the characters in a novel written by Hemingway says, "I would rather choose suffering than nothingness." You do not prefer to be empty. You would rather choose hell, because then you have something to hang on to – even if it is hell. At least there something to cling to. You are used to it. Besides, you don't have to do anything. To give up old habits requires great effort.

If your fist has been closed for lives on you will find it impossible to open it, because your fingers have become stiff and frozen. If you want to open your first you will have to make an effort so that the muscles get stronger and the blood begins to flow again in the veins. One thing is certain: he who closes his fist can also open it. The very fact that the fist is closed proves that it was open at one time so it can be open again. But if it is closed for a longer period, it will be difficult to open it. This is the difficulty. Hence, the effort is necessary.

Effort means: you will have to try hard to drop the mind. And the mind will whisper in your ear again and again: "What foolishness is this! What madness!" The moment you leave the mind, it does.

EFFORT IS THE SEEKER. Unless you become a seeker, you will not make an effort. You do make an effort, but it is half-hearted And half hearted effort carries no meaning. It is just as if you have gripped the wheel with one hand and let go with the other. This does not solve the problem. A lukewarm effort is meaningless.

A businessman once told his wife that he was going to the Taj Mahal Hotel to entertain a very important client who was to give him a very big order. So he was gone. When he came home that night, well-stuffed with food and drink, his wife asked, "Did you get the order?"

"Fifty-fifty," he answered.

The wife said, "At least you got something."

As they were preparing to go to sleep she suddenly asked, "What do you mean by fifty-fifty?"

The husband replied, "I reached the hotel, but the client didn't."

When you too are half-and-half, you are like this. Nothing will be gained, for the other half is always missing. You are always fragmented; you are never total. Whenever you are total a revolution takes place, a transformation begins in your life. It is then that you reach the boiling point; and only at the boiling point does the water turn into steam. Then you cannot flow downward like water; you can only rise upwards like vapour. Then your direction is not downwards, it is upwards.

EFFORT IS THE SEEKER. You have to drop laziness.

People come to me and say that the morning meditation is a bit difficult. Six o'clock is too early. You do not understand what you are saying, If getting up at six in the morning is difficult, it will be much

more difficult and painful to step outside the mind. If getting up at six in the morning is so difficult, how will you jump out of the wheel of life? If you are not even prepared to drop the small habit of sleeping late... for a day or two you may fell lazy. But you allow laziness to win over you. It shows that you value your laziness more than meditation. If this were not so you would never have brought up the whole matter.

Somebody comes and complains that the four meditations you do during the camp are too tiring. ”Why can’t we only do two each day?” But then, why do two? Forget about all four. If four meditations tire you, two will tire you half, but you are bound to get tired. And I know if I say that two will be all right, you will promptly return with the request to do only one, because it is the same mind up to its old tricks. Even two meditations will make you fell tired to some extent.

If this is the way you approach things then you will eventually become more and more lazy. Effort is required for everything. Remember, life is effort; death is rest. If you want to be dead you need do nothing. If you want to live you will have to do something. If you want to live life to the fullest you will have to make a great effort. If you want to attain God such small bits of efforts will not do. Your whole life should turn into one gigantic effort. You must stake everything that you have. If you hold back even a little bit of yourself, then you will miss. You have to stake yourself totally; only then will you be saved. That is why so few attain. The reason is nothing but laziness.

While doing the active meditations you are so very careful not to hurt yourself or fall on somebody or tire yourself. Why do it all? Who asked you to do it? You are not clear within yourself and that is the trouble. You live in a haze where everything is foggy and misty. You are not even clear as to how you came here and why? Somebody was coming and you just came along with him – just to look at what was going on.

You have been pushed and pulled about like this for infinite lives, but you will never reach your destination this way. You will never get there by blind chance. You will not reach the destination accidentally. It requires a well directed effort. You reach the destination when all the currents in your life flow in one direction. Destination is your concentrated will power. As soon as you are fully resolved, your energy accumulates at one point and your mind flows in a single stream. This energy within you is unbounded. So if you feel that you do not have sufficient energy, you will get tired very soon, you are mistaken.

There are three layers of energy in your body. The uppermost layer is for day-to-day living; it is like the small change you carry in your pocket. It is not all the money you have. It is just the pocket money you use for minor expenses.

Mulla Nasruddin was going through a village when four men jumped on him. The night was dark but the Mulla fought them so ferociously that he outwitted all four of them. With great difficulty they could overpower him, but when they searched his pockets they found only seven paise! One of them said, ”You are limit Nasruddin! ”I don’t know what made you fight so hard for only seven paise.”

Nasruddin replied, ”I didn’t think that you were fighting for seven paise in my pocket. I have hidden five hundred rupees in my shoe!”

But now the thieves would not dare to attack him. If he could fight so dangerously for only seven paise...!They said, ”Good bye! maybe next time.....”

The energy you use for your everyday living is no more than seven paise worth. You use this for sitting, standing, walking, eating, sleeping and other light jobs. This is your superficial energy, the small change in your purse. When you start meditating, this energy is used up in no time at all, because you are not accustomed to using it for meditation; this is a new activity. Now, if you let this exhaustion govern you and you stop meditating you will never be able to enter deeply into meditation. Take no notice of your fatigue. If you continue you will find that your persistence has tapped the energy that lies at the second level.

You have often experienced this phenomenon. For example you are about to go to bed at night. You are overcome with weariness, so sleepy that you can barely keep your eyes open. Suddenly there is an alarm. Your house has caught fire! Can you sleep after that? do you say ”I am sleepy?” Your sleep vanishes totally. Sleep is the last thing on your mind. Where has all this energy come from? Just now you were dozing. If someone had asked you to read the Gita you would have found it impossible; but now that the house is on fire you spring into action. You run here and there to put out the fire. And when all the fuss has died down you will still find it impossible to sleep, however hard you try. you will remain awake what happened? You have broken through to your second layer of energy. which is not a layer of your daily routine. That layer breaks down. Now this flood of newly released energy makes sleep impossible.

If you persist in your meditation without giving up, you will discover a second source of energy available to you before very long. Once you have this energy at your disposal, then no matter how much you meditate your body will never become tired. You will have something inexhaustible. This is the second layer.

There is also a third layer of energy. This second source of energy is your treasure It can be consumed, though not as easily as the first. If you keep on making effort, ceaselessly, this source of energy will also dry up, and the third layer will break loose. This third source does not belong to you. It belongs to God, and it never dries up. If you become lazy, however, you will not reach the second, let alone the third. GOD IS THE SUPREME ENERGY HIDDEN IN YOU.

The first layer is that of your mind; the second is that of your soul; the third is of God. Exhaust the mind and you attain the energy of the soul. Exhaust the soul and you attain the energy of God, which is eternal and inexhaustible. Then you are one with the whole.

Therefore Shiva says: EFFORT IS THE SEEKER. Continuous effort that becomes more and more intense is the seeker. You have to keep on trying until the third level of energy is reached, and you obtain the supreme power. Then you are a siddha, one who has arrived. Then you can relax. Before that, any relaxation is suicidal.

The third sutra:

THE GURU IS THE WAY.

This quest for life cannot be carried out individually, because by yourself you are caught up in your own circle. You cannot see outside it. You don’t even know that there is anything beyond it. You live in a cocoon and for you that is the only life that there is. Only someone who has known the Absolute can bring you the news of the outside world. you are a prisoner inside your house, oblivious of the

stars and the moon and the open skies. Someone from outside who has seen the moon and the stars will have to come and knock at your door and tell you to come out from behind your closed doors.

But before you move an inch you will ask the question: Does the outside exist? That's what people ask: Does god exist? Is there a soul? And you want that sitting inside the house someone should prove the existence of the sky. How can it be proved when you are sitting inside the four walls How can you be convinced of the vast space outside unless you are willing to step out of your house? You will have to step out. You will have to walk a few steps outside with him who says that the sky exists, because the sky can only be shown, it cannot be proved. If somebody wants to prove the existence of the sitting under the roof you can defeat him. You will say, "what nonsense! there is only the roof and the walls. What is the proof that there is some vastness outside? Bring some sky inside and show me The sky is not a thing which can be brought inside. The sky cannot be broken into fragments, nor can God be broken into pieces and shown to you. you will have to step outside to see for yourself.

Therefore, THE GURU IS THE WAY. Guru only means the one who has had the experience, the one who has known, the one who has escaped from prison. Only he can make you aware of your imprisonment, he alone can tell you that you can escape from here, and only he can suggest the means to escape. And only he can guide you out of the prison, because he knows the door from which you can escape. There are doors in this prison where the guards are asleep and there are doors in this prison where the guards are awake and alert, and if you try to escape through these doors you will find yourself in great trouble. Now, at least, you are free within your prison, but if you try to escape through the main entrance, where the guards are alert, you will be caught and thrown into a dark dungeon. Then the prison will become even more constricted. And remember if you try to get out by the method of negation you will fall into this dungeon.

If you fight with evil you will be thrown into greater evil – that is the main door. No one can ever escape that way. No one has ever escape through that because there is a strong guarong at the main gate, and all steps are taken to maintain complete security. But there are other openings in this prison which are hidden, where there is no guard; because these exists are unknown to the prisoners. They have their eyes fixed on the main door.

During the French Revolution the inmates of a prison rebelled. There were two thousand prisoners and only twenty guards on hand to put them down. In fact, the prisoners could have gained their freedom at any time. What can the twenty guards do? The prisoners never rebelled, but of course, prisoners are never friends with each other. They don't unite. They don't have the simplicity which can bring there together. They are inimical to each other. So twenty guards were enough. On this occasion however they united and rebelled.

The head jailer was very perturbed what to do? He told the guards not to worry about the main gate but defend the smaller doors and windows. The guards says, "This is not the right decision" The jailor said,"Don't worry Leave the main door unguarded." but they did as they were told, and not a single prisoner escaped. The main gate was unguarded. They could have broken it down and all of them marched out, but they ignored the main gate. they imagined it was heavily guarded since it had always been heavily guarded.

When the guards asked him how he hit upon the idea, the head keeper explained it like this: "They

rebelled because someone from the outside got in among the prisoners and stirred them up to escape-a free person who knows. This someone, since he comes from the outside, knows that we have a heavy guarding around the main door, so he would advise them to use the smaller doors. So till yesterday we were guarding the main door because those who were inside were ignorant but it seems that some master, has got in among them."

In life, fighting against evil appears to be the main gate. Your mind tells you: Destroy evil and you will attain to saintliness. Leave the wrong path, then the right path will appear. Renounce the world to allow space for god to be enthroned within you.

These is the main gate. The master will never tell you to try it, because no one has ever been able to pass through it. This door is heavily guarded and he who tries to escape is thrown into deeper dungeons.

According to me, all your saints and monks are locked in worse prisons than you are. You do not have the eyes to see, so you cannot see this. The worldly man is in great distress, but the so-called saints are in a worse plight. You at least have a little courtyard in front of you where you can feel a little free, but they are deprived of such courtyards. They are inside the prison but they do not get the limited freedom that an average prisoner gets. They are locked in dark, dismal cells twenty-four hours a day.

Sadhus and sannyasins come to me. I find their minds diseased and mad. one Jain sadhu told me, "I am sixty years old. I have been a saint for forty years, but one single thought haunts me always: could it be that I have made a mistake? Could it be that the common man enjoys the world while I undergo these tortures unnecessarily?"

Such doubts are only natural for an intelligent person. This man is not a fool, he is wise and his doubts are natural. He sees that fighting desire for forty years has not led him anywhere. He has attained nothing, and his anger, lust and greed have not been destroyed. They have only been further submerged and hidden.

You can fool people in the outside world and hide your passions from them, but how can you hide them from your own self? You know you have them all inside you, repressed. You look like a good person, you do not commit a crime, but the criminal is hiding inside and can appear any minute. Given the opportunity, he will commit a crime.

The prison walls have come closer for this man. He has lost even the little freedom to walk about than an ordinary person has. It is a dungeon.

He who tries to leave through the main door will be bound by even heavier chains; but there are secret doors that only the master can show to you. There are keys to open the secret doors, but only he who has already escaped can lead you out.

Scriptures can help you to some extent. You may remain in the prison and read them, but you cannot find your way out through them; because who is to find the meaning behind the words? None other than you. Who is it who will read the scripture to extract the meaning? It's you! Who will understand? You will! And you will understand them according to your own understanding. And

if your understanding were the right understanding, you wouldn't need the scriptures at all; but you are not wise, and that is a fact! The meanings that an ignorant person draws from the scriptures just cause him more trouble and difficulty. No! You need living scriptures. THE MASTER IS THE LIVE SCRIPTURE. Find a living guide to lead you on the right path.

Shiva says: THE GURU IS THE WAY. There is no other way. If you try to solve this problem yourself you will find yourself drawn deeper into the problem, for the mind is a very subtle mechanism. To avoid accepting anyone's help we attempt to solve our problems by ourselves. If you discover that your watch has stopped your first impulse is to do something immediately to try to make it work again. The more stupid you are, the more strong impulse you have. A child doesn't hesitate at all; he fell what's the big problem? First it was working now it doesn't. Let me find out for myself. It is not a very complex machine.

If you attempt to repair your own watch you will find yourself in the same state as Mulla Nasruddin.

I have heard: One day Mulla Nasruddin went to a watch repair shop. He placed his watch on the counter. It was just a pile of little wheels and pieces. The watchmaker looked at the mess and then he looked at the Mulla.

Nasruddin said, "I dropped it. I can't understand how it could have fallen."

"I don't understand why you bothered to pick it up," said the watchmaker. "It is beyond repair. Anyway, a watch won't fall into a million pieces just by dropping it."

"Well, the fact is," confessed the Mulla, "I tried to repair it by myself."

A watch is a simple mechanism compared to the mind. There is no mechanism on earth as complicated as the brain. There are seventy million cells in your brain, each capable of collecting ten million messages. Psychologists say that one brain can store all the written matter in the world. All the knowledge of the world can be stored in one small brain. And it is such a small thing. It hardly weighs one and a half kilos, yet it has seventy million tiny neurons, each invisible to the naked eye.

Once you grasp the immense complexity of the brain, you can understand why brain surgery is still in its infancy. You try to cut something and thousands of other neurons get destroyed. Everything is so delicate. Just a touch of a surgeon's knife and big numbers of neurons are destroyed.

Even the knife is not needed; you try standing on your head for half an hour everyday and your brain will be damaged. While standing on the head excess blood floods the brain and damages the delicate tissue. The people who practice this posture for a long time are never very intelligent.

Man's brain developed as it did because at some stage in his evolution he stood upright on his hind legs, and the flow of blood to his brain was thereby reduced. For this reason the brains of animals did not develop any further; because their brain and their bodies are on the same level. Their nerve fibers are thicker, they are not thin. The whole dignity and speciality of man lies in the fact that he stood up. By standing on two legs the gravitational force causes his blood to flow downwards. His lungs and heart have to work harder to pump the blood upwards, only then the blood flows towards the brain. And thus a limited quantity reaches the brain. This has made it easier for the finer, more

delicate tissues and fibres to evolve. If there is a flood, the bigger trees will be swept away; what about the tiny bushes? So the tissues are so delicate that the slightest increase in blood pressure destroys them, as if they were hit by a flood.

If you dismantle the delicate machinery of all these seventy million cells and tried to work things out for yourself, you would never meet with any success. Failure and great damage are certain. Yet this is what people do: they try to open their own brains! They try to meditate on their own and practice their own yoga postures! They pick up clues from books and from people that they meet. They pick up ideas that are floating freely in the air and they begin to work with them. The only outcome is disaster!

A Buddhist monk was brought to me. He had not been able to sleep for three years. He had been given extensive treatment but to no avail. His insomnia had defied all tranquillizers, and no treatment seemed to work on him. You can imagine his state – the man who has not slept for three years is almost insane!

No doctor had asked him what I asked him, however. The doctors all carried out the usual tests; they checked his blood pressure and did a cardiogram and then began to treat him. But this was not his trouble. This man was engaged in practising a particular meditation technique used by the Buddhists, Vipassana. He himself had chosen this meditation from the scriptures and began to practise it. A guru will take care of each and every disciple. If he develops a group exercise he will take care of the group. The scriptures cannot take care of you in this way. Who is going to read them Scriptures can live for thousands of years, and anyone can read them his own way.

The technique of vipassana is a very old technique. This man read about it and set out to practise it. Then he began to enjoy it. As a method it is a jewel. Buddha himself used it a great deal. Once you begin to enjoy it you won't know when to stop. Enjoyment, once it become extreme, turns into poison. This man was so intoxicated by the vipassana that he began to practise it twenty-four hours a day.

If you practise anything incessantly, day and night, sleep is bound to be destroyed. You have created a great flood of energy inside yourself, and its continuous motion won't allow you to sleep. Besides, he had done this practice for so many years that all the brain tissues that brought on sleep had been destroyed. A doctor can help only if the brain tissue itself is still in order. Tranquillizers can cause the cells in question to relax, but if they are not there what can the doctor do?

I suggested to him that he should forget the meditation completely and become a lazy person for a full year. He should forget all about meditation. He should encourage idleness-just eat, drink and sleep as much as he could for a year; become a completely worldly man for a full year.

He was disappointed. He objected, "I never expected to hear you say such a thing. Are you trying to ruin me?"

I told him that he could think this if he chose, but this was my opinion. "Do as I say for a year and then come to me," I told him.

He returned in three months, beaming and happy. Then I had to give him a new technique. At such a point I have to judge what is suitable and how much a particular person can take. Gradually the

duration is increased according to the seeker's progress. I have to be aware of every aspect of the seeker's state of mind. I have to watch the whole picture.

Therefore Shiva says: THE GURU IS THE WAY. Do not be a way unto yourself or you will spoil everything. First of all, it is a difficult task to find a living person because to surrender to a living person is difficult; the ego gets hurt! So people take greater interest in the scriptures; scriptures don't hurt the ego so much. You can throw them in the dustbin or keep them in a place of worship – scriptures won't object. You cannot do that to a living guru. Your ego will have to bow down to him.

You also bow down to the scriptures, but you are still your own master. At any time you can discard them; they can do nothing against your will. To bow at the feet of a living person is a crushing blow to the ego. That is why people first seek in books. Then, when they are tired, they look for a master; but by then the books have so much corrupted them by words they cannot recognize the master when he comes.

When you finally approach the master you bring your bookish knowledge of master and try to judge him accordingly. No book can tell you what a master should be like. A book can talk about a guru. If there is a book about Kabir it will tell you all about how Kabir used to be, but Kabir is not going to be born again. Those are Kabir's characteristics, but not those of a master. If you are a follower of Kabir and totally filled with him, and thus seek the same qualities in another person before accepting him as a master, you will never find a master for yourself. Kabir cannot be born again.

The Digambara Jainas do not accept a master unless he is totally naked. It was Mahavira's pleasure to take off his clothes; I do not enjoy doing that. If the seeker is looking for a Mahavir, Mahavir no longer exists. It s an irony of fate that during Mahavira's lifetime it could be this very same nakedness that prevented people from accepting him, perhaps because nakedness was not mentioned as a necessary quality in the books that were circulating at that time. None of the Tirthankaras before Mahavir had renounced clothing, so the Jainas themselves were not prepared to accept him, because nakedness seemed uncivilized to them. They rejected Mahavir, for nowhere in the scriptures is there any mention of naked gurus. Then Mahavir died and scriptures were created around him and the present day Jain carrying Mahavira's burden. As a result, when Parshwanath appears wearing clothes he cannot be accepted as guru – he is not naked!

Remember, whatever particular scripture that you read tells you about a particular master. He cannot come again. A master is incomparable, unique! Thus if your eyes are filled with scriptures you will never be able to recognize a living master. The scriptures tell about those who have been and who will never be again. Those who believed in Mahavir will never accept Buddha. At best they may consider him a great soul, a Mahatma, but not Bhagwan.

There is a man I know, a Jain. He has written a book. He is really a good man, but that does not give him understanding. Bad people are generally foolish, but so are good people; foolishness is so deep rooted that the goodness makes no difference. He is a good man and he respects all religions equally. The book he wrote is called BHAGWAN MAHAVIR AND MAHATMA BUDDHA – GOD MAHAVIR AND GREAT SOUL BUDDHA. My friend is a writer. He is known to the people in Poona; in fact it was he who brought me to Poona for the first time. He is an old devotee of Gandhiji, from whom he acquired this felling that all human beings are one. So he wrote this book – but his Jain mind persisted. I was staying with him at the time. I asked him, "Why did you differentiate between Mahavir and Buddha, calling one 'Bhagwan' and the other only 'Mahatma'?"

He replied "You see, Mahavir is in fact Bhagwan, but we can accept Buddha at most as a Mahatma, not as God, because God does not wear cloth. He is naked."

So this is the difficulty! It is not that only Jainas have this difficulty. everyone has it. This is why a Jain cannot accept Ram as God, because Sita stands by his side. A Jain cannot understand a woman present with God. When he has renounced everything how can a woman be there? So a priceless jewel like Sita is lost to the Jainas. They cannot grasp her significance.

And Krishna? They put him down in hell, for he has not one but sixteen thousand women around him. No one is more eligible for hell than Krishna. Since the Jainas are traders and merchants by caste, they are afraid of starting any row with the Hindus. Perhaps this is the reason why they have advocated nonviolence.

It is always a coward who advocates non-violence. Violence requires some guts, so cowards believe in not killing and not being killed As a principle it's fine: Do not kill others-Live and let live! But it implies that they want to survive and they don't care about the others at all so they use the idea of non-violence; there is no other meaning behind it. After having thrown Krishna into hell, they were afraid of the anger of the Hindus, so out of fear they have played another trick: They declared that Krishna will be a Tirthankara in the coming age. He does not fit anywhere in their doctrine however, if they have to live among the Hindus, they have to accept him. They compromised – just like any business man will calculating mind! Now the Hindus won't be angry it's fine. And their own concept remains intact. They have avoided the conflict.

If you seek the master through scriptures, you will never find him, for by the time the scripture is compiled the person around whom it is written has already gone. And each master is in a class of his own kind. He is different and unique. You can't find another like him. You can't find Mahavir again, nor Buddha or Krishna. But in all your seeking you simply look for these very people and you wander around and around. When they were alive you were looking for someone else – again, someone who had long since gone. You go on missing every time.

If you want to find a master put all scriptures aside. Try to come close to someone. If you want to find a master, bathe yourself in his presence. Don't take your concepts along and don't try to judge him by your measurement. Let your heart beat with his heartbeats; don't allow the intellect to interfere. If you allow the mind to interfere the hearts will not meet, and you will not be able to recognize the master.

The master is recognized through the heart and not through the head. Whenever you set the intellect aside and see with the heart something happens immediately. If it is possible for you to connect with this master, it will happen immediately, without a moment's delay. You will find yourself melting into him and him melting into you. From that day onwards you are an integral part of him. From that day onwards you become his shadow; you can flow him The master can be sought with the heart, and without the master there is no way.

THE BODY IS THE OFFERING.

Remember, that which you call the body and which you take to be your entire being – is no more than an offering. As you make offerings into the sacrificial fire as part of a ceremony, so also you

have to give up your body, bit by bit, in the course of meditation. All other offerings are useless. You can offer ghee and wheat to the sacred fire, but it will do you no good. You will have to throw yourself into the flames for the fire of life to be lighted. You have to stake your entire body. If you try to save a part, your fire will not ignite the sacrifice will not take place. Give all of yourself! THE BODY IS THE OFFERING!

KNOWLEDGE IS THE FOOD.

You live, now, on food. The food reaches your body. It is necessary. Realization, knowledge, meditation, awareness are food for the soul. Until now you have fed only the body and have left the soul hungry. Your body is well nourished, but your soul is starving.

Knowledge is food for the soul, so the more you become awakened, conscious, the more you know, and by this I do not mean book knowledge. Knowledge means awareness. The more you are established in the fourth state, turiya, the more your soul will be filled with life energy,. Your soul is almost dried up; you have denied it all nourishment. You have virtually forgotten that it needs to be fed.

Your body consumes food while your soul is fasting. This is the reason why many religions have used fasting. Reverse the process: Let the body fast a few days and let the soul be nourished. This does not mean that the body has to be starved. Give the body its normal requirements, but don't let all your effort in life be exhausted in feeding it. Let a major part of your life's work be the awakening of knowledge, for that is your soul's food. Knowledge is the food.

WHEN KNOWLEDGE IS DESTROYED, THE DREAM IS SEEN.

If knowledge of the soul does not penetrate you, and if the flame within does not get its fuel, then dreams arise in your life; then desires arise, and your life loses its way and staggers there in the darkness. Then you live in illusion, in desires; then you merely keep thinking and weaving webs of fantasy.

I asked Nasruddin, "Mulla, where do you intend to go for your vacation this year?"

"I only go on vacation every three years," he replied.

"What do you do in the remaining two years?"

"One year we spend in musing over the previous vacation and reliving it in our minds, and one year we spend in planning the next vacation."

At least Nasruddin goes on a trip every three years, but you do not go at all! Half your life is spent in thinking of the past and the other half in thinking about the future. The journey never begins. Either you roam around the byways of your memory, which is a dead dream, or you wander in your imagination which is a dream of the future, which is still to come. You are divided in these two. The present is in the middle, and that is where life is – but you miss it!

Knowledge, awareness, will awaken you, here and now, to this very moment. Knowledge will bring you into the present. The past will fade. It has in fact faded. It is you who senselessly persist in

carrying the ashes. The future is yet to be. You cannot make it happen. It comes when it comes, but the present is now. That which is present is reality, truth. To dream is to wander in that which is not present.

Remember the sutra: WHEN KNOWLEDGE IS DESTROYED THE DREAM IS SEEN. When knowledge is absent, when the soul is not awakened, you are lost in dreams. The past and the future become everything for you, and the present has no meaning; but in fact it is the present that is everything. As you begin to awaken, the past and the future will get less and less and the present will begin to have more and more meaning for you. The day you are fully awakened there will be only the present. Then there is no past, no future. When there is no past and no future all diseases of the mind, all its repetitions and circles, are destroyed. Then you are here in the present, pure, immaculate, innocent, fresh like the morning dew. Then you are here in the present, like the lotus flower. If you are present in your entirety at any given moment, that moment you are God.

Because you are not present in this moment you are the mind and the body but not the soul. Meditation is an effort to drag you from the past and future into the present. You have to go neither backward nor forward; you have only to be here. To be here and now totally peaceful and aware is meditation! Through this is born knowledge and through knowledge you reach the highest peak and attain the bliss of the final samadhi.

He who loses this, loses all! He who attains this, attains all!

Enough for today.

CHAPTER 5

The Knowledge That Is Self Knowledge

15 September 1974 am in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

[Note: This is a translation from the Hindi series Shiva Sutra, which is in the process of being edited. It is for research only.]

ATMAN CHITTAM

KALADINAM TATVANAMAVIVEKO MAYA

MOHAVARNAT SIDDIH

MOHAJAYADANATTABHOGATSAHAJA VIDYAJAYAH

JAGRAD DVITIYA KARAH.

THE SOUL IS THE MIND.

LACKING DISCRIMINATION OF WHAT IS ESSENTIAL IS ILLUSION.

THE YOGI CAUGHT IN ATTACHMENTS MAY ATTAIN POWERS BUT NOT SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

AFTER CONQUERING ATTACHMENTS PERMANENTLY, SPONTANEOUS WISDOM IS ATTAINED.

THE AWAKENED YOGI REALIZES THAT THE WHOLE UNIVERSE IS AN EMANATION OF HIS OWN ENERGY.

THE SOUL IS MIND,

This sutra is very significant. Waves are seen in the ocean, but the wave also is the ocean. However superficial, however agitated the wave is, it still contains the infinite ocean within itself. The most contemptible, the most insignificant thing, also contains the absolute within itself. God is hidden in each and every particle

No matter how mad you are, no matter how distressed your mind is, no matter how many disturbances and diseases surround you – still you are God. It makes no difference that you are asleep, unconscious. In your unconsciousness it is God who lies unconscious within you. It does not matter that you have committed, or thought of committing, many sins. It is God who thinks within you. It is through God that the sins are committed.

THE SOUL IS MIND means your mind is a form of your soul. It is important, very important, that you understand this; otherwise, you will begin to fight with your mind, and whoever fights with his mind ends up losing. The path of victory lies in the acceptance of the mind – that it too is God. Caught in the state of struggle – useless struggle – and duality, know that the wave is also the ocean. Once this is seen and accepted, the distortions and diseases of the mind begin to fade away.

The day you begin to understand that the absolute lies hidden even within the most insignificant, you will no longer call it insignificant. It is you who has drawn its boundaries. The most minute grain has no boundaries; it is part of the boundless. The boundaries are created by your eyes. The day you begin to see the limitless in the limited, all limits and boundaries disappear.

The most profound experience in a person's life happens when he begins to see God in his own mind, when he begins to see Him in his own evil deeds, when he sees His footprints – and only His footprints – in all his wanderings. Then his wandering stops. To wander shows that you consider yourself separate and apart from God. In this separateness lies your disease; this separateness is the root cause of everything that disturbs your natural harmony. That you consider yourself aloof and separate – just that is your ego!

Strange as it may seem, as far as the ego is concerned, there is no difference between a good man and a bad man. The sinner is as filled with ego as the so-called man of virtue. Their actions may be different but the feeling is the same: both consider themselves apart from the rest. One considers himself evil, the other good. You stand apart from the rest as long as you consider yourself to be one or the other. You are not different from others. It is your own belief that has squeezed you into this cramped position. Your own concepts bind you; you are imprisoned within the cage of your own beliefs. Otherwise, there are no walls anywhere; all around you are open skies. No one is stopping you. No one obstructs your way.

How can your ego melt? THE SOUL IS MIND means: you are not you! You are God! You are part and parcel of the whole. You are not a small wave; you are the whole ocean. If you encounter and experience this vastness – the whole – it will cause your ego to fall. And where there is no ego, there cannot be. any evil! There is only one evil, only one sin: "I am separate!" This feeling of separateness is also found in those whom we care our sadhus.

It is said that once a yogi died. He reached heaven and knocked at the door, which was opened. The guard said, "Welcome! Please come in. The hatha yogi stopped there, shocked. He said,

”What kind of heaven is this where you let anyone in without asking any questions at all? You never inquired who I was or what my actions were on earth, good or bad. I don’t want to be in a place that is open to all and sundry. No reservation, no inquiry – you welcome just like that! This is not my idea of heaven.”

His ego is filled with good deeds, not evil. This man has performed so many austerities, so many spiritual practices; perhaps he has attained siddhis, powers; but it is all in vain, for all the siddhis he has gained have only helped to swell his ego. His sadhanas (austerities or spiritual practices) have been a total failure.

Bernard Shaw had received the Nobel Prize. He was invited to join an exclusive club in Europe that has only a hundred members in the world. Each member must be an outstanding world figure in his own field: Nobel laureates, celebrities, great sculptors, painters, writers. But only hundred, not more than that. Only when a member dies do they choose another in his place. People wait their whole lives to be invited. When Shaw got the Nobel prize, he received the invitation of that club. The invitation said: ”We shall feel honored to have you as a member of our club.” Shaw replied, ”Any organization that is honored by my membership is no organization for me. It is inferior to me. I only want to become a member of a club that is unwilling to admit me.”

The ego always seeks the difficult, the unattainable; whereas life is very simple. Therefore the ego always misses life. And there is nothing more simple than God. Therefore the ego never seeks this door. This door is always open. You are always welcome without any questions. If you are questioned at the entrance, that is not the gate to God; it is the gate to the market place. The fact is: you stand at this entrance. If you stand with your back towards it, it is entirely your own doing. The door has not rejected you. If you would only look! The door is always open and the sign says ”Welcome”!

THE SOUL IS MIND means: do not ever consider yourself separate, no matter how evil you are. This does not give you licence to be bad. On the contrary. Once you see that you are not separate, evil will be impossible.

Psychologists say that an individual becomes what he believes himself to be. Our belief becomes our very existence. They say we should not call a bad man evil, because by constant repetition – ”You are bad! You are bad!” – becomes a mantra. If a man is told constantly by everyone around him, ”You are evil”,it within himself that he is evil. Not only that, and then he tries to behave as others expect him to. Evil becomes his habit. People who explored the field of religion made this discovery long long ago. So they have asked the ultimate reality to make your mantra. THE SOUL IS MIND.

You are God. Your very soul is your mantra. This is the greatest statement that can be made about you. If this becomes your mantra, if it mingles and mixes with every particle of your being, if its vibrations penetrate each pore of your body, you will gradually come to feel that you are becoming what you think you are. What you have chanted inside yourself becomes a reality in your life.

The beginning of religion is: You are not, God is! It starts with this sutra. You are in deep slumber. Granted that you are a great wrong-doer, granted that you are guilty of a host of sins this makes no difference to your basic nature. Purity is your nature. No matter what sins you have committed, once this thought takes root within you – that you are God! – all evil is wiped away. You can destroy

your vices one by one, but it will be an arduous task, stretching over many, many lives because the vice are infinite.

In your effort to destroy one evil you create ten more. When you eradicate one vice and replace it with virtue, ninety-nine vices still remain within you; they will quickly spoil your one virtue. Then all your good acts will also appear sinful. If you touch nectar it becomes poison, because the evil within you quickly contaminates it. Building a temple brings you no humility. On the contrary, it inflates your ego even further. The ways of the ego enters are very subtle; something useless can nourish it.

Mulla Nasruddin owned a dog. Its pedigree was unknown. It was a thin, ugly, weak creature that went about with its tail between its legs always scared, always trembling but the Mulla never tired of praising him. He had named him Adolf Hitler. When I asked him about the dog the Mulla would say, "There may be doubts about Hitler's family background, but my dog is a very valuable thoroughbred. No stranger can pass my house without our knowing it. Hitler lets me know immediately."

"What does your do Hitler?" I asked. "Does he bark or bite, what does he do?"

"He rushes in and hides under my bed," said the Mulla. not ones has it happened that a stranger has come and i fail to notice it." Even the cowardice is praised!

Your ego is like Mulla Nasruddin's Hitler. You don't know its breed. Do you know from where your ego is born? How can that which does not exist be born? The ego is an illusion. Its breed is unknown. You are born of God. From where does your ego come? Have you observed your ego closely? You may call it the Adolf Hitler, but its feet are made of clay. It is so torn and tattered!

The biggest of egos is weak and miserable. Why? Because even the biggest ego is impotent; it has no power of its own. Power belongs to the soul. The source of power is different. Therefore the ego has to be nursed twenty-four hours a day. It needs support. It has no legs to stand on. We have to prop it up with wealth or position – if nothing works we support it with sin!.

You can visit the prison. Men who are shut up in jail tell stories about crimes they never committed. A man who has killed one person boasts that he has killed a hundred. This is the only way to inflate the ego in prison. There the bigger the crime, the bigger is the criminal. The petty criminal has no prestige, so prisoners compete to establish who is the greatest criminal. Those who are tried under one section are not respected. Those who are being tried for a number of crimes, are presented in the court every day are the bosses. They magnify their real crimes and take credit for others that are wholly fictitious.

The ego can be supported by good deeds, by evil deeds, by wealth, by position – and yet it is a cripple, death makes it fall. Death destroys that which is not; that which is cannot be destroyed. You will remain but remember, when I say you will remain, I am talking of that part of which you know nothing.

That which you believe yourself to be will not remain, because it is nothing but your ego. Your name, your looks, your wealth, your honor, your abilities, whatever you have earned – nothing of these will remain. If you find the faintest trace of the connecting link between this and what you actually are – which you have not laboured for, which you are born with and which is beyond all your ability – you will find that, that which was with you before you were born will remain with you after death.

THE SOUL IS MIND. That very soul is worth seeking. Your mind also bears a ray of the soul, or else it would no function. Even if you want to sin who will do it? You need energy to commit sin. The energy comes from the same source; you are simply misusing the energy, but cannot switch over from misuse to correct use, because at the root lies the ego.

There is only one sin: to consider oneself apart from the existence. All other evil follows like a shadow. There is only one virtue: to know oneself and be one with existence. When the wave merges with the ocean all virtues follow by themselves in its wake.

THE SOUL IS MIND.

ILLUSION IS LACKING DISCRIMINATION OF WHAT IS ESSENTIAL.

What is this illusion, this maya? Why is the mind fogged with darkness if the soul itself is the mind? Why this inability to discriminate what reality is? You are unaware of the doer, the real artist within you. You are oblivious of the fundamental principle within you. That which you presume to be the doer is non-existent. You hold on to that which is not; hence the distress and confusion. All your life you slave and toil, and your troubles are not diminished; in fact they have increased. In spite of working hard all your life, in the end you find you have gained not a drop of joy; there are only mountains and mountains of sorrow and pain. Yet man runs in this meaningless rat race until his last breath.

Why this infatuation for what is worthless and meaningless? Try to understand. All that is meaningless and worthless has one quality in common.

A man bought a new bungalow. He laid out a garden and planted some seeds flowers. When they began to sprout he found that weeds had come up mixed with the flowers. He was worried, so he went to his neighbor, Mulla Nasruddin, for advice.

”How am I to know which plants are flowers and which are weeds?”

”That is simple,” Nasruddin answered, ”Pull them all out! Those which come up again are the weeds.”

This is the quality of all that is worthless: pull it out and it is not destroyed. The meaningful, the purposeful, is destroyed if you pull it out; not so the meaningless, the purposeless. You sow the seeds of what is meaningful and you are not even sure if it will bear fruit, for there are thousands of obstacles ahead. This is the speciality of the useless. Uproot it, and it grows by itself. The useless and the ineffectual flower on their own. Uproot them a thousand times, and they will still persist.

The meaningless grows effortlessly, but the meaningful requires great effort. That is why you have chosen the meaningless; it grows on its own. You don’t have to do anything to become a thief. The habit of stealing grows like weeds. Do you have to work hard to become or to become sexual? You don’t have to go through any prayer, any sadhana, any yoga. These things happen on their own. do you have to go somewhere to learn how to be angry, to some university?No it grows like weeds. But when it comes to meditation the difficulty starts. If you want to learn how to be truly loving there are many difficulties in the way, while attachments grow and flourish like weeds. You learn love only with great difficulty. Every moment you have to uproot all the weeds before you can plant the seedling of

love. If you want love to grow, the weeds must constantly be kept in check or the young plant will be smothered, as if covered by a heap of rubbish.

The useless and meaningless have one outstanding quality: they demand no effort. You may laze around, they will take root and flourish on their own, and they will keep a tight grip on you until your last breath.

A seeker is one who has begun his search for the meaningful. To attain to the meaningful is a journey, an uphill journey. Attaining the worthless is like rolling down the mountain; you don't have to do anything, since the force of gravitation will do everything.

Until now you have done nothing in your life, so you are useless. You may not agree. You may claim,"I have worked hard and made a success of my life. I have wealth and prestige. I have obtained these degrees, and these titles..." Still, I will say, you have not done anything to attain this. Your successes have come up like weeds, and if you take a good look at yourself you will find that you have done nothing to earn your wealth and position. You allowed ambition to grow in you, and these are simply the fruits of ambition. Ambition and desires were already there. They have grown in your mind like weeds, and cling to you until you die.

A seeker is one who has realized that that which grows on its own is useless, and that he has to plant something.

A woman went to a psychiatrist and said, "Now I need some help. I kept postponing it but it's high time now. I will have to speak. He asked what her problem was. She said, "It is not me but my husband. He is not as loving as he used to be when we first married, nor is his desire for me what it used to be. He used to be overwhelming like a flood, but now he is like a river that has dried up."

The psychiatrist was highly amused, but he kept a straight face. After all, business is business. Then he asked her, "How old are you?"

"Only seventy-two," she answered.

"And what is your husband's age?"

"He is only eighty-six."

Everybody thinks this way. The word 'only' – "only eighty-six", "only seventy-two" – this 'only' is used against death. They feel that they are still very young, they have barely started living.

Then the psychiatrist asked the lady, "And when did you begin to notice that his sex drive was getting less?"

She replied, "Last night and again this morning."

Till the very last, man holds on to what is worthless. There is nothing he has to do about it; it grows on its own.

People come to me and say,"We try to meditate but slip up again and again. We meditate for two days, but then it stops. Then after a few days we remember again, then again it stops.

This is not the case with your desires and passions. You have never forgotten to be angry and you have never forgotten to be greedy, but you have to remind yourself to meditate. Try to understand this fact, because meditation has to be actively practiced. It slips away again and again. It is a seed that has to be sown and taken care of. Rubbish grows by itself; weeds come up by themselves. Know that whatever happens by itself is worthless. As long as you live that way you will attain nothing. At the time of death you will find yourself leaving empty-handed, just as you came in empty-handed. And it is this blindness, this lack of discrimination that is maya, illusion. This is the state of unconsciousness where you cannot discriminate between what is useful and what is useless.

Shankara has defined knowledge as the discrimination between the meaningful and the meaningless. In life both exist – the flowering shrubs as well as the weeds. You will have to distinguish one from the other by your own experience. If your attention gets fixed not on the meaningful but on the worthless, you wander in illusion.

You do not know who you are, nor where you are going, nor do you know where you come from. You have got yourself entangled with the rubbish by the side of the road. You have made a home by the side of the road, and you are so filled with worries and anxieties-just because of this worthless trash, which is there whether you take care of it or not. You have no cause to worry about it.

Indiscrimination is maya. Indiscrimination means the inability to distinguish the diamond from the pebble. You have to become the jeweller of life because that alone leads to the birth of discrimination. You possess life. Now look inside it. The test of your search is to know all that happens by itself is worthless, and that which refuses to happen in spite of your efforts, is worth attaining. This is the test. The day you find that that which was so difficult to bring about has begun to happen, then know the flowers are about to bloom. And the day all that used to grow by itself stops growing, know that maya has ended.

THE YOGI CAUGHT IN ATTACHMENTS MAY ATTAIN OCCULT POWERS BUT NOT SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

The meaningless rubbish has become so significant for us that when we set out to accomplish the meaningful we end up accomplishing only the worthless.

I am astonished by the motives of the people who come here to meditate. They desire only the worthless even through meditation. They come to me and say, I want to meditate to get rid of physical ailments. Can you assure me that they will disappear by meditation? It would be better for them to go to a doctor. When they come to a spiritual physician it is only to cure their physical disorders. Meditation is no more than medicine to them, just medicine for the body.

People come to me and say: My financial condition is very bad. Will meditation improve things? This cover of attachments is so dense and thick that even when you seek nectar it is only for the poison. Isn't this amazing? You come for the elixir – but only want to commit suicide by drinking it! But you cannot commit suicide with the elixir of life. Once you drink it you become immortal, but when you

set out to find the elixir, the nectar, your goal is suicide. You want to fulfill some earthly desire or other, even through religion.

Go to the temples and listen to the prayers of people. You will find that their demands are all worldly: someone's son needs a wife, another person's son needs a job, someone wants peace in his household. Even in the temple you ask for worldly objects. One would think your temples were supermarkets where everything is sold. You have no idea what a temple should be. Your priests are no more than shopkeepers. The people who go to the temples are buyers of worldly goods. You will always avoid the real temple.

Once I was a guest at the house of a dentist friend. One day, while I was sitting in his drawing room, a small boy who looked scared, entered. He looked around furtively. I could almost see him trembling inside. Then he asked me, "Could you tell me if the doctor is in?" I told him that he had just gone out. The child's eyes lit up with joy.

"My mother sent me to have my teeth checked," he said. "may I ask when he will be out again?"

Such is your condition. If you come across a genuine temple you will run away as fast as you can. You can bear the toothache, but you are not ready to bear the pain that the dentist gives you. We are all like small children.

You can bear all the pain the world inflicts on you, but you are not prepared to undergo any pain for religion. And religion is bound to give you pain. Actually it is not the religion that gives you pain. Your teeth have decayed so badly that the pain is inevitable.

Religion causes no pain. Religion is the supreme bliss. But you have always lived in pain. You have accumulated so much pain around you that all your teeth are filled with pain and suffering. Truly you will have trouble pulling them out, so you would rather live with this pain and suffer. The poison is spreading all over of your body. Your life is going topsy turvy but this pain is familiar to you. these pains are familiar to you.

Man is ready to bear the familiar suffering. Ready to go through the unfamiliar suffering. These teeth are yours and the pain is yours. You have known them for millions of lives, but you are unaware of the fact that once these teeth are removed, this pain disappears, the doors of bliss will open for the first time in your in your life.

Even if you go to the temple you ask the priest when God will next go out? – when can I come? You go and you do not want to go. It is difficult to assess the games you play with yourself.

Observing you and your problems over a period of time, I have come to the conclusion that your problem is only one. You do not know exactly what it is that you want. You are not sure that you want to meditate, but you are upset if you cannot meditate. Now if your mind is not entirely made up whatever you do, will be half-hearted. Nothing is ever attained in a half-hearted way. The worthless needs no effort; it continues by its own momentum. That which is meaningful in life demands that you stake your life on it.

This sutra says: THE YOGI CAUGHT IN ATTACHMENTS MAY ATTAIN OCCULT POWERS BUT NOT SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

The curtain of attachments is so dense and thick that even if you go towards religion you look for miracles. If you find Buddha standing before you, you will not recognize him. If Buddha and Satya Sai Baba are both present you will definitely move towards Satya Sai Baba, and not towards Buddha, because Buddha is not so stupid as to conjures things out of the air! You are in search of magicians. You are impressed by miracles, because your deepest desire is for the world and not for God.

When you see a miracle you are impressed. You think that you have found a guru. Now you hope to have your desires fulfilled. A guru who can produce an amulet from nowhere must surely also produce the Kohinoor Diamond, so you wait patiently and serve the guru. for You never know when his compassion might fulfill your desire. What difference does it make to the guru whether he produces an amulet of the Kohinoor. You desire the Kohinoor, and even a great man will become a thief for the Kohinoor. Today he showers ashes from his hands, tomorrow he may shower the elixir of life; nothing is impossible for such a guru. You only need to serve him!

No, you will never go to Buddha, because no miracles occur around him. When all your desires have ended, there is no question of satisfying them. The greatest miracle that takes place with Buddha is the light of desirelessness; but your desire-ridden eyes cannot see this. You can only see Buddha, you can only understand him, you can only bow down to him when the world's meaninglessness has really and truly dawned on you, and the curtain of attachments and cravings has really fallen away.

Attachment is an intoxication.. Just as an intoxicated man addicted to drugs does not know where he is going, what he is doing, so also you move about in this almost dazed condition. No matter how hard you try to watch your step, it makes no difference. All drunkards try to take hold of themselves; they try to prove to themselves that they are not intoxicated. They only deceive themselves! The more they try to cover it up, the more obvious it is. Attachment is an intoxication.

When I say that attachment is an intoxication I am speaking in chemical terms. In the state of attachment your whole body is filled with intoxicant chemicals- even in the scientific sense. When you fall in love with a woman your blood becomes filled with certain chemical substances. These chemicals are the same as are found in L.S.D., hashish and marijuana. This is why the woman involved begins to look so wonderful; she never appears dull or ordinary. Similarly, the woman who falls in love sees her man as something out of this world. When the intoxication fades, he does not seem to be worth a penny.

This is why your love affairs cannot be permanent – they are all conducted in a state of intoxication; it is a form of attachment. it has not happened consciously. You were unconscious when it happened. This is why we say, "Love is blind." Actually love is not blind it is attachment that is blind. We mistake attachment for love. Love is 'the eye'. No eye is sharper than the eye of love. It is the eye of love that sees God hidden in all His creation.

Attachment is blind. It sees things where they are not. Attachment is a dream; and those whom we call yogis are also prey to it. They acquire certain occult powers; that is not difficult at all.

You can read another person's thoughts with a little practice. You can influence others thoughts with a little practice. You can implant your thoughts into another – again, with a little effort. This is science, and religion has nothing to do with it. just as reading a book is a science. When an illiterate person sees you reading a book, it is nothing less than a miracle to him. He only sees a few blotches

on the piece of paper and you are getting great pleasure of reading poetry Vedas Upanishads. You are being mesmerized by them. An illiterate man is amazed to see this.

Mulla Nasruddin was the only one in his village who could read and write. When there is only one literate person it is difficult to judge whether he is really literate. Who can tell? One day an old woman came to him and asked him to write a letter for her.

"I am sorry. I shall not be able to write it," said Nasruddin. "My foot is aching."

"But how can your foot prevent you from writing?" the old woman demanded.

"Don worry about the detail. I say, my foot hurts and I cannot write your letter."

But the woman was obstinate. "I will not leave unless I know the truth. I may be illiterate, but I have never heard that the pain in the foot has anything to do with writing a letter."

"If you insist I will tell you," said Nasruddin. "Who will go to the next village to read the letter? It's me! I can write, but I am the only one who can read my writing. now my foot is hurting. I am not going to write it!"

An uneducated person is amazed to see someone lost in the book. But anyone can be taught to read; there is a method to it. You see your thoughts moving inside you, and another person can also learn to see them. There is a method, an art but this art has nothing to do with religion. Just as reading a book has nothing to do with religion, reading another person's thoughts has nothing to do with religion. These are the tricks of a juggler, a magician, and those who can perform them are not those who have attained.

But you are bound to be impressed. You go to a monk and he calls you by your name. He says, "You come from such-and-such village, and there is a neem tree on the right corner of your yard." You go crazy! But what does the true saint have to do with knowing your name, your village, your house, and even a neem tree? He is a saint who has realized that no one has a name, no one belongs to a village. This name, this family, this village, all belong to the mundane world.

You are a worldly person, so the monk impresses you because he himself is more deeply involved in the world. He has learned a greater art. He speaks without your asking. He wants to impress you. Remember, as long as you want to impress someone, you are possessed by the ego. The soul never wants to impress anybody; what is the point? It is like drawing a line on water.

What difference does it make to me whether ten thousand people are impressed by me or twenty billion? What will I gain out of it? The desire to impress crowd of ignorant people only shows your own ignorance. It only betrays my own ignorance. When a politician tries to impress people one can understand it, but why should a religious person do this?

Know one thing for sure: whenever you try to impress others it shows that you are not established within your soul; it shows that you are very much centered in the ego. Ego is nourished by influencing others; it works like food for the ego. The more I am known, the greater is my ego. If the whole world recognizes me, my ego becomes invincible. If I pass through a village and no one recognize me, no

one even looks at me, there is no flicker in anybody's eyes, as if I don't exist, then my ego receives a blow.

The ego desires attention from others. Now this is very interesting. The ego has no desire to pay any attention to others, but it certainly wants the attention itself. It wants to be the center of the world.

A religious person is not worried whether others look at him or not. He is more concerned about looking into himself because it is that self that will ultimately remain with him. It is childish! It is natural for children to be eager to impress their elders; they bring a certificate home from school and show it off to everyone. But if you are still seeking certificates in the old age, then you have missed life altogether.

The desire for occult powers is part of the desire to impress others. It has nothing to do with the religious quest. It is essentially worldly.

This sutra says, the yogi who is caught up in his attachments, attains occult powers but is devoid of any self-knowledge. No matter how great his attainment is – he may raise the dead, he may cure illnesses, he may turn water into wine – but this has nothing to do with self-knowledge. In fact, the truth is that the more power he acquires, the further he drifts away from self-realization, because as the ego becomes larger and larger, the soul becomes more and more empty. And as the ego is emptied, the soul becomes richer and richer. You cannot enhance both ego and the soul at the same time.

Give up the desire to impress and influence others or your yoga will be corrupted. In that case, even if you practise yoga, it will have a political, not a religious motivation. And politics is tricky. In politics you want to influence other by hook or by crook. You don't mind using right or wrong methods in doing that. And the reason why you want to influence others is that you want to exploit them.

I have heard: Elections were in progress and, three people were taken to jail. It was quite dark inside when the three introduced themselves to one another.

One of them said, "I am Sardar Sant Singh. I work for Sardar Sirfod Singh."

The second said, "That is strange! I am Sardar Shaitan Singh, and I work against Sardar Sirfod Singh."

The third said, "Amazing! I am Sardar Sirfod Singh!"

Leaders and followers of ruling party or the opposition, all – are fit only for jails. That is the right place for them. The roots of sin lie in the desire to influence others. Ego knows neither good nor bad; it only knows how to fulfill itself. How it fulfills itself is secondary. The ego's only aim is to nourish itself and grow strong; but, since the ego is emptiness, it always remains empty in spite of everything. As life advances, a man's ego turns more and more insane. He realizes that life is passing by, most of it is gone, and yet the ego is unfulfilled.

This is the reason why the old people are so irritable. This irritability is not because they have been unsuccessful in their lives. They become irritable because they could not fill what they wanted to.

Their irritability becomes more and more because as they get older people stop noticing them. In fact they are simply waiting for his departure.

Mulla Nasruddin was a hundred years old. I asked him if he could tell me why God had granted him such a long life. Without batting an eyelash the Mulla replied, "He is only testing the family's patience."

All old people are testing the patience of their family They are watching all the time that the relatives are paying less and less attention to them. The death will destroy them. The death will destroy them much later, the inattention of the relatives kills them much earlier. Hence the irritability.

You cannot imagine how irritable Richard Nixon must right now. All those people who wanted nothing more than a glance from him have now turned their backs on him. Those who were nears and dears have become strangers. Friends are become enemies. These who supported him, withdrew their support. Nixon is perturbed, perplexed, restless. The first question he asks of anyone is, "Wasn't what I did right? What are people saying about me?"

Just recently he was at the height of his power, and suddenly he was thrown deep into oblivion. He is the same man before. The only difference is: he was at the peak of his ego's glory, now he is thrown into the ditch but the soul remains untouched. If he could remember that which has neither peak nor valley; for which there is no victory or defeat, which is not bothered whether people look at him or turn away, which is devoid of all change and is uniform.

You will experience this uniformity only when you stop looking to others for recognition. Drop this beggar-like attitude. What will you gain by attaining powers? People will call you a miraculous man millions of people will come to you. By attracting a millions of idiots you will prove that you are the center of attention of millions of idiots: you are super idiots!

What will you gain from the praises of the ignorant? In what way you are benefit by the appreciation of the ignorant? What is their praise worth? What is the advantage in being the leader of those who have already gone astray?

I have heard: There was a Sufi saint, Farid. If people clapped when he spoke he would cry. One day hid disciples asked him the significance of his tears. Farid said, "When they clap I know at once that I have made some mistake, otherwise they would never clap. Then, when they do not clap I know that they have not understood me. Then I know that whatever I said was right."

What is the applause of misguided people worth? Before whom do you want to prove yourself? If you want to be acclaimed as one who has arrived by the world, you are still looking for the recognition of fools. You yourself are a fool. If you want to prove yours powers in front of god and be recognized by Him, you are a greater fool, because the ego has no place before God. You have to be exceedingly humble. You will be accepted there only if you have completely annihilated the ego. If you reach there with your arrogance, it in itself is a great obstacle.

Therefore the so-called siddhas, those who possess the powers, never reached God. They acquire many powers but they miss the real power. Self-realization is the genuine power. Why do they miss? Because occult powers are also oriented towards the other. Would you crave these powers if

there would be nobody is the existence, if you would be all alone? Would you like to turn water into medicine? Would you like to touch a dead man and bring him back to life? If there were no one else in the world you still want to acquire such powers? You will say, "what's the use of these powers? There are no spectators. The powers are for the spectators.

As long as your attention is directed towards others you cannot direct it towards yourself. Self-knowledge is attained only by him who turns his eyes away from others and into himself.

AFTER CONQUERING ATTACHMENTS PERMANENTLY, SPONTANEOUS WISDOM IS ATTAINED.

Only when attachments are completely conquered is the victory complete. What is the meaning of attachment? It is the attitude, "I cannot live without others. The other is the center of my life."

You must have read the children's stories in which there is a king whose life force is encaged in a bird maybe a parrot or a mynah. It is impossible to kill the king. The bullet will pass through his body, the king will remain alive. The arrow will pierce his heart, the king will not die. You may poison him, he will not be killed. You will have to find the bird in which his life force is hidden. Kill the bird and the king dies. These stories, are very meaningful. The adults would do well to understand them.

Attachment means: you do not live within yourself; you live for something else. For example, someone's life revolves around his cash-box. You wring his neck and he will not die, but steal his treasure and he will drop dead. This man's life lies in his wealth. His bank balance falls and it is a death-blow to him. You kill him but he is not going to die. Try to poison him and he will remain alive.

Attachment means you have removed your life-force from within yourself and placed it elsewhere. somebody puts it in his son, another in his wife, a third in his wealth or his position-but always somewhere else. The life force is not vibrating within you. It is not where it should be, and then you will be in a trouble.

This very attachment is a samsara, worldliness. Wherever you place your life-force, you become slave to it. The king whose life force is in the parrot is slave to that parrot. His very life depends on the parrot. If the parrot dies he dies, so he guards the parrot with his life.

I have heard that once a king was very displeased with his astrologer. The astrologer had predicted the death of the prime minister the next day, and he died! The king was very worried. He suspected that his prime minister had died because of his prediction. He had died as a result of a spell cast upon him by the astrologer's prediction. The king thought, "If he says the same thing about me then I will surely die." It will be influenced by his words.

He had the astrologer thrown into prison. When the astrologer asked the king why he was being imprisoned the king said, "You are a dangerous man. I do not think that the prime minister dies a natural death. What you said influenced him deeply. Your words hypnotized him. You are dangerous!"

The astrologer said, "Before you throw me into the dungeon hear what I have to say about your future, I have figured it out too." The king refused to listen to him, but he called out, "You will die

three days after my death." Now the king was really in a dilemma. He kept the astrologer in the palace and had him looked after day and night. He himself took care of his body because his death meant the death of the king.

Wherever you place your very being, there are you enslaved. Watch people approaching their strong-box, with folded hands, as if they are going to the temple. All sorts of holy inscriptions are written on it as if it is the very place where God resides. They worship it.

On the festival of diwali you should see these mad people worshipping their wealth, with such feeling! Their attitude is worth watching. Every year on this day the shopkeeper starts his new account book. On the first page he draws a swastika, the symbol of Ganesh, and he writes, "I bow to Ganesh."

This Ganesh is an old trouble-maker. The ancient story tells us that Ganesh is the Lord of all obstacles, and he looks like a mischief-making sort of God. First of all, he doesn't have a head of his own, and anyone who doesn't have a head of his own is really crazy! He can do the impossible.

Everything about him is ambiguous and confused. He sits astride a mouse that he rides. And the mouse is the symbol of reasoning and logic. And logic is as sharp as the teeth of a mouse; it bites and chews things into pieces. You can never depend on logic, for wherever there is logic it creates a great deal of obstacles. If a person's life is pervaded with logic it will be full of confusion and chaos; he will lose all peace and tranquillity.

It is an ancient story that ganesh is a God who creates trouble. Whenever there is an auspicious occasion he presents himself. People were afraid of him. They stood before him with folded hands and begged him to create no trouble for them in their affairs. Gradually people began to look upon the God Who was a trouble maker, as a trouble-shooter but they have forgotten the real story. They are right when they fold their hands and beg him to have mercy on them.

The curtain of attachments means that your soul is prisoner elsewhere. Whether it is locked up in your son or your wife or your wealth makes no difference. What matters is the fact that your soul is not within you; that's what attachment means. A permanent conquest of attachment means that you have given up all dependence on others. Now you no longer depend on someone else in order to live. Your life depends entirely on you. You are centered within your own self. You have made your own existence your center. Now if your wife dies or your wealth disappears, it does not matter at all. For these are just superficial waves. Then, whether you succeed or fail, whether happiness or sorrow, it makes no difference, for the difference was caused by your dependence.

Victory over attachment means to become completely independent. It means the feeling and the knowledge that "I depend on no one. I am enough for myself, alone!" Such satisfaction! Such contentment! That I exist is enough. Such an attitude is victory over attachments. As long as your being depends on another attachment holds you captive. Until then you will grab on to others so tightly for fear of losing them, for you cannot live without them.

Mulla Nasruddin's wife died. The Mulla cried dutifully, but one of his friends could not contain his grief. He cried and howled he beat his breast and refused to be consoled. The Mulla could not endure it. He put his hand on his friend's shoulder and said, "Don't grieve my friend, I shall marry again." Now this man had been in love with the Mulla's wife; his life-force was invested in her, so it was only natural that he should be so distressed, but not so the Mulla!

What is it that makes you cry? It is only your attachments. What is it that you miss when it is lost? It is the object of your attachment. Ponder over this. Find out what it is that grips your very life, without which you feel miserable and destitute; that is the center of your attachment. Before it is taken away from you, abandon your hold on it, because you are sure to lose it one day.

Nothing is stable in this life, neither love nor friendship. Constant change is the very nature of this world. The world is like a river... constantly flowing. Nothing is enduring, nothing is constant; and nothing can be made to endure, no matter how hard you try. You cannot hold that which is forever moving, forever flowing. You want to hold it, to freeze it. You will have no success, for you are going against the very nature of things. It is because of the effort that you put into this futile endeavor that you find yourself so disturbed.

Change is the other name for the world; yet you attempt to find in it some permanent support on which your life can depend. This cannot be! Every moment of your life is filled with sorrow, for every moment further erodes the support on which you stand.

Here is what you should do: make an effort to find out what things it would hurt you to lose. Then, before they are lost, open your hands little by little, relax your grip on them. This is the method for conquering attachment. There is bound to be pain, but you must bear it; this is your penance. It is not necessary to renounce anything. It is not that you should leave your wife and run away to the Himalayas. Remain there, where you are, but gradually stop depending on her. There is no need to cause any pain; your wife need not even know it. There is no deed to tell her.

Jesus said, ”Only when your right hand does not know what your left hand is doing, are you a true seeker.” The desire to let others know what you are doing is again a desire of the ego. You want the world to know, ”Look at that man! He has left his wife and is going to the Himalayas. Isn’t that wonderful!” It is not the least great. Ask any husband. He is only too happy to go to the Himalayas. Maybe he is unable to go, but that is a different matter.

Mulla Nasruddin ran to the local lunatic asylum and knocked at the door. When the superintendent asked him what the matter was he said, ”Has any lunatic escaped from your asylum!”

The superintendent wondered, ”Why do you ask? Have you seen someone running?”

”Someone has run off with my wife,” said the Mulla. ”He must be some crazy man who has escaped from here.”

Ask any husband. Whoever lives in the world has no end and to his tales of woe. He cannot escape for he can see no joy anywhere. Where is he to go? Wherever he goes, the world follows him like a shadow. Besides, with great expectations he has made a place for himself in the world now it is difficult tom destroy it, for then life becomes meaningless.

Seek out the attachments. Try gradually to live without the things that you now think you cannot live without. Create such a state within yourself that if and when these things are lost, there is not the slightest tremor within you. Then you will have attained victory over these attachments. This can be possible. It has been possible. And if it has happened to even one, it can happen to all.

This sutra of Shiva says: AFTER CONQUERING ATTACHMENTS, SPONTANEOUS WISDOM IS ATTAINED. The day you overcome your attachments for good, you will begin to experience that knowledge – the knowledge that is not learned from others, but is innate and natural. That very knowledge is self-knowledge. There is no way to learn knowledge of the self from others. It springs naturally from within.

As flowers grow on trees, as streams flow down the mountains, so this knowledge gurgles within you; and it is your very own innate knowledge. You don't have to get it from any other person. No guru can give it to you; all gurus only point towards it. When it is attained you will find that it was already within you. It is your own wealth, and therefore it is called innate, natural knowledge.

There are two types of knowledge. The knowledge of the world has to be learned from the other. It is not innate, not spontaneous. No matter how intelligent a person is, he acquires worldly knowledge only through others. No matter how dull and stupid a person may be, even he cannot attain knowledge of himself from others. It is within you. The only obstacle is attachment. When attachments are cut away, when the clouds disperse, the sun shines through.

THE AWAKENED YOGI REALIZES THAT THE WHOLE UNIVERSE IS AN EMANATION ON HIS OWN ENERGY.

The day the natural knowledge unfolds within a person he becomes awakened and he can see that everything in this world emanates from his pulsations. He becomes the center. You wanted very much to be the center of the whole world, but because of the ego you could not succeed. Every attempt ended in defeat. How as soon as the ego falls, you become the center.

What you wish to attain you will attain. Only now you are looking in the wrong direction. You are following the wrong path; you have fallen into error. What you desire you shall attain – only you have chosen the wrong support, the wrong charioteer, the wring vehicle. You can never be the center of the universe along with your ego. The egoless person becomes the center of the universe at once. Buddhahood is attained only under the bodhi tree. Then all the world becomes the circumference and buddhahood becomes the focal point. Then all the world is only my expansion. Then all the rays are mine. All life is mine, but this only happens when the 'I', the ego, is no more. This is the complication, as long as the 'I' exists, no matter how much you expand yourself, no matter how great your empire is, you are only deceiving yourself.

You have traveled a great deal. Lives upon lives have you wandered and yet you have not become aware.

Mulla Nasruddin once boarded a plane. Before he settled in to his seat he called the stewardess and said, "Look here! Has the oil and gas and water been properly checked?"

The stewardess assured him, "Just relax, sir. That is our worry, not yours."

"Then don't ask me halfway to get out and push!" said the Mulla.

I happened to hear of this incident, so I asked the Mulla, "Did you have any trouble? Did you have to push the plane?"

He answered with the proverb: ”He who has been scalded by hot milk never forgets to blow, even on his buttermilk. If you had ever been made to push a bus you would also have been about the plane.”

You have been scalded so very many times, and you haven’t even learned to cool the milk, let alone the buttermilk. The greatest problem in life is that we fail to learn from experience. People say that they learn by experience, but there is no evidence of it, for time and again the same mistakes are repeated. If you were to commit some new errors that would show some ability, some skill, and it would bring some momentum and maturity to your life.

The mind is a circle. You keep revolving round and round in the wheel of the ind, and this wheel is given energy by your attachments. Break your attachments and the wheel stops, and as soon as the wheel comes to a halt you realize you are the center. You need not become the center, there is no need to become God; you already are! Therefore this knowledge is innate.

Such an awakened yogi realizes this world to be the result of the rays that emanate from his own self. Such is the experience, and it gives supreme bliss. There is supreme nectar in the feeling. All darkness flees from your life as soon as this knowledge comes to you; all suffering, pain and anxiety vanish into thin air. You are filled with a joy, an ecstasy. You are drunk, intoxicated with it, and it awakens the song within you. You throb with every breath; you are filled with a fragrance that comes from an unknown source.

This is natural knowledge which no scripture can teach, nor any guru, but the guru can help you to remove the hurdles. Keep this well in mind. There is no way to ‘learn’ this supreme knowledge. You have to learn to remove the obstacles in its way. Meditation will not give you that supreme treasure; you only get the key to the door. With this key the door can be opened. The treasure lies within you. Thou art that! Tat-tvam-si! You are the brahma!

All methods serve to remove the hurdles along the way. All your rocks must be removed. The destination you carry with you. There is no difficulty in attaining Brahma. The difficulty is in your holding on to your attachments. You cling so hard to the world, and as long as you hold on to the world, you are merely postponing the meeting with God. It depends on you. Leave this very moment and you attain this very moment. If you wish to delay, if you wish to linger, you may do so for many more births. You have seen lingering since time immemorial. You have lingered enough, and you can linger for many more lives, but I feel that it is not meaningful to wait any longer.

The time is ripe for you to drop off the tree of the world. Don’t be afraid that you will disappear. You will be lost, but only the you that is useless will be lost. What is meaningful will be multiplied endlessly.

CHAPTER 6

The Mad Projectionist

16 September 1974 am in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

[Note: This is a translation from the Hindi series Shiva Sutra, which is in the process of being edited. It is for research only.]

NARTAKAH ATMA

RANGOANTARATMA

DHIVASHAT SATVASIDDHIH

SIDDHAH SWATANTRA BHAVAH

VISARGASWABHAVYADABAHIH STHITESTATSTHITI.

THE SOUL IS A DANCER.

THE INNER SOUL IS THE STAGE.

THROUGH CONTROL OF THE MIND REALITY IS ATTAINED,

AND A FREEDOM FLOWS OUT FROM THAT ATTAINMENT.

AND BECAUSE OF THIS SENSE OF FREEDOM, HE FREELY MOVES WITHIN AND WITHOUT.

Before entering into the sutras let us understand a few things, Friedrich Nietzsche has said somewhere , "I only believe in a God who can dance. Believing in a sad God is a sign of a sick man."

There is truth in this statement. You mold your God in your own image. You are sad - your God will be sad. You are happy - your God will be happy. If you can dance then your God will also be able to dance. Existence appears to you just as you are yourself. CREATION IS AN EXTENSION OF YOUR OWN VISION. As long as you cannot believe in a dancing God, you are not healthy. The concept of a sad, weeping, sick God speaks of your own sick state.

The first sutra of today is:

THE SOUL IS A DANCER

There are some things that need to be understood about a dancer. Dance is the only activity in which the act and actor become one. When someone draws a picture, the picture and the person who draws it become separate; when a poet writes a poem, the poem and the poet become separate; when a sculptor makes a statue, the sculptor and the statue become separate. Dance is the only activity in which the dancer and the dance are one; the two cannot be separated. If the dancer goes away then the dance will be no more. If the dance is lost then that man cannot be called a dancer. The dancer and the dance are one.

That is why it is very meaningful to call God, a dancer. This world is not apart from him. It is his dance; it is not his deed. It is not a sculpture that God has created and finished with. He is present within his creation every moment. The moment He steps aside the dance will stop. And remember, the moment the dance stops, God will also disappear. He cannot exist without the dance. He is manifest in every flower, every leaf, every grain and particle. It is not that the work of creation took place in some ancient past and stopped. The act of creation is happening every moment; therefore everything is new. God is dancing – inside and outside too.

THE SOUL IS A DANCER. This means that whatever you have done, whatever you are doing, whatever you will do, is not separate and apart from you. It is your own game. If you are suffering, it is your own choice. If you are blissful, it is your own choice. No one else is responsible.

I was a newly appointed professor in a college. As the college was a good distance away from the town the professors used to bring their lunch with them and sit together at one table during lunchtime. It was by chance that when the person sitting next to me opened his box and looked in, he said, "Again it is potatoes and chapatis!" I thought maybe he doesn't like potatoes and chapatis. But as I was new there, I didn't say anything. Next day the same thing happened. He opened his lunch box, looked in and sighed, "The same potatoes, the same chapatis!" So I said to him, "If you don't like potatoes why don't you tell your wife to make something else?" He said,"Wife! What wife? I make my lunch myself?"

This is your life. There is nobody else. If you laugh, you laugh; if you cry, you cry. No one else is responsible. It could be, however, that you have cried for so long that it has become a habit and you have forgotten how to laugh. It could also be that you have cried so much that you cannot do anything else! You have had a lot of practice. It is also possible that you have been crying for so

many lives that you have now forgotten that it was you yourself who had chosen to cry, but your lack of memory does not turn truth into a lie. You have chosen it; you are the master, and therefore the moment you make up your mind and decide, this crying will stop.

To be filled with the knowledge that I am the master. I am the creator and responsible for all my actions, brings about a transformation in your life. As long as you hold others responsible, transformation is not possible because till then you will be dependent. You think that others are making you unhappy so how can you ever be happy? It is impossible, it is not in your hands to change others. Only the power to change your own self lies in your hands.

If you think it is your fate to be unhappy then the matter is not in your hands any more. How can you change your destiny? Destiny is above you. And if you feel that whatever is happening has been destined to happen to you by God, you will just be a machine, dependent on outside factors and without any soul of your own.

The very meaning of soul is that you are independent. No matter how great your suffering, it is of your own making. The day you decide otherwise, your life will change. Everything depends on your outlook towards life.

I was a guest at Mulla Nasruddin's house. In the morning while taking a walk in the garden, I happened to see Mulla's wife throwing a cup at his head. It missed his head and crashed against the wall. Nasruddin also became aware that I had seen it. So he came out and said,"Forgive me! But don't think otherwise. We are very happy. Sometimes the wife throws some things but that does not make any difference in our happiness."

I was a little surprised. I asked him, "Mulla, would you mind explaining that in more detail."

He said, "You see, if she hits the target then she feels happy and if she misses then I feel happy. But it doesn't affect our happiness. And sometimes the aim connects and sometimes it misses. So we both are happy.

Everything depends on how you view life. It is you who makes it, it is you who experiences it and it is you who interprets it. You are absolutely alone. Nobody ever enters into your life. Nobody ever can. If anyone does, it is because you give him permission. Now this understanding brings up a problem, and because of this problem you have chosen to forget your understanding.

The problem is: if you realize that you alone are responsible, then you cannot suffer. And still if you choose to suffer then you cannot complain. You enjoy both the suffering and the complaining.

You enjoy pain and suffering because then you feel like a martyr. There is great pleasure in martyrdom. When you are unhappy, you ask for sympathy, and sympathy is very pleasant. That is why people exaggerate their suffering tenfold, while telling it to other people. What could be the reason that people go on telling their tales of suffering when nobody wants to listen.

Who is interested in your suffering? Your tales of woe only make others sad; they can't possibly make flowers bloom in their lives, yet you insist on telling them. And the other listens only till he is hopeful that you will also listen to his woes. If he doesn't think that will happen then he slips away.

You call only those people bores who don't allow you to speak. So there is a kind of contract: you bore us and we bore you. You bore me with your tales of suffering, I will bore you with mine and then we will be even.

Why do people talk so much about suffering? The reason is that man seeks sympathy. If you broadcast your woes someone will caress you and soothe you. Someone will say,"O! you are suffering so much. You are asking for love from the other in this manner. That is why you have a large investment in your suffering. You have invested a lot in your suffering.

Whenever you are unhappy only then you see a little hope around you. People seem to offer you help and support. They are sympathetic. You have never received any love in your life and sympathy is rubbish, but it is the next best thing to love. One who has never had real gold starts making do with unreal gold.

Sympathy is false love. What you really wanted was love, but love has to be earned, because only a person capable of giving love can get it. Love is a reflection of what you give away. You are incapable of giving; you are only begging. You are a beggar, not a king! It is much easier to beg when you are suffering.

Look at the beggar along the road. He has made artificial wounds on his body. Those wounds are not real. But he seems in so much pain that you find it very difficult to say 'no'; you feel guilty, it hurts your ego that how can you say 'no' to a person who is in so much pain. If he looks healthy then you will also say,"You are healthy; do something, earn something; you can earn something! But seeing a suffering man you can not say anything. You have to show sympathy even if it is false.

You hold on to suffering because you did not receive love. One who has received love in life will be filled with joy and bliss; he will hold on to joy and bliss and not suffering. Suffering is not worth holding on to. But then you have the advantage in complaining; because whenever you say that others are making you suffer, the burden of responsibility is no more on you. And when I say to you, all the scriptures say to you and all the wise men have said only one thing that you alone are responsible and nobody else, it becomes quite a burden for you. The most burdensome thought is that you can no longer shift the blame onto someone else. Even more burdensome is the fact that if you alone are responsible then who will you ask for sympathy. And deep inside another difficulty arises that if you are responsible then change is possible. And change is a revolution, it is to undergo a transformation.

You have to break all your old habits. You have an old framework, that is all wrong. The house that you have built till now is a complete hell. But you have created it; no matter how big it is, it has to come down. Your whole life's work seems to be going down the drain. That is why you try to avoid the truth, but the more you evade, the more lost you will be.

Understand this first and foremost that you are the center of your existence; nobody else is responsible. No matter how burdensome it feels, but you alone are responsible. If you accept this truth all sorrow will soon disappear. Because once it is clear that I am making this game, how long will it take you to destroy it? Then there is no one else involved. And still if you want to enjoy suffering then it is your decision, but then there is no reason to complain. If you want to wander aimlessly in the world, it is your own sweet will. If you want to descend into hell, it is entirely your own choice. But then don't complain! Then be happy in your suffering!

These sutras are very valuable in this context.

The first sutra is: THE SOUL IS A DANCER. Your actions and your being are not two different things. Your actions come out of your own being, just as the dance comes out of the dancer. And if the dancer starts complaining, "I am tired of this dance. I don't want to do it !" what would you say? You would say, "Stop! Don't dance then. Who is asking you to dance? You are the one who is dancing. Stop! if it is all useless and you find no pleasure in it. If you find it painful then stop! The dance will disappear"

THE SOUL IS THE DANCER. This means that whatever you do, it is you who is doing it. It has come out of your own self. Just as leaves come out of the tree, your actions come out of your being. Stop! And the actions are no more!

Another thing to understand about this sutra - soul is the dancer - is: if you stop your dance of suffering, if you bring a halt to your life of misery and pain, the dance will not stop- it will change its form. The dance cannot stop; it is a part of your existence. It is your very nature. You will go on dancing; but then there will be no tears only laughter. Then your dance will have a rhythm, a melody. It will be pulsation of joy, of intense pleasure, an intoxication. Right now your dance is the dance of hell, then it will be a divine dance.

There has been a Mohammedan fakir - Ibrahim. He was a king who later became a fakir. He came to India during his travels. He saw a sadhu looking sad and depressed. Sadhus are often sad and depressed because their life was full of pleasure when they were in the family life. They don't know any pleasure other than that. They renounce the world and the family life and all pleasure is lost. They might not be suffering but they are sad and joyless.

There is a slight difference between sorrow and sadness. Sorrow means that there is a sharpness, a tang, in the sadness. Sadness also has an ardor, a passion. There are two types of ardors: one is of sorrow, one is of happiness. One, when you are so filled with sadness that tears begin to flow and one, when you are so filled with happiness that tears begin to flow - both are a kind of flood.

When a man runs away from the world because it is full of sorrow, he also leaves the joys behind. Then he is filled with sadness; there is no flood, neither of joy nor of sorrow.

Look at your sadhus and sannyasins. They are dead; as if they are ghosts, as if the dance has stopped. They ran away from sorrow, but the joys were also lost. Their idea was that if they left sorrow behind there would be only joy left. This was their mistake.

In this world, where there is joy, there is sorrow too. You desire to keep the joys and get rid of the sorrows. So you run away from sorrow; but in the process the joys are also lost.

The sadhu was sad. He must have been an ordinary sadhu. A true sadhu lets go of both happiness and unhappiness. He does not want to keep happiness, he simply drops both of them. And the moment he drops them, all sadness disappears, for sadness is the mid-point between the two. When you drop both of them, the mid-point also gets lost. Then an entirely new dimensional journey begins, you may call it bliss, tranquility, nirvana- whatever you please.

There is no ardor in bliss; it is a cold ray, a cold light; there is no passion. Bliss is like sadness in a way. Sadness is in the middle of joy and sorrow. Bliss is beyond joy and sorrow. Sadness is a state of darkness where everything has become motionless, a state of death where everything languishes in inertia. Bliss is a radiant state of awareness – where there is neither joy nor sorrow. In this respect bliss is also like sadness, where there is no joy or sorrow. There is light there but the light is not that of joy, because the light of joy also has an edge to it, an intensity which makes you perspire.

Therefore, people get tired of happiness. You cannot remain happy for a long time. Happiness is tiring because there is a fever, an intensity to it. If you were to win a lottery every day, you will die, you will not live. It is all right if you win it once in a while. If you get it everyday, the tension would be so much that you will not be able to sleep. Your heart will beat so hard that you will not be able to rest. The excitement would be so great that it would kill you. So happiness can only be taken in homeopathic doses. You will not be able to bear an allopathic dose. A lot of unhappiness along with just a little joy is about all you can bear, for it is also a tension. It also has a heat and intensity to it.

Sorrow is tension, as is joy.. There is an excitement in both. Bliss is the state of a non-excited, non-stimulated mind; there is light but no heat. There is dance but no excitement. There is a silent, serene dance where there is no sound. It is a dance in emptiness, which does not bring any fatigue. It is not of the body. Joy and sorrow are of the body, and bliss is of the soul. It is a different dance altogether.

That sadhu was an ordinary sadhu – the kind found everywhere. Ibrahim was surprised to see him sad, for his idea of a sadhu was that he should be blissful. So he asked the sadhu, "What are the characteristics of a sadhu?"

That sadhu said, "If he gets food he accepts; if he does not he is content." Ibrahim said, "Those are the qualities of a dog. What is so saintlike in it? This is exactly what a dog does. If he gets something he is happy, if he does not, he is contented."

The sadhu was shocked. He asked, "Then how do you define a sadhu?" Ibrahim answered, "If he gets something, he shares it and if he does not then he dances and thanks God that you gave me an opportunity to practice austerity. The definition of sadhu is: one who shares with others when he gets something. One who shares whatever he gets is a true sadhu. If he holds on to it, he is a householder, a family man. If he hoards it he is a householder, if shares it he is a sadhu; whatever it may be-it may be bliss or knowledge or even meditation-he shares them all.

It is an interesting fact that worldly things, if you share them, become less and less; therefore we hold on to them. If you start sharing from your vault then your vault won't remain a vault for long. Because everything in the world is limited-the moment you start sharing it is gone. That is why you have to hold on to what is limited in the world. But we need not apply this to the soul – for that treasure is boundless; the more you give away, the more it becomes. The more you draw out, the more new comes out. It is a boundless ocean.

Ibrahim is right; if he gets, he shares it; doesn't eat alone. If he does not get, then he dances and thanks God. To be contented is not enough, for there is still sadness in contentment.

People usually say, "A contented man is a happy man." It is not true. A contented man is not happy. He just thinks he is happy. Deep within he is unhappy, but there is nothing he can do about it. He is

helpless so he wears the garb of contentment. No! being contented will not do. Contentment is a part of sadness. When you bear it without raising a fuss, when you do not complain; these are signs of a dead consciousness.

Ibrahim said, "If he does not get anything, then he dances and thanks that you gave me an opportunity to practice austerity; today there will be fasting. If you receive, then gratitude because then you were able to share it, to spread it! If you do not receive, even then gratitude!"

You cannot destroy the bliss of a sadhu. On the other hand, if your sorrows are destroyed the result will be nothing more than sadness. Even when you somehow manage to drop your sorrow, you become sad. Sorrow keeps you occupied, busy. You may not have realized it, but if all your sorrows are taken away from you, you will commit suicide; for what will you do then? There will be nothing left for you to do.

The father is busy working because he has to educate his sons, to get them married. If all them get married and settled right now, what will the father do? Life will seem useless. You are occupied with such meaningless things. It makes you feel that you are doing something, you are important, needed. The world cannot go on without you; what will happen to your son, to your wife! It gives strength and support to your ego, that you are indispensable; everything is happening because of you. Whereas the simple fact is that things can go along just as well without you. When you were not there, things were still going on; and after you have gone things will continue. But just for a while in between you dream, the dream of your indispensability.

So even if you drop sorrow, the best you can do is to become contented. But there is sorrow hidden beneath contentment. Contentment is only on the surface; deep inside there is a wound of sorrow. Contentment is just like a bandage, it is not a remedy.

No! A true sadhu is not contented; he is blissful! Whatever the circumstances, if he gets something, he will share it and be blissful; even if he does not get anything then too he will dance and be happy.

The nature of the soul is to dance, and it can dance in two ways. It can dance in a way that there is sorrow and suffering all around, that there is darkness and gloom all around; or it can dance in a way that everything starts dancing with it and flowers bloom all around.

Sannyas is the dance of bliss; the worldly life is the dance of sorrow. There is no hell anywhere else! Don't sit there in the hope that there is hell somewhere else. Hell is your wrong way of dancing which creates sorrow and suffering. Heaven is also nowhere else. It is your right way of dancing, which creates heaven wherever you are. Heaven and hell both are qualities of your dance.

You don't know how to dance but you go on thinking that the fault lies in the dance floor. There is nothing wrong with the dance floor. For one who knows how to dance, the floor does not matter. And for one who does not know how to dance, a floor made exactly at an angle of 90 degree does not help. He will not come to know how to dance because of that.

I have heard that a man went for an eye operation. Before the operation he asked the doctor, "I cannot see at all. Will I be able to see after the operation?" The doctor examined him and said, "Of course you will." The man said, "And will I be able to read also?" The doctor said, "Certainly." The

operation was a success and the man was able to see. But he was very annoyed with the doctor. He went to his house and said, " You lied to me. I still cannot read." "How is that possible?" asked the doctor. " You are able to see everything, then why can't you read?" "I never learned how to read," replied the man.

Even if you recover your eyesight, it does not make you able to read when you have never learned how to. No matter how smooth the floor, if you don't know dancing.....; dancing does not depend on the smoothness of the floor, it has to be learned. And remember there is no one else who can teach you! You are all alone! The enlightened ones can give you hints, but it is you alone who will have to learn. Nobody can hold your hand and teach you. The dance of life is so within, so deep that outside hands cannot reach there. Nobody else except you can enter there. You are completely alone there. Everybody else is outside.

The soul is a dancer. Sorrow and joy are the two ways in which it can dance. If you are unhappy then you have chosen the wrong way to dance. Change your way. Don't blame anybody. Do not complain. As long as you complain, you will go on dancing in the wrong way; because you will never realize that the mistake is mine....; it is always the other that you try to blame.

Stop complaining. Look at yourself and wherever you find sorrow arising, look closely, you will find the cause within you. Drop those causes! What is the purpose of doing things which bring only sorrow and pain? Why do you go on sowing seeds which yield only poisonous fruits? Why do you go on gathering their crop every year? It would be best not to sow the crop at all. Even if it stays empty, it is not bad. In fact, it is best that the field stays unsown for a while, so that all the old seeds have time to die away; and you are able to sow new ones.

Why are you so afraid of being empty? Meditation is this empty state. It is like a farmer leaving the land empty for a year or two, doesn't sow anything; meditation is such a state in between; it is the empty space between heaven and hell. Leave it alone for a few days. Don't sow anything. Remember one thing: rather than doing something wrong, it is better not to do anything at all. Just stop for a while and don't do anything. Till you know how to do it right, it is better not to do at all; for each action, each wrong action gives rise to a chain of actions. One wrong action sets off a chain of wrong actions. This is what we call karma, a net of our actions.

You are always doing something. You cannot sit idle, you will go on doing something. Sitting idle, doing nothing – in itself is meditation. Sit and do nothing, so that the old habit drops away and gradually you begin to see things clearly. But you are so busy that you do not have the time or the convenience to see.

The only meaning of meditation is that you sit silently and do nothing for one or two or three hours-whatever time you have. Just watch, observe so that by and by your vision becomes sharp and penetrating, and you begin to realize that whatever has happened in my life up to now, I was the cause. As soon as this realization dawns on you, you will stop sowing worthless seeds. A meaningful dance will be born within you.

Religion is supreme bliss; it is not the sadness of renunciation but the enjoyment of existence. It is to be merged with the supreme enjoyment. It is to become one with the dance of existence. Don't ever think of religion in terms of sadness and renunciation. The religion that thinks in terms of sadness

and renunciation is wrong. True religion is always a dance. It is always bliss. True religion is always a playing flute.

THE SOUL IS A DANCER.

THE INNER SOUL IS THE STAGE.

And this dance, which is happening, is not happening anywhere outside; it is going on within you. This world is not a stage; it is the soul within that is the stage. However much you may think that you have gone outside, you cannot; how will you go outside? You will always remain within yourself. Everything is happening in there only. The play goes on in there, then the results become visible outside. It is just like when you go to a cinema hall and you see the drama on the screen, but actually it is all happening in the projector behind your back, what we see on the screen is only the reflection. The screen is not the genuine stage, but your eyes are so glued to it that you forget that the actual picture is behind you in the projector. The real picture is behind your back, what you see on the screen is only a reflection.

The inner soul is the stage; the projector is within. All the seeds of the drama come from within; outside you only get news; you just hear the echoes. And if there is sorrow outside, know that you have the wrong film within. And if whatever you do outside seems to go wrong, it means that whatever you bring out of you is wrong.

A change of screen will make no difference. Whatever you do to improve the screen will not make any difference. If your film is coming wrong from within you, the screen will go on repeating the same story. And then you are not only a film but a broken record too which goes on repeating the same line.

Have you ever tried to find out what there is inside your skull? You will find that things are being repeated again and again-like a broken record. You go on repeating the same thing again and again. Nothing new ever happens there, and whatever you repeat there, its echoes are heard all around you, it is reflected on the screens of the world.

Mulla Nasruddin went to see a movie with his wife and child – and you can imagine Nasruddin's child, he cannot be an orderly child because when everything is disorderly inside then whatever comes out is also disorderly. The child was crying, howling and making a lot of noise. The manager had to come and ask Mulla at least seven times that either you take your money back and leave, or keep the child quiet. But why would he keep the child quiet. The manager had to come again and again. Mulla would nod his head and go on silently watching the movie. And then, when the picture was almost over, Mulla asked his wife, "What do you think? Did you like the movie?" She said, "It is absolutely hopeless. So he said, "Then don't waste any more time. "Give the kid a hard pinch; so that we get our money back and go home."

You have been watching for a long time. You have been watching for many lives that it is all wrong. When will you pinch? You will have to do it yourself; there is nobody else here. When will you wake up and come back? What is the purpose of watching this wrong show which is filling you with such pain and distress; which does not give birth to anything except sorrow and nightmares-you can leave this house. You are in this house only because of yourself. Why are you delaying it? Haven't

you had enough? If you haven't had enough then why listen to the ravings of people like Buddha, Mahavir, Krishna, Shiva and Jesus? Don't listen to them. Stay away from them, because their words are meaningful only for those who are fed up with the movie, who feel that they have seen enough; for those who are bored and restless and uneasy in this hell; for those in whom the desire for the heavenly dance has arisen; for those whose desires have turned to God.

Your mental state is such that you want to travel on two boats. This adds to your troubles. No matter how much pain it gives you, you still want to continue chasing after the pleasures of the world. There is always a slight ray of hope that you will find happiness. Happiness always seems to be so close! And you are sustained by this hope, that the goal is almost within your reach; but your experience tells you that nothing is going to happen. Experience is on the side of the Buddhas; hope is opposed to them. And you support them both. You have a foot in each boat.

One foot is in the boat of hope. You always say that all will be well in a little while. One woman fails to give you happiness, you change to another. One son disappoints you, perhaps the other won't. One business is not profitable, perhaps another will be. You are forever changing things around you. If one house has not brought you happiness, perhaps another might. Your strong-box small; a bigger one would do better. You keep doing this everything around you – you are keep only changing the screen! The story within you is just the same, so the same story is projected on the screen outside again and again.

Everywhere you meet sorrow. Your experience is of sorrow; your hope is for happiness. These are the two boats. If you hear Buddha or Mahavir or Krishna, they talk of experience. They urge you to get off the boat of hope and climb aboard the boat of experience. And you listen to them. You cannot deny them completely. In their presence you feel that they have attained something which you have not. It seems that the rat-race has ended for them, but you are not one hundred percent sure; they might be frauds. Who knows whether they have really attained. They might only be pretending. And, who knows? – We too might attain! The wise ones might just be saying that the grapes are sour and not worth having; perhaps they were unable to reach. Perhaps in our own way we can reach. So you are in a dilemma. Certainly, you cannot deny your experience, but still hope persists. This dilemma is your madness.

These two boats go in different directions, so board whichever one you choose. It does not matter if you decide to board the boat of hope, but at least get into one boat and leave the other. Step totally into the boat of the word and very soon you will get bored. This half-half business gets you nowhere. Keeping one foot in the boat of the Buddhas prevents you from having a full experience of the world. You remain half-half; you go to the temple as well as the shop. This way neither is the temple properly looked after, nor the stop; they cannot both be managed together. Look after your shop whole-heartedly. Forget that there ever was anyone like Mahavir or Buddha or Krishna or Shiva. Forget that there are any scriptures. Let ledgers in your shop be everything from you. Jump into it with all your heart and very soon you will emerge from it. Your experience itself will show you the uselessness of it all.

But you find that you cannot do it; one foot is still stuck in the other boat. Again the problem: you are not wholly in the second boat. The reason you haven't left the first is that your mind keeps whispering: 'There is no hurry. You are still young. These are things for old people to concern themselves with. When you have one foot in the grave then put the other foot in Buddha's boat.'

People think that religion is for the old; they will require the water from the Ganges only when they are about to die. Only then will they need someone to recite the prayers. When you are at the point of death, when there is no energy or power left in you, then you begin to prepare for the journey. You are bound to fall back into samsara, back into the world again; you will get back into the same boat, just as you have for innumerable lives.

THE SOUL IS THE DANCER.

THE INNER SOUL IS THE STAGE.

Remember, whatever you see without is what projected from within. In life the only things that you see are things that you are projecting, and life presents you with so many situations that demonstrate that this is so.

I have heard: Once three travellers were together in a waiting room. One was an old man of sixty, another a middle-aged fellow about fort-five, and the third a young man of thirty. The young man was telling the others, "I spent last night with the most beautiful woman in world; the pleasure of having her beyond description."

The forty-five year old said, "Nonsense! I have known many women in my lifetime. At the time I thought they were incomparable, but now I see that the pleasure they gave me was not as great as I imagined then; in fact, it was no pleasure at all. Now I know the real meaning of joy. Last night I was invited to the king's place and Oh! what a glorious banquet! Never have I tasted such wonderful food."

"That's all nonsense," said the old man. "Ask me what is the real pleasure. This morning my bowels emptied so completely. The pleasure of an empty stomach is beyond description. I have never known such bliss."

Such is earthly joy: it changes with the years. The trouble is you, who forgets. At the age of thirty the sex urge seems to give the greatest pleasure. At forty-five food seems to give more pleasure, therefore people tend to put on weight at about this age. At sixty the interest in food is gone; the remaining interest is in keeping the bowels empty. The pleasure of samadhi comes from an altogether different dimension.

The soul within is the stage. Whatever you have put inside. Sex desires flow out from young man's eyes. his whole body is filled with aspects of sexual desire; wherever he looks he sees woman. Sexual desire grips him from all sides.

Mulla Nasruddin was a young man. He went to see an art exhibition with his wife. They were newly married, so they were going places together. There were many masterpieces in the exhibition. The Mulla stopped before a particular picture. He was transfixed. He would not budge. It was a picture of a nude covered only by a few leaves. The caption read; Spring. He was transfixed. The Mulla's wife shook his arm and said, "Are you waiting for Autumn?"

Such is man's mind. his wife guessed right. Wives usually guess right. They know.

Whatever force has come to the forefront in you becomes the whole world that surrounds you. You color the world with your own brush. We have a previous word in our language, raga. No other language has a word like it. It means both fascination and color. All your fascination is the result of the color which are projected by your own eyes. You color everything, and the fascination of whatever you have colored is what catches hold of you.

Raga means: you have colored. A woman is not beautiful. The color off your sexual desire paints her beautiful. A child is not bothered with a woman's looks, for the color of his sexual desire has not yet developed. The old man has long passed this stage. He laughs at your foolishness, even though he did the same thing himself when he was young. You will also laugh when your turn comes, but he who becomes alert realizes at the time it is happening that this is foolishness; and awakens. There is not much sense in laughing later on; anyone can do that; But when the foolishness has caught hold of you and the color is in full force, then you should become aware that this is all a play from within, and the outside is a mere screen.

THE INNER SOUL IS THE STAGE. It is the projector by means of which the outer world becomes an extension of the inner drama.

THROUGH CONTROL OF THE MIND, REALITY IS ATTAINED.

This play is going on, and you shall keep wandering in it as long as the mind is not within your control. Through control of the mind reality is attained. As soon as you realize that the entire drama is projected from within, you forget all about conquering the world, it is only a screen.

Bring your mind within your control and the whole world is yours to control. When you come to know that you are the producer, the actor, the writer, and also the stage of the play – everything will stop taking any interest in any external changes. Then you will busy yourself with the integral possession – that is, to take possession of your mind, to be its master.

You are not master of your mind. Your thoughts are not your slaves; rather, you are slave of your mind. You meekly follow whatever your thoughts take you; they never go where you want them to. Try to give a slight turn to even a very insignificant thought and it resists you. Tell a small thought to be quiet, and it immediately rebels.

You never consider this situation, for it is too painful. The very thought 'I am not my master' is killing, because you have set out to be master of the whole world! How can you be the master of anything when you are not even the master of your own self?

Take a good look at your mind. Examine it closely. The first thing you will come to know is that the mind has become the master – not you and not your soul! The mind says: Do this"! And you do it! If you don't the mind creates problems. It become sad, and the sadness of the mind becomes your sadness. If you do as it says you get nowhere, for the mind is blind. Where can you reach by obeying the mind! The is unconsciousness. If you listen to it you reach nowhere.

You must have heart that if one bind man follows another bind man they are both bound to end up in a ditch, but that is what each of us is doing. Your mind is absolutely bind; it knows nothing, and yet you follow it as blindly as your shadow follows you. You have forgotten that you are the master.

Association with slaves brings this about. Gradually the slaves become the master, for as you begin to depend more and more on them their ownership begins to be established.

All sadhanas, all spiritual practices, aim at only one thing: to break and destroy the domination of the mind. What will you do to destroy this domination? First: if you want to overthrow the mind's domination, destroy all identifications with it. A thought arises inside you – don't be one with it! You becoming one with it gives it strength; stand far away. Stand as if you are just standing by the roadside watching people pass by. Look at it as you would look at a cloud in the faraway skies while you stand on the earth below. Don't identify. Don't unite with your thoughts. Don't say, 'This is my thought.' As soon as you say 'my', you are identified; as soon as you are identified with it, all your energy flows into that thought. It is this energy that makes a slave of you – and it is your own energy!

Don't be identified. As you begin to stand apart from your thoughts, they begin to lose strength and become lifeless, for they get no energy. Your trouble is: you want to extinguish the lamp, but you yourself also keep on adding oil to it. On the one hand you blow at the lamp to snuff it out; and on the other hand you pour in more oil. Stop replenishing the oil. The old stock won't last very long.

What is the oil? Whenever a thought gets hold of you – for instance, whenever anger takes hold of you – you immediately become one with it. You say, "I am angry." Now the truth is: you have identified yourself so much with the anger that all your energy flows into it. You have become the shadow and your anger is the master. When anger comes, stand away form it and observe. Let the anger arise; let it permeate your body. It will envelop you from all sides. Let it! You only have to remember one small fact – that you are not your anger! Don't be in too great a hurry to dive in, for then it will be difficult to come out of it.

Watch your anger, but be firm on one point: if you really must reply to the man who has insulted you, do so when the anger is gone. Under no circumstances reply before then. in the beginning this is going to be difficult, very difficult. You will have to be very alert and on your guard, but gradually it will become easy. Just keep your mouth shut as long as the anger lasts; answer only after the anger has long been gone! This is only proper. The right answer can only come in serene moments. To answer in anger is as good as answering under the influence of alcohol.

When sex desire takes hold of you, stand apart and watch. The greater the distance you create between yourself and your thoughts, the more you establish your control: but you stand so close, so very close to your desires that you have even forgotten that there is any distance between them and you – that there is any gap between the two.

Start today. The results will not come immediately, because your closeness, your association, has existed for countless births. Such old associations cannot be broken in a day; it will take time, but slight effort on your part will bear results, for this is a false identification. Were it genuine, you would never be able to break it. But this identification with your thoughts is nothing more than your conception, and still it creates all your problems.

When hungry don't say, "I am hungry." Say, rather, "I see that the body feels hungry." This is the fact. You are the observer. It is the body that feels hunger. Consciousness is never hungry. Food goes only into the body. It is the body, the flesh and blood, that has needs. It is the body that gets tired; never the consciousness. Consciousness is a lamp that burns without wick and oil. It demands no food or fuel. None is ever needed.

The body needs fuel and water. The body is a machine; the soul is not. Feed the body when it is hungry, but keep one thing in mind: the body is hungry and I am observing it. If it is thirsty give it water. It is necessary, for the body is an instrument that depends on food and water. He is a fool who says, "I am not the body and therefore I will not give it food and water." If you don't put petrol in your car how will you make it go? Then you can sit in it, but it won't move. You have to give the car its fuel. Only then will it run. Only, don't become one with the car. Be the master and meets its needs.

The needs of the body have to be me; it is a machine that you have to use. It is very useful instrument, because it is the ladder that leads to bliss; but the steps can also lead to sorrow. The body is a ladder. The characteristics of a ladder are that one of its ends always rests on the ground, and the other always touches the skies. You can ascend as well as descend with the same ladder. It is through the medium of the body that you have descended into hell; it is through the medium of the body that you can blimp to heaven. And it is the body through which you will reach liberation. It is your medium. You have to take care of it. You have to provide for all of its needs, but there is no need to become one with the medium! Let the instrument remain an instrument. You write with your pen, but you are not the pen. You walk with your feet, but you are not the feet.

The body is the machine, a valuable machine. Take care of it and don't spoil it. It can be spoilt in two ways: there are people who spoil it by overindulgence; there are others who spoil it by renunciation. Both are enemies of the body and both are foolish, ignorant. One goes toward prostitution or overeating to spoil it; the other does the damage with fasting. Either you flood it with petrol or you don't put in a drop. These are the two extremes. You have to give the body enough to meet its needs. You have to provide for your servant's upkeep, but that doesn't make him into a master.

THROUGH CONTROL OF THE MIND, REALITY IS ATTAINED. As your mind begins to come within your control, as you gradually start becoming the witness, you will find that reality; your soul, your actual existence, begins to become awakened.

It is misuse and failure of the mind that leads to samsara, the world. Control of the mind leads to the soul. Where mind is the master, is the world; where mind is the slave, is God.

The mind is a ladder. You need not use it for descending; you have to climb up and up. But only he who is master can go up; the one who is slave descends further and further down. Slavery of the mind is very dangerous, for the mind is not one. It is a crowd. One minute it orders you to be angry, the next moment it orders you to repent. One thought tells you: Enjoy the world! Another says: You must gather wealth! even if you have to steal! Another thought says: That is a sin! There are countless other thoughts and their sum total is the mind.

If your mind were just one thought that would be sufficient to allow you a peaceful life, but it is not just one. Your mind is a crowd, a marketplace. The mind is like this: in a classroom, as long as the teacher is present, the children sit quietly and study. As soon as the teacher leaves, the classroom turns into bedlam. The children start shouting, throwing books, overturning the desks, and fighting amongst themselves. There is no one to control them. As soon as the teacher comes back, all is silent; the books are in their place and so are the boys.

As soon as you gain mastery over yourself, the mind begins to work in a more orderly fashion. As

soon as you lose your hold on the mind, there is chaos and confusion. It is very difficult to obey this chaos, for it takes you nowhere. It is not just one note, but a discord of so many different notes.

Mahavir has said that man has many minds. Man has not one mind but many. Modern psychology supports Mahavira's view. They say that man is 'polypsychic'. It is just as if there is one servant and thousands of masters, and each master orders the poor servant about. Whom is he to obey? He is bound to go mad. This is exactly the state of your mind.

Seek the one, so that the teacher comes back into the classroom. Seek the one so that the slaves may go and work at their appropriate places. If the owner is one it will give a direction to your life, and reality will assert itself. You will then be able to know yourself. Then this assertion of existence will bring a natural freedom in its wake. As long as your mind is your master, you will remain a slave. The moment you realize reality, natural freedom happens.

It is necessary to understand what is meant by 'natural freedom'. Why is it not just called 'freedom'? Why 'natural'? The answer is very subtle. There are two types of freedom. One freedom is directed against somebody. In that case it is self-willed and headstrong. This is not real freedom, for in it you are obliged to take the opposite direction.

For example, the mind says, 'Be angry.' Now if you want to do just the opposite of what the mind tells you, you will say, 'No, I shall not be angry; rather, I shall be forgiving.' The mind says, 'Kill!' and you will say, 'No! On the contrary, I will offer him my head to chop off.'

We do exactly the opposite of what the mind tells us – just as our sadhus generally do. The mind says, 'Go and look for a woman.' The sadhu runs away to the jungle. The mind says, 'Pursue wealth.' The sadhu refuses to touch money. The mind says, 'Rest.' The sadhu stands in the burning sun or sleeps on a bed of nails. This is not true freedom, for you are still listening to the master, even if you are going contrary to his directions. You do the opposite of what he says, which still leaves him the master.

Understand this. It is a little complicated. The fight is still going on; it has not ended. Once you are the true master, all fighting ends, for the slave is a slave and he is not worth fighting any more. Imagine that a slave in your house becomes the master, and you sit or stand as he order you to. If you decide not to obey him and to do just the opposite of what he says, he is still the master; for it is he who motivates you. And if he is clever he might tell you to sit when he wants you to stand! You cannot escape him.

Mulla Nasruddin had guests in his house and his little son was making a lot of noise. The Mulla told him to keep quiet, but the more he told him, the more rowdy he became. Normally children tend to become noisy in the presence of strangers in order to make their presence felt. It is a battle of the egos – the parent versus the child.

At last the Mulla said, "Look here! Do whatever you like. Now we shall see if you can disobey me!"

The child must have been puzzled.

If you go against the mind the natural freedom will not result. It is not freedom. The result is rebellion. We are always tied to those we rebel against. We have relationship with the person we fight. We

are not yet masters, for initiative still comes from the opposite camp. When the signal comes we do the opposite.

If you then practice celibacy, it will make no difference, because your celibacy will be a revolt; it will not be natural. The mind is filled with sexual desire and you set out to fight it. This is war! And who goes to war with his own slaves? He who fights his slave counts him his equal, and not his servant. This is why your sadhus may be the opposite of you, but they are no different from you. They do the reverse of what you do, but as far as ownership of the mind is concerned, the sadhu is not an iota different form you.

Natural freedom is something quite different. Natural freedom means: I am the master. Now the question of obeying or disobeying the mind does not arise. It is no longer a question of being for or against. Now I give orders to the mind. I do not take orders from t. There are two ways of obeying the mind – to accept its orders or to go against them. In both cases you are in bondage to the mind.

When the mind becomes the master its ownership can be of two kinds: positive or negative. If you want you can be a householder, a worldly man; if you want you can become a sadhu. It makes no difference. Your sadhus are just the opposite of you. You stand on your feet; they stand on their heads. They are in greater difficulty, for it is easier to stand on your legs than on your head. Sadhus do exactly the opposite of what the household does: you amass wealth, he renounces it; you care for your body, he neglects it; you life on a soft bed, he lies on rocks; you enjoy good food, he fasts; you wear fine clothes, he goes naked. This is not natural freedom. It is a state of tension.

That is why the sutra says: THROUGH CONTROL OF THE MIND, REALITY IS ATTAINED. This leads to natural freedom. Then you are free. Then you do no look to the mind for guidance. Then you actions become natural. Then it is you who decides, and the mind merely follows. But this only happens when you become the master, and you can only become the master if you have become the witness.

Do not fight the mind. Fight – and the natural freedom will not result. If you fight you give the mind an equal status. You fight a person only when you consider him your equal. He was a friend before, now he is an enemy. The master is not an equal; the master is always above – in the skies, and the servant is always below – on the ground. When you are master you acquire the freedom that is natural, and this freedom is unique.

I have heard: There was a Muslim fakir, Bayazid, who set out on the holy pilgrimage to Mecca with a hundred of his disciples. They were fasting along the way. He was a very well-know and respected sage. On his way he stopped at a village. All the people came running to receive him. They informed him that a devotee of his who lived in the village had invited the whole village to a feast in honor of his arrival. This man was very poor. He had sold his hut, his cattle and his land in order to celebrate Bayazid's visit to the village.

Bayazid and his disciples had decided to fast for forty days, of which only five days had passed. They decided not to break the fast until the completion of the journey. Bayazid appeared undisturbed, but all the disciples became very tense. Bayazid went and sat down to the fast, so the disciples also had to sit. They were horrified by his behavior. Had Bayazid forgotten that they were fasting? Or had he succumbed to the savoury smells of the food?

They had to sit down and eat, since they had to follow their master, but they were very much upset. And there was Bayazid, eating heartily without a trace of guilt or tension. When everybody else left to retire for the night, the disciples cornered him and demanded an explanation. They expressed their displeasure at having broken the fast.

Bayazid said to them, "Why are you so upset? Did you not see with what love the poor man laid out the feast? For that love it was good to break your fast. Besides, fasts can be broken and resumed again, but a loving heart should not be so easily broken. Had I broken his heart there was no way to make amends. And what does it matter that we broke the fast? We had decided to fast for forty days. We shall start a new and fast for forty-five days!

This is the difference. The disciple's freedom was not natural. They were troubled that Bayazid had given in to the mind, and they had been taught to obey the mind. This was slavery to the mind! Bayazid was his own master. It was his very own decision whether to break the fast or keep it; the mind had no hand in it. Also, there was no hostility or opposition toward his mind, nor vice versa. his attitude was: 'I am the master. If I wish to keep the fast, I shall; if not, I shall not. The decision is entirely my own.'

Both the master and the disciples were on a fast, but there was a world of difference in their attitudes. Bayazid's freedom is natural. He can stay in a place and be completely relaxed, or he can stay in a hut and completely at ease. But his disciples would become restless if they had to sty in a palace, for that would be gratification of the senses.

This is very interesting. Sometimes you are caught by a palace, and sometimes by a hut; but you are always in the grip of one or the other; but nothing can obstruct Bayazid's way, for his decision comes from his own soul. His freedom is natural. The soul is the criterion.

Natural freedom arises only when reality is the result within. All other freedoms before this are false freedoms.

AND A SPONTANEOUS FREEDOM FLOWS FROM IT.

BECAUSE OF THIS FREEDOM, HE MOVES FREELY WITHIN AND WITHOUT.

This is an invaluable sutra: BECAUSE OF THIS FREEDOM, HE FREELY MOVES WITHIN AND WITHOUT.

Kabir never gave up his occupation of weaving. It does not suit you now. You are no longer a householder. It no longer befits you to weave cloth and go and sell it in the market."

Kabir would laugh and say, "It is all His play. Within and without are one."

We cannot understand this, for we are so caught in the grip of the outside world that within and without can never be one for us.

Zen master have said: "Samsara and moksha are one – the world and liberation are one and the same. This shocks us. How can that be? We are caught in the grips of the world, we are plagued

by the world. Liberation is exactly the opposite: it is where we shall be free, tranquil, blissful, where there is no pain. In our minds liberation stands in opposition to the world, but when a person is liberated he finds nothing opposing or conflicting in this world. All conflicts and opposition cease, all distances between the within and the without fade away, because all distances are created by the ego.

What within and what without? All is one! But the ego stands as a wall between them and creates the differences. If we were to step into the river with a pot and fill the pot with the river water we could say that there is water inside the pot and water outside of it; but what is the difference? Merely a wall of clay! What happens when this wall breaks? Then what is outside and what is inside? What is within is without; what is without is within.

That is why Kabir says, "When I sit and when I stand that is my worship. When I walk it is my prayer." Now Kabir no longer goes to the temple, for there is no distance between shop and temple; they are one and the same. Now Kabir does not run to the Himalayas for there is no difference between the marketplace and the mountains. Kabir does not even renounce the house, for he sees no difference between 'mine' and 'your'. What is the person to run away form then?

All distances fall when the ego falls. Then there is nothing within and nothing without. Then there is neither matter nor God; then both are one. That is non-duality, the indivisible – where all is one and all boundaries fall, but this can only happen when natural freedom enters one's life. Then such a person, because of his independent nature, can go out into the world and, remaining in the world, he can also live within his own self. For him there are no obstructions. Inside a palace he is as much a sannyasin as he is outside on the road. If he has a million rupees he is still not possessive, not an owner; and if he has nothing he is still the greatest of possessors, for all the world is at his command.

It is however very difficult for us to recognize, for we are familiar with only one side of existence. You assert the difference between the water outside and the water inside the vessel. What is hidden within you is what is outside of you. The space within is the space without. Your body is the vessel of clay that creates this slight difference.

Samsara, the world, and sannyas are not two things. They seem to be two, for you know only one of them – the world; you do not know sannyas. Therefore you think of sannyas in terms of the world. Your concept of sannyas springs from your concept of the world; therefore you call him a sannyasin who is completely the opposite of a worldly man. You say: See! What a great sannyasin. He walks barefooted! He remains naked, stand in the sun and rain, and sleeps in the grass.

You can never think of a sannyasin in any other terms. King Janak can never be a sannyasin to you. How can he be? He lives in a place. Krishna cannot be a sannyasin to you. How can he be? He wears his peacock crown and plays his flute. No! For you they cannot be sannyasins.

When your slavery to your mind ends and the essence within you is liberated, you will come to know that liberation is everywhere. Then the shop is no longer a hindrance nor the palace an obstacle. For liberation is the state of your experience. When you reach salvation the world is no mere; then there is no within and without. All is one! Then worship and work are the same. Then a person accepts life as it comes, as it is. There is no need to make the slightest change. Thus even butchers

have attained the supreme knowledge. It has also happened that the sannyasin who flees from the world nothing.

This sutra has an intrinsic meaning: BECAUSE OF THIS FREEDOM, HE FREELY MOVES WITHIN AND WITHOUT. He is now free. He is beyond all definitions. If you try to define him you will never know him. Now he is beyond all explanations, he has no goals. It is difficult to tell where you will find him; he can be anywhere.

Once it happened that one of Buddha's monks was passing through a village. The village courtesan happened to see him and immediately fell in love with him. The monk was young and handsome; besides he had the unique beauty which only a monk can have, which cannot belong to the ordinary man. He who gives up all is filled with a certain light within. He who has dropped all that is meaningless, finds flowers of meaningfulness blooming within him. him life is filled with a grandeur, a dignity, which is not seen in ordinary life.

It was only natural for the courtesan to fall in love with such a blissful dancing monk. The woman was very beautiful and many had tried to win her favours; even the kings knocked at her door. She was not available to everyone. She came running to the monk and said, "Please, sir, I beg you to be my guest during this rainy season."

The monk said," I shall ask my guru and do as he orders." Note that he said neither yes nor no, but promised to ask his guru. The next morning the monk went to Buddha and said, "I received an invitation to stay with a prostitute. What shall I do?"

Buddha replied, "If the prostitute was not afraid of you why should you be afraid of her? Is my sannyasin so weak that a prostitute can frighten him? Go! Accept the invitation. Stay with her during the rainy season."

There was great commotion among the rest of the monks. Many of them had notice the beautiful courtesan. Many of them were filled with desire for her. How they wished that she had invited them instead!

One monk stood up and said, "This is not proper. A sannyasin staying in a harlot's house? This is not right. There is every possibility of his falling."

Buddha replied, "Had you received the invitation you would not have got my permission, for there is the possibility of your being defiled; you still differentiate between within and without. The one I am sending out, I know him well. Whether he stays within or without makes no difference to him."

The monks were not convinced. They told Buddha, "You are making a mistake. You are setting a wrong precedent. All the rules of propriety are at stake."

Every day the monks brought some alarming news of his activities.

Some said that they saw him watching her dance. Some said that he sat on velvet cushions. Some others said he was all dressed up in beautiful clothes. Others swore that they saw him embracing the prostitute.

To all of this Buddha would say, ”What until the rains are ended. What is the hurry? Why do you bring these rum ours? What have you to do with them? It is not you who is getting defiled. The one who is will return after the rains.”

After the rains the monk returned with the courtesan walking behind him. She bowed before Buddha and said, ”Please make me a sannyasin. The monk has won. I have lost. I did everything that I could. He objected to nothing. He did not move when I embraced him. When I made him sit on a velvet cushion he did not object, saying that is was forbidden for a monk. I gave him the best of foods, and he never complained that it was against his principles, that it might arouse desires in him. I offered him all kinds of invitations and he never said no; he just sat silent and unperturbed in all situations, as if nothing had happened. I am immensely moved by his behavior. I want to acquire the same bliss that he enjoys. I want to be in the same state he is in, where the within and the without do not matter – such bliss that nothing can destroy.”

Buddha addressed the other monks thus: ”Look! He whose within and without are no more, makes a sannyasin out of a prostitute. Had you stayed with her you would have become her shadow.”

The good that is afraid of evil is of no value. The sadhu is afraid of the sinner; the true saint is not. The saint is beyond both. The saint is one whom no circumstances can change. Staying in the world outside, he is firmly established within himself. The world cannot penetrate within him, even if he choose to remain in the world.

Buddha said, ”The highest state of sannyas is when you go through a river but the waters do not touch your feet.” If you are afraid of the river for fear of getting your feet wet, that is not the highest state; it is a state of fear.

You must keep these sutras in mind. You have to break the mastery of the mind. This happens with the witness state, which creates the difference between you and the mind.

You have to assert your own mastery, not by hostility but by rising above the mind. Independence will come. If it comes through opposition it is a false freedom; there will be tension and distress. It will not be saree, nor will it be spontaneous. In religion there is no place for a warrior. In religion you have only to rise above. Do not fight, for you will stagnate at that level. Don’t make an enemy of your mind; you have to go beyond it – transcend it.

The key to going beyond the mind is the ability to witness. As you rise above, spontaneous freedom results. This freedom is not against anybody or anything. In such freedom you reach a state where, whether you live within yourself or without, it makes no difference, for the distances have fallen; there is no within, no without. Samsara and moksha, the world and liberation, are one. All dualities have ended. All dichotomy is lost. You have reached the non-dual, non-dichotomous state.

CHAPTER 7

Meditation is the Seed

17 September 1974 am in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

[Note: This is a translation from the Hindi series Shiva Sutra, which is in the process of being edited. It is for research only.]

BIJAVDHANAM

ASNASTHAH SUKHAM HRIDAE NIMAJJATI

SVAMATRA NIRMANAPADAYATI

VIDYA-AVINASHE JANMAVINASHAH.

MEDITATION IS THE SEED.

JUST SITTING, RELAXED WITHIN HIMSELF,

HE ENTERS SPONTANEOUSLY INTO THE LAKE OF

SUPREME BEING.

HE ATTAINS TO SELF-CREATION OR BECOMES

'TWICE-BORN'.

ETERNAL KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO CESSATION

OF BIRTH AND DEATH.

Jesus' disciples said to him, "Tell us about the Kingdom of God." And Jesus replied, "The Kingdom of God is like a seed." In our discussion today we shall talk about this very seed that Jesus speaks of.

Meditation is that seed. The seed in itself has no meaning. The seed is only a means; it is a potential tree. The seed is not a state of being; it is a stage on the journey. When a seed grows and becomes a tree, it reaches the goal. It flowers and bears fruit. This is its success. In a like manner, when the seed of meditation becomes a tree, it also flowers and bears fruit, and that blossoming is God.

It is necessary to understand the state of the seed. You constantly ask about God, but this is a futile enquiry. Why ask about the tree when you haven't cared for the seed? Without sowing the seed, how do you expect to see the tree? And God is not an external happening that you can see with your eyes. God is your own purified state; God is your own development. You will not be able to see God in others until the seed hidden inside you sprouts and becomes the tree.

No matter how hard they try, no Mahavir, Buddha, Shiva or Krishna can reveal God to you, for your God is hidden within yourself. At present He is in seed form; He is not yet a tree. You can see nothing in a seed. When the seed bursts and the tree sprouts, when it develops, you will manifest yourself. The flame within you will be kindled, and then you will know that God is.

It is difficult to defeat an atheist for this very reason. He always asks, "Where is your God. Show Him to me." His very question is wrong, so whatever answer is given will also be wrong. God is hidden with you. He hides within the questioner. And you cannot see the other man's God, for it is an internal happening. When your own seed sprouts you will know.

Right now you are like the seed, but you do not understand this seed, so you seek outside. As long as you seek without, your seed will lie dormant; it will not sprout, for it needs water and soil. It needs light and love, just like a small child. When you turn your eyes within, when your attention flows inward and your life-energy turns within, the seed will get that energy; it will become alive, it will sprout. MEDITATION IS THE SEED.

People come to me and say: "We are restless, how can we become tranquil?"

Mulla Nasruddin came to me early one morning. I was about to say something when he rattled off a question. "You have got to help me," said the Mulla.

"What is the problem?" I asked.

"It is a very complex problem," said the Mulla. "I get a strong desire to take a bath about ten to twenty times a day. This obsession is driving me mad. I can think of nothing else. Please help me."

"When did you last have a bath?" I asked.

"As far as I can remember, I have never given in to this troublesome practice," said the Mulla.

If you refuse to bathe and if the desire for a bath catches hold of you, then the desire is not the problem; the problem is you. You are restless. You do not know. You have never meditated. You have never indulged in this troublesome practice, and you want to eradicate your restlessness? It can never be eradicated without bathing in meditation.

Meditation is an internal bath. As the body is rid of dust and dirt, and becomes clean and fresh after a bath, so is meditation a bath of the inner soul; and when everything becomes fresh within, then where is the turmoil? Where is the sorrow and worry? Then you are thrilled. You are cheerful and blooming. There are bells on your ankles and your life becomes a dance. Before that you are sad, tired and distressed. And if you think that the cause of your distress is outside you are mistaken.

There is only one cause for your restlessness: you have not let your seed of meditation develop into a tree. Try as hard as you will, you will remain restless. Perhaps you imagine that peace will come if you accumulate the right things – wealth, status, honor, health, sons and daughters... but there is no end to your restlessness. The more of these things you gather, the more your life will be filled with restlessness, and the more intense it will be.

A poor man is restless, a rich man more! Why is this so? Why does restlessness increase with wealth? It doesn't! The poor man is also restless, but he doesn't have enough time to know it. The rich man has the time to notice it; it pricks him like a thorn, and he sees it all around him.

When you have gratified all your needs, you will suddenly realize that the actual need is for meditation. All other needs were for the body, not for your self.

This sutra says: MEDITATION IS THE SEED.

On your great journey, your quest for life, your pilgrimage to the temple of truth, meditation is the seed. What is meditation? Why is it so valuable – so valuable that if it flowers you will become God, and if it rots you will rot in hell? What is meditation? Meditation is the state of no-thought consciousness, where you are fully conscious but thoughts are absent. You are, but the mind is not. The death of the mind is meditation.

At present, you are not. There is the mind and mind alone. It should be just the opposite: there should be only you, without any mind. Right now the mind consumes all your energy. All your life-energy is being sucked by the mind.

Have you ever seen the air plant? the amar-bel? It is a parasite that attaches itself to a tree and lives off of it, sucking its energy. The tree ultimately dries up and dies. It is called amar-bel, the immortal creeper. It is just like the mind. It has no roots. It needs no roots, for it lives off the parent plant. It sucks the tree dry as it nourishes itself. The Hindus have given it an apt name, the immortal creeper.

Your mind is also an immortal creeper. It does not die. It lives on indefinitely. It follows you for countless lives. What is interesting is that it has no roots, no seeds. Its existence is rootless. It should be dead, but it lives on you.

Your mind envelops you. You are completely smothered by it. All your life-energy is sapped by the mind. You are almost dried-up. Your mind lets you have just enough to keep you alive. The parasite

does not kill its host tree outright; the host is allowed to retain enough for its most basic needs. A master treats his slave similarly: the slave is given just enough to stay alive.

Your mind gives you just enough to permit your survival. It gobbles up ninety-nine percent of your energy and allows you just one percent so that you can maintain the body. In a non-meditating state, the mind is ninety-nine percent and you are one percent; in a meditative individual the individual is ninety-nine percent and the mind only one percent. If you become one hundred percent and the mind is zero, that is the state of samadhi.

Then you are completely liberated; the seed has developed into a full-grown tree. There is nothing left to be achieved now. All that was to be attained is already attained. All potentiality has turned into reality; all that was hidden is now manifest. Then existence becomes filled with your fragrance; then the music of your dance is heard in all corners of the earth, and even far away in the moon and the stars. It is not that you alone are thrilled – the life-stream of all existence throbs within you. Then existence becomes filled with celebration. Whenever a Buddha is born all of existence celebrates. All of existence yearns to see your seed turn into a spreading tree.

Meditation means: where the mind is as good as gone. Samadhi means: where the mind is completely void and only you remain.

This sutra of Shiva says: MEDITATION IS THE SEED.

Therefore we have to start with meditation. Right now, in sleeping and in wakefulness, in consciousness and unconsciousness, the mind has you in its grip. Thoughts invade you in the day and dreams in the night. All the twenty-four hours the mind argues and debates and the most amazing thing is: it all leads to nothing. What have you attained by all your reasoning and thinking? Where has it taken you? What goals have you reached?

The great philosopher, Immanuel Kant, was returning home one evening when a small boy stopped him on the road and said, ”Good evening, uncle. I have just been to your house. Tomorrow a few boys are going for a picnic, and I came to borrow your camera. You were out so I asked your servant. He refused me flatly. Is it right, uncle, that a servant should say no like that?” The child was boiling with anger.

Kant said, ”The servant was certainly not right. Who is he to refuse when I am here? Come along with me.”

The child was pleased. They reached Kant’s home. The servant was called and reprimanded before the child. Then Kant turned to the child and said, ”Now I shall tell you. The fact is, I don’t own a camera.” All the joy, the thrill, the hope that the child was nourishing of getting the camera, all vanished into thin air when he learned that his uncle didn’t even own one.

This is the state of your mind. All your life you toil, you slave, you groan with the load that you carry because you still hope. In the end the mind will admit that it does not possess what you seek. This has always been the story. It does not have what you are actually seeking, but it keeps hoping: ”Maybe today, or tomorrow... tomorrow.”

No one can give you such seductive sweet-talk as the mind. And you are a fool. If the mind had anything to give, it would have given it by now. The very fact is that it keeps putting you off again and again and you still believe it. How many times have you believed the mind? Every day it says, "Tomorrow", and when tomorrow comes the mind again says, "Tomorrow". Now it has become your unconscious habit, and the habit is so deep-seated that you hardly think about it. Even in your sleep the mind beguiles you with fresh assurances about the future.

Mulla Nasruddin was in bed with a very high fever. I went to see him. I asked his wife how long he had been in that condition. The wife said, "For an hour he has been running a fever of 105 degrees."

The Mulla was unconscious. I put a thermometer in his mouth to see what the temperature was. At once he spoke, "A match, please!" He was a chain-smoker and the habit was so deep-rooted that even in that unconscious state the thermometer reminded him of a cigarette.

And when you die your condition will be exactly like the Mulla's. "A match, please!" Your mind keeps weaving its webs even in your unconsciousness. At the moment of death you will be filled with the mind. Whether you perform worship or pray or go to the temple or to the holy places... the mind is with you and whenever the mind is with you, you cannot establish contact with religion.

There lived a Moslem fakir by the name of Haji Mohammed. He was a sadhu. One night he dreamed that he had died and was standing at the crossroads between heaven and hell. One road led to the world and the other to moksha. An angel stood at the crossroads, guiding and directing people according to their actions.

Haji Mohammed had nothing to fear. All his life he had been a good and pious man. He offered his prayer five times a day, and he had been on the holy pilgrimage, the Haj, sixty times. In fact, that is how he came to be known as 'Haji' Mohammed. When his turn came he stood with his chest out before the angel.

"Haji Mohammed!" the angel called.

"Yes," said Haji.

"This is the way to hell." said the angel, pointing at a road.

"There is surely some mistake," said Haji. "Perhaps your ledgers are mixed up. I have been to Haj sixty times during my life on earth."

"That has all gone to waste," said the angel, "for you made it a matter of prestige and began calling yourself 'haji'. You have reaped the benefits of your Haj already. What else did you do?"

Now the Haji was not so sure of himself. When sixty pilgrimages counted as nothing, what else had he to show? Yet he persisted, "I have said my prayers religiously five times a day."

"That too was fruitless," said the angel, "for you; you prayed louder and longer when people were around and made a short job of it when there was no one around. Your attention was on people, not on God. You wanted to be known as a religious man, a pious man. Have you anything else to show?"

The Haji was now so terrified that he woke up! This dream changed his life. He became plain Mohammed from Haji Mohammed; he also began to pray in secret so that no one would know. Word went around the village that the Haji was no longer religious. Why, he had even stopped his prayers! So he reached his dotage. The Haji never refuted what people said. His prayers began to be meaningful and sincere. It is said that he had no trouble reaching heaven.

If your mind prays it will not allow prayer to happen. It will make prayer yet another way of filling its ego. Don't talk about your meditation. Hide your meditation as you would hide your precious jewels. You always protect your valuables from the gaze of others: do the same with meditation. Don't talk about it, don't fill your ego with it, or the creeper of the mind will reach there also and suck it away. Whenever the mind reaches, religion is not. Where the mind is not, religion is. The mind is always outgoing, extraverted; its attention is on the other, and not on itself. Meditation is in-going. It is introverted.

Meditation means: the focus is on one's own self and not on the other. Mind means the focus is on the other. Observe yourself: when you give a two paise coin to a beggar you look around to see if people are looking at you or not. When you build a temple you take care to inscribe your name in bold letters on a marble slab right at the entrance. You give to charity, but you see to it that it is mentioned in the newspapers. Everything you do is in vain. You cannot reach by becoming 'Haji' Mohammed. Don't keep an account of your fasts and austerities. God's realm is not a place of business. God is not impressed by your balance sheet.

Now look at the Jain munis. Every year they announce in writing how many vows they have undertaken, how many fasts they have observed in the rainy season. They keep a ledger of all of this." They are shopkeepers who just happen to be occupying our temples; they are still not rid of the habit of keeping accounts. All their fasts and meditations go to waste; they are becoming 'Haji' Mohammeds.

Don't worry about the outside world; don't worry whether people know you are religious or not. What others say is of no consequence and not worth giving a thought to, for it is your mind that relates to other people, not you. The day the mind is no more, you shall become disassociated from every one. It is the mind that binds you together. As long as the mind ties you to the world, you will remain torn away from God. The day you are divorced from your mind, the mind annihilated, you will be united with God. You disassociate on one side, while you begin to associate on the other. You break relations here, you establish relations there. Once the eyes close here they open there.

MEDITATION IS THE SEED, and meditation means: the thoughtless consciousness.

Now the second sutra:

JUST SITTING, RELAXED WITHIN HIMSELF, HE ENTERS SPONTANEOUSLY INTO THE LAKE OF THE SUPREME BEING.

This sutra is very revolutionary. It is easy and also difficult. The individual, once truly established within himself, drowns in the lake of the supreme being.

If you were to ask the Zen Buddhists in Japan what you should do in order to meditate, they would say: "Do nothing! Just sit!" Now remember, when they say to do nothing it means you have to do

absolutely nothing – simply sit – for if you do anything, the mind immediately becomes active. On the face of it this seems very easy, but in fact it is very very difficult to just sit. There is the trouble: you sit with the eyes closed and the mind begins to race. Your body looks still enough sitting there unmoving, but in your mind there is great commotion.

If you just sit and do nothing that is meditation. If you just sit doing nothing – there is no Ram-Ram, no Krishna-Krishna, no ripple of thought – for that too is an activity. If you are simply doing nothing; if there is no attempt even to stop the thoughts – for you can only do that with another thought – if you neither repeat God's name nor remember the world; if you are not saying 'I am the soul' nor 'I am Brahma', for such repetitions are also useless, they are mere thoughts; if you sit, just like a rock, nothing happening within, nothing happening without, then you are 'JUST SITTING'. This state is called 'zazen' in Japan – just sitting. Zen masters use this method. The disciple requires twenty years, thirty years, to reach this state of just sitting.

This apparently easy sutra is very difficult. The easiest things are the most difficult things in the world. If you are told to climb the Himalayas you will not find it that difficult. You may become weary, you may face the difficulties, but still you will climb; but as soon as you attempt to do nothing it will seem that a great calamity has befallen you.

What happens when you sit quietly? You find that as soon as you sit all kinds of movements occur in different parts of your body. You feel needles pricking your feet, you feel itchy somewhere else; suddenly you feel a pain in the neck or the back. A moment before you felt none of this, you were absolutely all right. Suddenly your body revolts and tells you to do something; even if you were able to ignore everything else, you will feel compelled to change your position.

Life is supported by action in this mundane world. As you begin to empty yourself of action, the world is lost. As soon as you try to be still, the body urges you into one activity or other.

People come to me and complain: "We suffer from no aches and pains, but as soon as we begin to meditate all kinds of troubles start." You feel like coughing when there is no reason to do so. You are the master, and if you do not listen to the body it will quiet down, for how long can it remain agitated? It is the attention that you give it that acts as its nourishment. You must firmly tell the body: Whatever happens I am not going to do anything for this one hour. You feel itchy? What of it? How is it going to harm you?

Have you noticed that if you do not scratch for a minute or two, the itching stops on its own? The itching sensation is never removed by scratching; rather, it increases. If you have made a firm resolution that you are the master and not the body, you will find the throat has settled down – there is no cough. You will have to assert your domination for a few days though. Too long have you allowed the slave to lord it over you, so when you begin to steal its power it is sure to rebel and defy you.

You have decided to sit still for an hour. What is the worst that can happen? The feet turn numb... All right, let them! They feel itchy... So what! It is not a matter of life and death. You will find that if you remain firm in your resolve, the feet will stop being numb. This was only a ruse of the body to defeat your purpose. Had you listened to the feet your hands would have clamored for attention, then your neck and so on; but if you ignore the feet the itch will subside once and for all. A beggar

does not beg for long before an empty house, but if you make the mistake of saying, "There is no one here. Go elsewhere," he will not budge from your door. Once you responded he is sure to say something.

A beggar called out for alms before the house of a miserly Marwari. What a wrong place to go! He called out and begged for a loaf of bread.

"There is no bread here," the Marwari called back.

"Then give me a paisa or two," cried the beggar.

"There is no money here."

"Then some old clothes!"

"Did I not say that there is nothing here?" shouted the Marwari.

"Then why stay here?" answered the beggar. "Why don't you join me and we can go begging together!"

One reply – and you are caught. Your reply means that you are, and you are willing. At least you are responding. That is enough. You feel itchy! Just observe it and do nothing, do not react. In a short while you will be surprised to find that the sensation has gone. When there is a pain just observe it; it will go away. It takes about six months to make the body 'just sit' like this. Choose any posture in which you can be comfortable. Don't choose an unsuitable posture which might give you trouble. Therefore I say choose a comfortable, easy position. Don't take an uncomfortable position that tortures the body unnecessarily. You don't have to sit on pebbles or thorns. As it is, the body will give enough trouble: don't increase your pains.

Sit in an easy posture and resolve to sit like this for an hour. Then don't listen to the body at all. If you stick zealously to your resolve and do not give in to the body, within three weeks you will find that the body will stop agitating. Then when the body stops disturbing you, turn to the mind.

Don't worry at all about the mind in the beginning. You have to make the body toe the line before grappling with the mind. The day you discover that the body has become passive and no longer give you trouble, that it is now prepared to sit still, know that half the journey is over. In fact, more than half the journey is over, because the mind is also a part of the body, and if the body has been subdued the mind cannot hold out for long. If the whole body has been trained into acceptance of a particular posture, this part of the body cannot wander for long; it too will have to settle down.

To stabilize the body, to subject it to a particular posture, means to stop all the turbulence and disturbances of the body. Now you sit as if you have no body, as if you are bodiless. You are now aware of the body: you are just siting.

Next concentrate on the mind. The method is the same: don't do a single thing that the mind says. Don't react to it. Watch the thoughts with an indifferent attitude, as if you have nothing to do with them, as if you are witnessing the thoughts of another person while you are standing apart, as if

you are watching a rowdy mob on the road, as if you are seeing the clouds passing by in the sky. Observe indifferently. Be absolutely neutral.

First let the body become tranquil. This state comes gradually in the course of three weeks. The mind takes about three months. It may be a little more or a little less. All depends on your seriousness and sincerity of purpose, but within a period of six months this state of 'just sitting' can be achieved. Now neither the body indulges in activities nor the mind.

Do not fight the mind. Do not suppress it. Do not order it not to think, for remember, this too is thinking. Even this much of a thought can keep the mind going. The mind will stir up a great deal of chaos, but don't fight it. Your reactions will show that you are still willing to give in to it, that you have failed to ignore it.

Indifference is the key. Just watch. Say nothing. It is going to be difficult, for the habits are old and deep-seated. It has always been your habit to talk with the mind, to answer it back. Gradually, by and by, if you persist you will reach a stage when by constant observation there is only you, and nothing is happening – neither in the body nor in the mind. When all activities of the mind and body become quiet, that state is called the state of 'just sitting'.

Here the word 'posture' does not mean some intricate yoga posture. If you do yoga asanas it will be helpful, for it will give you the power to sit longer, but this is not necessary. If you learn merely to sit, that is the supreme asana. Also, it is not necessary that you should sit on the floor; you can even sit on a chair. Only one thing must be remembered: you have to keep the same posture through the given period.

Sit comfortably so that the body has no cause for complaint. Make all arrangements for the body's comfort: if it is cold take a blanket, if it is hot switch on the fan. Arrange for the body's comfort. Don't take pleasure in torturing the body, for that is just cruelty Whether you torture another body or your own, both are acts of violence, and nobody has ever attained God through violence. This body is also His there is no need to torture it. When once you have settled down, don't listen to the body's demands. Keep sitting! Ignore the mind, be indifferent toward it. It will create chaos, it will indulge in all kinds of rowdiness, perhaps more than ever before.

People come to me and say: "When I was not meditating my mind was never this restless. Now it is a hundred times more restless than it used to be. Now there is great noise and tumult." It has always been so, only you were not aware of it, for your mind was always outside you. You were so involved in the outside world that you did not notice the tumult within. Your sitting in silence does not create it. In fact, when you are tranquil this chaos can only die down. It cannot possibly increase. But you were so involved in the outside world, in your house, your family, your business, your wealth, that you could not hear what was happening inside. Now that you have closed your eyes to the outside world all your attention has gone within, all the focus, all the light is now concentrated within. Then in this first experience, when the light falls within, you discover what chaos reigns there.

But remember: be indifferent! You have to remember one thing: except nothing from the mind. If you hold on to the slightest hope you will not be able to disregard the mind. Leave all desires; nourish no hopes and sit in total indifference; be neutral and unbiased. However difficult you may find it in the beginning, it will become easier if you persist. Don't worry about the time – today, tomorrow or

the day after – don't worry when you will reach, because the greater the hurry the more you will be delayed. To hurry is the nature of the mind. If you hurry the mind will defeat you. If you keep your patience and don't hurry, if you are prepared to wait for the happening whenever it comes, you will find that within six months the mind will become tranquil.

The state of 'just sitting' means that there is no activity in the body, no thought in the mind. This sutra of Shiva is revolutionary. It says that the moment you achieve the state of 'just sitting' you find yourself bathed in the lake of the supreme being. That lake is within you.

When all movements of the body stop the energy cannot flow out. When all activities of the mind come to a halt, all outlets of energy are sealed. For the first time the bucket of your mind has no holes. Now there is nothing to flow out. All the life-energy circulates within, and within is the great lake. This energy flowing within you then meets the supreme lake. You – your drop – beings to drown in the ocean. Then a natural bathing in the supreme lake occurs. And that is God Himself.

When you go outward you wander. As soon as you go within the goal is attained. You are seeking outside what is hidden inside you. What you are seeking in fact is you, yourself; and therefore the search never succeeds. That which you seek lies hidden forever within you. That is the difficulty. That is the complexity of the whole thing, for you never look there. Where you look, there He is not, and so you wander and wander endlessly.

One evening Mulla Nasruddin was out on the road with a lamp looking for something. He was frantic. Darkness was closing in and his friends offered to help him.

"What are you looking for?" they asked.

"I have lost my needle," said the Mulla.

After a while one of them said, "Mulla, exactly where did you drop the needle? The road is so wide and the needle is so small."

Nasruddin said, "Don't ask that question. That is a sore point."

The friends were puzzled. "What do you mean?" they asked.

Nasruddin said, "The needle was lost in the house, but there is no light inside. It is so dark there, so terribly dark that I am afraid to go in even during the daytime. That is why I am looking outside."

"Have you gone mad, Mulla?" they exclaimed. "How can you find outside what was lost inside?"

Nasruddin laughed out loud. "Everybody is doing the same!" he exclaimed. "What is lost within we seek without, and no one else is considered mad, only me!"

What is it that you seek? You are definitely seeking something, but what is it? If we were to find the sum total of all our searching we should discover that it is bliss that we seek. We find some people searching for wealth, but really they seek bliss; some seek love, but really they seek bliss; some seek honor, but really they seek bliss; some seek fame, but really they seek bliss. In essence they

are all seeking bliss. Your quests may have different names, but the deep meaning is one, and one only – bliss! You seek bliss whether your feet point toward the tavern or the temple. Whether a man acts out of sin or virtue, whether a man commits a good act or foul, he is seeking bliss.

Have you ever asked where bliss was lost? Look in the place where you lost it. You search in other places than where you left it. You have certainly not lost it somewhere outside. It was a taste within, a flavor you know well.

Psychologists have made a significant statement. They say that a child is in a most blissful state within the mother's womb. And he should be! He has no worries, no responsibility, no anxiety about food or about the weather. The temperature in the mother's womb is constant. It makes no difference to the child whether it is burning hot outside or biting cold. He is not affected if the mother is hungry, or if she is undergoing any emotional or physical strain. The child is fully protected. He just floats in the womb.

You must have seen the picture of the Lord Vishnu floating in a sea of milk. This is how it is with a child in the mother's womb. This picture of Vishnu symbolizes the state of blissful rest that a child enjoys in the womb. There is a flower sprouting from Vishnu's navel. That depicts the umbilical cord which joins the child to the mother. That is the source of its life. As there is water in the ocean, so is there water in the mother's womb; even the salt ratio is the same. This is why the mother gets the urge to eat salty things, for the salt in her body is absorbed by the womb.

The child floats in this water inside the mother's womb. It is in complete bliss. It knows no worry: before it is hungry it is feed. There is no need to cry. There is no need to breathe even; the mother breathes for it. The child is joined with the mother. It is not yet separate. It has no ego: it is not conscious that 'I am'. The fact is: the child is, but it is completely bathed in existence, and the bliss of this condition is the bliss that he searches for all of his life.

Psychologists say that your whole life's quest is an attempt to regain the womb. We devise a thousand and one ways to recapture this bliss. If you look closely you will observe this fact. You try to find a comfortable bed to sleep in; comfortable bedding is that in which the temperature is almost the same as a child curled up in the mother. People who sleep well sleep in this position; they become babies all over again.

All your efforts are aimed at being relieved of your responsibilities and worries. You try to become rich, for if you are rich you can use your wealth as a means to dissolve worry about the future. You seek friendship, you seek love and protection. Alone, you are afraid, for all around there are enemies, unknown and unfamiliar. You make a house for yourself and you feel safe within its four walls; look closely, and you will see it is an attempt to create a womb within which you can feel safe.

The child experiences bliss in the mother's womb. Every child does. Then all his life he spends searching for this same bliss. That is why, whenever you get a glimpse of this bliss you feel happy. All your moments of happiness are glimpses of bliss. Psychologists say that the search for liberation is a search for the womb. The day this whole existence becomes like a womb to you, when you are completely drowned in it, when your ego is completed annihilated and you have no worries, no anxiety, you will attain this bliss all over again. This bliss is right within you, but you have lost it; and because you seek outside yourself, you do not find it.

In the state of 'just sitting', in the state of meditation, your own body becomes a womb for you. In this state when all activities quiet down, when all thoughts are lost, your mind and your body become the circumference and you enter the womb once again. This is why we call a meditative person 'DVIJ', which means twice-born. There is one birth in which you pass through your mother's womb; this is the birth you get through your parents. And there is a second birth in which you have to give birth to yourself. It is this birth which makes you a dvij.

In the state of 'just sitting' a person is naturally bathed in the lake of the supreme being. And to be bathed in the ocean of consciousness.... When the ocean of the body has given you so much pleasure, imagine how much more the ocean of consciousness can give you! It is more than your powers of imagination can grasp, infinitely more. It is boundless. The bliss you tasted in your mother's womb was the bliss that comes from drowning in the body, but the bliss you will know when you sink into the soul, that is the real bliss. The Hindus have called it brahma. No taste can equal the taste of Brahma. It is sat-chit-ananda, truth-consciousness-bliss.

As soon as you drown in the ocean of consciousness you become dvij, for now the soul is born in you. At present your soul is hidden within the seed. It is the present and it is not present; it is present as a seed, but not as a tree. You are still only a potential, a promise of becoming. You have not yet become the tree, and this is your trouble; this is your anguish. It is this that makes you distressed and anxious.

If all this distress is correctly analyzed, it is the pain of being born. As long as you are not twice-born, dvij, this trouble will persist. He who undergoes the second birth finds that the first birth ceases for him, for now it is of no use to him; otherwise, you will be born, you will die and you will be born again. You will reincarnate again and again, but when you become twice-born there is no need to return to the body again.

Those of the brahmin caste are called 'dvij', twice-born. It would be more fitting to call a dvij, a brahmin; for all brahmins are not dvij, but all dvij's are brahmins. No one truly becomes a brahmin just by being born into a brahmin family. He only becomes a brahmin when he is dissolved in Brahma, when he is born of Brahma.

The Hindus have a unique concept. Each of us is born into the lowest cast, sudras, and only a few attain Brahmahood. So, whatever caste the child is born into, by birth we are all sudras. The child of a brahmin family is initiated with the sacred thread. This is just to make him aware that he is now a brahmin and not a member of a lower caste. It is only a custom. To be a brahmin is not so easy that it can be done merely by putting a thread around your neck. To become a brahmin is the most difficult process in the world; it only happens when a person is drowned completely in his soul.

He who gives a new birth to his self is twice-born, dvij. Now he is his own mother, his own father. He is not born through an outside agency. His relationships with the world are broken. He is now united with Brahma.

This sutra says: MEDITATION IS THE SEED. He who attains the state of meditation, he who just sits, is immersed in his self. This gives birth to his soul. He is now 'twice-born'.

Leave aside all the second-rate methods, shun them. Don't be satisfied with the sacred thread around your body. If only it were so cheap and easy to attain Brahmahood, to become one with

Brahma. But this is the way we are; we are always rummaging around till we come up with some easy method to fool ourselves with. How long can we maintain this self-deception? All your sacred threads, all the devices you use to misguide yourself – destroy them! They give false hopes. What you need is a genuine birth, and that will only happen when you become your own womb. You will need a body in the state of 'just sitting' and a mind in the state of meditation. Together they form the womb within you.

Nicodemus asked Jesus, "When shall I attain your Kingdom of God?" Jesus replied, "When you die and are born again." You have to end your life as it is, be dead to it, and be born again as you should be. Only then can you enter the Kingdom of God. Then answer is clear: destroy the seed form and become the tree.

As you are, you are only a dream, a promise – a promise that some day God will emerge from within you, but He has not, as yet. Bury this possibility within the soil like a seed. What is the danger? What is the fear? I can understand the seed's misgivings. It is afraid of extinction. Besides, it has no knowledge of the tree that it carries inside. It has never come face to face with the tree. If the tree is to sprout the seed must die. Besides, the seed is not sure whether, on its death, the vast tree will come into being. All that the seed can think is: Whatever I am will be lost. And where is the certainty of attaining this vastness? Exactly that is your anxiety. Of all the Buddhas and Mahavirs and Shivas you ask this same question: 'What if we lose what we have without gaining anything?"

The fear is natural. Therefore you are afraid to approach the master. If you don't experience this fear the master is not worth a penny; run away from him. The master makes you frightened for he looks like death itself. He will destroy you. And, as you are being destroyed, the mind says: "Escape from here." When the mind gives that danger signal don't run away! When the mind tells you to wait a little longer and enjoy the master's company, then is the time to run! Where the mind is fearful, know that something is bound to happen, for the seed is frightened only in the face of extinction.

You are not afraid of the priests. You are not afraid of the temples. And the holy places – Kashi and Bodh Gaya, Gunar, Kaaba, Jerusalem – you can wander there without a care, for there is no one there who threatens your existence. All the places of pilgrimage, all the holy places, are dead places, for life is not in the place, in the teertha, but in the tirthankara, the master. When the Tirthankara is gone a pilgrimage place is built around him, for now there is no fear from the master. A dead master cannot destroy you, therefore the mind worships the dead master very lovingly. You worship Mahavir and Buddha, for you know for certain that a stone statue can do you no harm. After all, it is you who bought it and you can throw it away whenever you want.

The Hindus are clever, they make their idols of clay, because after worshipping them for two or three weeks they throw them in the river. One thing is certain: we make them and we break them. You worship if you feel like it; if you don't feel like it, you don't worship. Who will ask you to explain yourself? All this is just a more sophisticated version of the games that children play. They play with dolls: we play with statues of God.

When Mahavir, Rama and Krishna are no more, then they are worshipped. When such a person is alive, people run away in fear. People who are deathly afraid of a master think lovingly of visiting the holy pilgrimage places. Crowds of thousands flock to the annual Kumbha Mela, the meeting of all the holy men. Have people ever gathered in such numbers around Mahavir or Krishna? Never!

The Kumbha does not come to your door, you have to make the journey to the sacred bathing place where it occurs, but Mahavir and Buddha come knocking at your door. Alas, they find the door closed, for we are frightened of these people. They are dangerous. They say: "Die like a seed and become a tree!"

This is why trust and faith are required, they are priceless. If you listen to reason it will say, "First be sure. What is the guarantee?" Logic is always right. It says: "A bird in hand is worth two in the bush." This is correct as far as reason goes, for how can you let go of the little you have for a promise of larger gains that are yet to come?

Mulla Nasruddin was eager to learn to swim. He found a teacher who said, "Come, I am going to the river." As it happened, the Mulla slipped as soon as he stepped into the water. He fell over and almost drowned. Somehow he found his way to the bank, whereupon he got out of the water and ran away.

The teacher called out to him, "Where are you going? Don't you want to learn how to swim?"

"First teach me how to swim," said the Mulla, "and then I'll get back into the river."

"That's almost impossible," said the teacher. "Unless you get into the water you cannot learn."

But the Mulla said, "Never again will I set foot in the river, at least not in this life."

You also reason like Nasruddin, and your reasoning is correct. The Mulla will only step into the river if he knows how to swim, for was he not almost drowned? It was sheer good luck that he found himself alive!

One day I saw Nasruddin teaching his wife how to drive. He stood at the edge of the road, well away from his wife, who sat at the wheel of the car. He was shouting out instructions: "Press the clutch! Change gears!"

I watched him intrigued. I went up to him and asked, "Mulla, I have seen many people teach driving, but yours is a unique method! How can you teach someone from outside the car?"

The Mulla replied, "The car is insured; I am not."

Logic always demands insurance; it wants a guarantee. The seed also demands a guarantee that it will become a tree, but how is one to assure the seed? Faith is invaluable. There is no way to assure you. Faith is a jump in the dark, therefore the faithful reach and the logical don't. The mind misleads, leads you astray; the heart takes you all the way to the destination.

When you are in love you never listen to the mind. Even when you pray you cannot pray if you listen to the mind. If you listen to the mind its logic always seems one hundred percent correct, but the ultimate result is zero. The seed remains a seed; not only does it remain a seed but it begins to rot.

Ask yourself this question: "Is what I have real?" What does a seed possess? Don't ask whether the tree will or will not be; instead ask the seed what it has that it is so afraid of losing. This is what faith

always asks. Faith says: ”What do I have that I fear losing?” There is nothing apart from anxiety, anguish and distress. Why be afraid of losing them? Is there any bliss, any joy in you, so that you are afraid you might lose it and be so much the poorer for it? You have nothing. You are like the naked man who wouldn’t bathe because he had no place to dry his clothes. he had no clothes, so there was no question of washing and drying them, but such anxieties catch hold of the mind.

You have nothing to lose, absolutely nothing, and everything to gain. This is false. Truth always looks inward: ”What do I have?” Logic always looks to the future: ”What will happen?” Truth looks to the present.

People come to me and I tell them to jump into sannyas. They say, ”Not now, after a year,” as if I am taking something away from them. As if they need a full year to muster the courage. They want to postpone it as if I want them to renounce something. They have nothing; they possess nothing except misery, wretchedness and poverty. I want to give them the glory of sannyas. I don’t intend to take anything away; rather, I want to give them something. To me, sannyas is not renunciation; rather, it is a door to supreme enjoyment. You become... you feel... like a king for the first time in your life when you take sannyas, but alas, you view your beggar’s attitude as a treasure.

Whenever I tell someone to jump into sannyas he looks at me as if I am snatching something away from him. I am amazed. If only he had something to lose then I could understand it. You have nothing! Not even rubbish! All that you have, all that you own, is a Pandora’s box filled with the scorpions and snakes of anxiety suffering, anguish and all kinds of ills. Why you hold on to all of this is beyond my understanding. What is the reason? The reason is plain: you don’t look in this direction at all. You are always concerned with what you will get.

People ask me: ”What will we attain by meditating?” And that is the error that they make. I want them to ask themselves what they have attained by not meditating. We cannot vouch for what will be attained, for the future is unknown. Besides, the seed and the tree never meet. The seed will remain a seed. How can we make the seed meet its future? When the seed perishes, only then does the tree come into being. By the time the tree is formed the seed is no more, so how can you show the tree to the seed? As long as you are a seed, you are a seed; when you become the tree you are no longer the seed. The seed and the tree never meet.

You want a guarantee for the future. To whom is this guarantee to be given? The seed you no longer exist – you will not remain. The man who trusts asks: ”What do I have?” Then he finds: ”I have nothing. I am naked.” Once he realizes that he is naked, why worry about drying his clothes?

Once this knowledge dawns on you, you will be ready to set out on the journey into the unknown, because then you are prepared for anything. You hold no fear of losing anything. If you gain something, good! If you don’t, you can’t be any worse off than you already are. Or do you think you can be? People are worried that they might fall into a state worse than their present condition.

Mulla Nasruddin was habitually saying: ”It could have been worse.” Whenever anyone told him something the Mulla invariably replied, ”It could have been worse.” His friends were tired of hearing this. At last an incident occurred in the neighborhood and the friends were confident that the Mulla would never be able to use his pet phrase in this context.

The Mulla's neighbor had been out of town. He returned two days before he had been expected. When he opened the door and let himself in he found his wife in the arms of a stranger. The husband picked up his gun and shot both of them. "Now Mulla, what have you to say about that?" chuckled the Mulla's friends, fully confident that they had him beaten for once.

"It could have been worse," the Mulla said calmly.

"What could have been worse than this?" they all shouted together.

"Quiet, my friends," said the Mulla. "Had he returned a day earlier it would have been me!"

But I tell you, it cannot be worse. Give up this phrase. The state you are now in is the worst state you can possibly be in. What could be worse?

Trust always thinks: "What do I have? What does the seed have? It is only a covering, a shell. It has nothing. It can become something, but only when its shell breaks." You are a shell, a covering. Let the shell break... and then everything becomes possible.

Therefore Shiva says: MEDITATION IS THE SEED, and when the seed is destroyed you attain the state of 'twice-born'.

ETERNAL KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO CESSATION OF BIRTH AND DEATH.

The day the twice-born state flowers within you, your knowledge can never be destroyed. It will flow constantly. You will become a current of knowledge. Everything will become knowledge, consciousness. When the seed of meditation breaks there is nothing but consciousness, and only consciousness within you. You are transformed into a state of awareness and of witnessing, where knowledge is indestructible, where it cannot be destroyed. Right now your consciousness is next to non-existent. You live as if you are asleep. Whatever you do, it is not done in full awareness.

A man sitting opposite Buddha was wriggling his big toe. Buddha said, "Brother, why does your big toe wriggle so?"

The man stopped immediately. He was surprised. "I myself do not know," he replied. "Now that you have asked I too am troubled over it, for it was not moving consciously."

"Such is your whole life." said the Buddha.

What have you ever done consciously in the course of your whole life? Have you ever been consciously angry? Have you loved consciously? Have you ever consciously been greedy or obsessed? What have you done consciously? Your life is such – merely twiddling your thumbs unconsciously. You set up house, raised a family; you gave birth to your children. Did you do anything consciously? Everything has happened to you; you were merely involved in it mechanically.

What did you do consciously in your life? Was there any action you did consciously? No! You can't find even one act that you did consciously. You fell in love? Love happened, you did not fall in love. If you quarrelled, quarrels just happened mechanically; you did not quarrel. You see a person and

you decide immediately whether he is good or bad, but in your full awareness, who is good, who is bad?

Whatever you have become is accidental. You have not gone about it in full awareness. Things happen around you and you flow unconsciously with them. You float like a wisp of straw in a river; you go wherever the current takes you. The straw thinks that it is travelling; and so you think you are doing something. How can you be the doer when you are totally unaware?

This sutra says that knowledge becomes indestructible only when the seed of meditation breaks and gives way to the eternal spring of consciousness. Then even when you sleep, you are not asleep. You are never asleep; you are fully conscious inside. Then when you make love you do so in full consciousness. When you eat, drink, walk or talk, you are completely aware. Then your whole life becomes an expanding consciousness. This is what we call Buddhahood, and it means: the state in which a man lives who is in full consciousness.

Now knowledge cannot be destroyed, now wisdom never fades. The flame within never burns low. It burns constantly and without flickering. When this happens – that the seed of meditation breaks and there arises from within the eternal knowledge and the constant stream of consciousness – then there is no birth; then you shall not reincarnate again.

You return to the body only in a state of unconsciousness. You are asleep and so you descend again to the body. The day your consciousness becomes constant the journey of the body will end. No longer will you descend into this narrow prison. No one in his full consciousness would choose to live in a body, for it is a bondage; it is a chain you have forged around yourself. This is imprisonment, slavery; and why would you want to be a slave knowingly?

You descend into the body unknowingly. You have lost your way in the dark. The day your eyes become filled with light you will stop descending into the body. Then where will you be? You will be a part of the great void, a bodiless part of it. This we call Brahma. Others call this God,; yet others call it nirvana or moksha. Call it by any name, it makes no difference. Between religions there is nothing more than a difference of words, and all words are correct, for each word indicates one quality of that supreme state.

Nirvana means: the extinguishing of the lamp. Buddha likes this word. He would say: ”When the lamp is extinguished, where does the light go?” What would you say? Where has it gone? You will not be able to point to a specific place. The light is bound to be somewhere, for nothing in this existence is ever destroyed. Whatever is, is! Whatever is not, is not! There is no way for a thing that is not, to be; and there is no way for a thing that is, not to be. The flame, the light, must be somewhere – somewhere in the vast expanse, one with existence. Up to now it had a form, now it is formless. Now it is liberated from the lamp, but that does not mean that it is lost.

The lamp was made of clay, the flame was totally separate. What has the flame to do with the clay? There is no relationship between the two. The flame did not owe its existence to the lamp; the lamp did not have to become the flame. The lamp was merely the body that contained the flame. You snuffed out the flame, and the connection between the fuel and the flame was broken. The flame was lost in the vastness and became a part of the great light. Therefore Buddha referred to this supreme state as nirvana, total extinction, for the flame dies down and becomes one with the supreme sun.

Mahavir calls it kaivalya, total aloneness. He says: "As your attachments break, darkness is gone and ignorance vanishes. All false knowledge is destroyed. Then there is you, and you alone – nobody else. Only the consciousness remains which has no beginning and no end."

Mahavir does not speak about God. He says, "The soul becomes God, the Supreme Soul." It is the same. Either you say the drop is lost in the ocean or the ocean has become one with the drop. The Hindus say that the drop falls into the sea. Mahavir says that the ocean is lost in the drop. The event is the same, only the expressions are different. Mahavir liked the word kaivalya. You, and only you, remain – pure consciousness.

The Hindus call it moksha, liberation, because the body is a prison, and you have obtained your freedom from it. Jesus has called it the Kingdom of God, because you are no longer poor and miserable. You have become a king. Only the words differ, the basic happening is one: when the seed breaks you become the tree.

Take courage. Great courage is required. It requires more courage than anything else does in the world. There is no greater challenge to your bravery than religion. Therefore I say: Do not think the weak take to the path of religion. The weak can never become religious, only the very strong can walk the path of religion. Where you see the weak becoming religious, kneeling in the temples and mosques, there is no religion there; it is only a worldly institution. The greatest act of bravery is to plunge into religion.

What is this act of courage? The leap by the seed. It is the seed's readiness to destroy itself without any hope or guarantee of becoming a tree, the destruction of the known in favour of the unknown, the unfamiliar. It is leaving the well-trodden paths to wander in the vast wilderness. It is the readiness to choose an unfamiliar footpath, to leave the world and set out in search for Brahma, to leave the well-mapped world behind and set out on the uncharted sea.

There are no maps, no guides. There are no written books that can be of help. All books are left behind when the world is no more, for they are part and parcel of this world. Not even the guru can go with you. He can only give you a push while he stands on the shore. What does a swimming teacher do? He merely pushes the learner into the water. You know that the guru is standing by, so you jump in confidently; but the knowledge of swimming is within you. To begin with, you throw your arms and feet about; that also is swimming, but a crude, unskilled form of it. In the course of a few days you learn by yourself how to move your limbs in the water. You could have done this without the coach, but you were afraid. Someone is waiting at the shore to help you if need be. That gives you courage, just as the guru stands at the shore to give you moral support. He does nothing, for there is nothing to do. Everything is hidden within you. It only has to be made manifest. The guru's presence only assures you that there is no danger. You feel confident that someone is looking after you, that someone will hear you if you should and call for help. The guru assures the disciple" "I am here. Don't be afraid to jump."

As soon as you dive in, you begin thrashing your arms and legs about. At first it is out of fright, but gradually you learn to swim. What is the difference between swimming and thrashing your limbs about? It is only a matter of a little experience. For the first few days your limbs will only move ineffectually, without helping you to move forward. By and by all your movements will fall into a coordinated pattern, and as you learn how to move more effectively your confidence increases.

After some time the guru will tell you that you no longer require his presence. Furthermore, you can guide others now, if you want to.

This is what the guru does in meditation: he pushes you; and if you have enough trust your seed will break and the tree will be born. If you choose to argue and debate you will wander uselessly. Trust is the door.

CHAPTER 8

The Fourth State

18 September 1974 am in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

[Note: This is a translation from the Hindi series Shiva Sutra, which is in the process of being edited. It is for research only.]

TRISHU CHATURTHAM TAILAVADASECHYAM.

MAGNAH SVACHITTE PRAVISHET.

PRANASAMACHARE SAMADARSHANAM.

SHIVATULYO JAYATE.

THE FOURTH STATE SHOULD SERVE AS OIL TO PERMEATE THE FIRST THREE STATES.

SO BATHED, HE ENTERS INTO THE STATE OF SELF-AWARENESS.

HE WHO EXPERIENCES THE DIVINE ENERGY PERVADING EVERYTHING VIEWS ALL THINGS AS EQUAL,

AND HE ATTAINS TO SHIVAHOOD.

Through all three states – wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep – turiya, the fourth state, runs like a thread through the beads of a mala. Even while you sleep there is someone awake within. When you dream there is someone witnessing the dream. When you are awake during the day there is a witness within as you go about your daily routine. This is bound to be, for that which is your nature

you cannot lose no matter how deep you are in sleep. That which you are is bound to be present. It can be suppressed, hidden, forgotten, but never destroyed.

Whether you are asleep or dreaming or awake, turiya is ever-present. Deep within you are always Buddha. However much you may wander, all wandering is only superficial and belongs to the waves on the surface. Deep within you have never wandered, for deep within there is no way to wander.

Therefore, the fourth state is not to be attained but revealed. It has not to be achieved but uncovered. It lies hidden within like a buried treasure. You dig through a few layers of soil and become rich as a king. You need not seek anywhere, the treasure lies within. You keep getting glimpses of it, but you pay them no heed.

In the morning you get up and say you slept long and deep, that the sleep was very refreshing. When you say this, have you ever wondered who it is who knows that the sleep was enjoyable? If all of your being was asleep, who was there to give remembrance? Who is it who says that the sleep was deep and refreshing? Surely someone saw into the depth of the slumber. Some dim light shone all through your sleep. The darkness was never total; it could be seen.

You dream at night. In the morning you remember some fragments of your dream. You say you had a nightmare. So the observer was separate from your sleep, he was not lost in the sleep. A part of you stood aside and did not become one with the dream. You were the observer, the spectator, when the dream was being played on the stage of the soul within. But you were outside the play, otherwise you would not have remembered.

When anger gets hold of you during the day, it is not that you are totally asleep; there are glimpses within. You are aware of anger when it comes, you feel it coming. As the skies fill with clouds before the rain falls, you feel the smoke rising before the fire of anger erupts.

When you are filled with attachments, when you are tranquil, when you are restless – there is someone within who keeps a constant watch; but you take no notice of this observer. Your attention flows toward what is seen in the world, and you are one with what you see; it doesn't occur to you to turn and see the observer within who watches. This is all you have to do: turn within and see the observer. Your unconsciousness will break and you will attain the fourth state. He who attains the fourth state attains all. He who does not attain the fourth state, finds at the time of death that whatever he has earned, whatever he has gathered, is not worth a penny. It is all useless.

I have heard:

Once Nasruddin ran to the river to catch a boat. He was going on a journey and he was in a great hurry for fear of missing the boat. When he reached the river he saw the boat just a little ways from the shore. He took a jump and landed on the deck, but in the process he slipped and fell. His elbows were bruised, his clothes torn, but he was happy; he had caught the boat. He looked at his fellow travelers and beamed, "Well, I made it."

One of them replied, "I don't understand, Mulla. Why such a hurry? This boat isn't going anywhere, it's just coming in to shore."

In the hour of death you will also realize that all your hurrying and scurrying ultimately turns out to be useless. The boat that you thought would take you is actually coming in to shore. But then it will be too late and nothing can be done about it. Now you still have time. Something can be done.

For him who awakens before death claims him, there is no death; but for him who sleeps until the time of death, there is no life. His life is one long dream finally broken by death. He who awakens during his lifetime sees and experiences his inner nature and knows that it is immortal.

Life continues while you remain unconscious. You go about as if you are drunk, you do not know where you are going. Why you are going is also unclear.

Two beggars at the roadside were having a conversation. I happened to be passing by and overheard them. One said, "I wonder what is the purpose of life."

"Life is only to live. What else can you do?" replied the other.

You are of the second beggar's opinion: you feel what else is there to do in life apart from living? And even that is out of your control; it depends on an infinite number of factors. Everything is in your unconscious mind. Why sex desire arose in you, why you raised a family, how greed and anger entered you, why you were dishonest, why you accumulated wealth, why you made enemies – you have no idea! You are just like a puppet, whose strings are being pulled by someone else. You imagine you are dancing, but in fact it is someone else who is making you dance.

Look closely at your life and you will find that you are nothing more than a puppet. How can anything real happen in the life of a man who is not his own master, but merely a puppet?

One evening Mulla Nasruddin hurried to the station with two of his friends to catch a train. All three were dead drunk. The Mulla tripped and fell and missed the train, but the other two managed to get aboard. The station master helped the Mulla to his feet and sympathized with him for missing the train. The Mulla said, "Don't feel sorry for me. I can always catch the next train. I'm worried about what will happen to those other two. They only came to see me off."

In the world to board the train is success, to miss it is failure; but in reality the one who succeeds and the one who fails, the victor and the vanquished, all are the same, for they are all equally unconscious. Rich and poor, winner and loser, each has his slate wiped clean by death.

Only one sort of person escapes this treatment: he who has realized the fourth state that is hidden with the first three. For him there is no death. He alone wins. Everyone else, be he Alexander or Napoleon, is a total failure. Once in a while a Buddha comes out victorious.

Here the meaning of success is only one: that you have come to know that him for whom there is no death. What perishes with death you should consider as defeat. Make this a definition of failure. Have you anything that death cannot snatch away? Ponder constantly over this: "Have I a single thing that death cannot take from me?" If you find that you don't, then hurry. You cannot afford to waste any more time. Time time has come to awake!

Your days and your nights, the time you spend awake, the time you spend asleep and the time you dream, death will snatch them all away from you. You have no connection with these three states;

they are clouds that hide your sun from you. If your life is spent entirely within these three states you will find yourself a miserable beggar when the hour of death arrives, but if you have been able to discern through the mists even a single beam of light then you can know that the sun itself is not far off. Then you will be facing the sun and the clouds will be behind you.

The first sutra is:

THE FOURTH STATE SHOULD SERVE AS OIL AND PERMEATE THE OTHER THREE STATES.

In all three states – whether you are awake, dreaming or in deep sleep – keep the remembrance of the fourth state alive. Whatever happens on the outside, just let it be. After all, it is only the periphery. Keep your attention on the center. Be aware each moment, whether you sit or stand, eat or sleep, whether you are going home or going to your place of work. Always remember that you are the observer and not the doer. Do not take life to be anything more than acting. Don't identify yourself too much with the action.

Whether you are a wife or husband, a businessman or client, don't get too involved. Don't lose yourself in it, for you are simply playing a role in the play. Keep outside of it, and within yourself. These are all necessary parts of life. You must go to work, it is necessary. The play is delightful if you see it as play, but it is fatal if you take it to be life. There is no reason so disrupt your life. You have to play the part that life has given you. You have to fulfill your duties and not be an escapist. There is absolutely no need to run away.

Escapists are always weaklings. Those whom you regard as sadhus and sannyasins are escapists. They are weak; they could not face life as it is; they could not take care of the observer within them. You cannot become a sannyasin by running away. It only shows that the world was too overwhelming and too strong, and you were too weak. You could not cultivate your awareness when at work. You could not take care of the observer within you while you were at home, therefore you had to run away.

If you could not become aware in your working world how will you become aware in the mountains? There is only one process of awakening and it has nothing to do with where you are or what you are doing. Geography is irrelevant. The process of cultivating awareness is one, and it has nothing to do with the location. It makes no difference whether you are sitting in a temple or sitting in your shop doing business. It matters not whether you sit on a velvet cushion or sit on the bare ground; the method is the same. The method is to be aware each moment of the fact that you are separate from the action you are involved in, whatever action it is – minding the shop or praying in the temple, business or worship, it makes no difference. "My actions are separate from me. They are part of the world. I am only the observer." This should be the attitude. Do not be so engrossed that only the act remains and the witness is lost. Right now this is what is happening to you.

This sutra says: Over the other three states let the fourth state pour continually. By continuous water the tree of the fourth state will begin to grow. Start with the waking state, for that is closer to the fourth, it contains a slight ray of awakening. Make use of this. How could you immediately awaken in your deep sleep, or in your dreams for that matter? So start with the waking state, which is one percent consciousness and ninety-nine percent unconsciousness. Make use of this one percent, and sprinkle it with turiya. Whenever the opportunity arises, shake yourself and wake up. Time

and time again your remembrance will slip. Give yourself a push, a jolt into wakefulness again and again. As a person ties knots in his handkerchief to help him remember something, tie knows in your consciousness that will remind you again and again. Whatever you are doing, whenever, shake yourself into consciousness of the truth – that "I am not the doer, I am only the observer."

When this thought takes root within you, you will notice all your tensions disappearing. All tensions belong to the doer, the ego As soon as you begin to contact the observer in you, all tensions vanish. If this happens even for a moment you will catch a brief glimpse. The waves of the ocean will start dancing within. Again and again you will lose it. This is only natural, for you have cultivated unconsciousness over many births. It will take time to overcome this unconsciousness. You have to be persistent and courageous. You have to keep on pouring the oil of the fourth state into your wakeful state – say about twenty times during the day.

While walking along the road, stop! Become the observer: realize that it is the body walking and you are merely an observer. While eating, stop! Become the observer. The body eats. You are merely observing. While attending to the customers in your shop, stop! Become the observer. Do not get so engrossed as to forget the observer. Take hold of yourself time and again. It will require a continuous effort. You will find, by and by, that the effort becomes easier day by day; now and again you will get flashes of turiya.

When turiya comes easily in the daytime you can gradually utilize it in your dreams. Then when you are about to fall asleep let the last thought in your mind be: "I am the observer". As sleep overcomes you let this thought reverberate in your mind: "I am the witness, I am the witness..." And thus you fall asleep. You will not be able to catch the moment when sleep comes and the repetition stops. If you cultivate the feeling till you fall asleep the feeling will continue into sleep, for it is only the body that sleeps. As you cultivate this feeling more and more, one night you will suddenly become conscious of the observer in your sleep. And as soon as you become aware of the observer a rare thing happens – dreams vanish. Dreams occur only because of your unconsciousness.

When this even takes place in your dreams, the third happening becomes possible. Continue the repetition: "I am the witness... I am the witness...": into your sleep. The day this stream of awareness enters your sleep the key to the supreme treasure falls into your hands. Now nothing and nobody can make you unaware, unconscious. He who awakens even for a moment in his sleep, his unawareness is gone forever.

The day you awaken in your sleep you become a yogi. You cannot become a yogi by performing asanas. These are merely exercises. They are good and useful to keep the body healthy, but if you take them to be the true yoga then you are deluded. Yoga means: the art of awakening in sleep. Thus he who awakens is a yogi.

This sutra tells you to bring the fourth state to the first three states, and then this occurrence is bound to take place one day. When you awaken even in sleep you will become fixed in the fourth state. When a person is established in the fourth state he becomes like a flame that burns unflickering, as if there is no breeze. Such will be your wisdom, such your knowledge; such will be your soul, non-flickering, filled with light. Then everything in you will be transformed.

The first thing is: for the one who becomes awakened in his sleep, dreams end forever. He who reaches Buddhahood never dreams. In the beginning when you awaken in your dream that dream

will break, but other dreams will continue; but if you awaken in a deep sleep where there are no dreams then you will never dream again. This happens because all dreams occur in a desire-ridden mind.

What is a dream? If you have a desire which remains unfulfilled during the day, you fulfill it during the night. Everybody cannot be a king: there is a lot of struggle and competition, so the beggar gratifies his desires by dreaming of becoming a king. The balance is maintained: the one who is king in the day is not conscious of his kingdom in his sleep; the beggar begs all day and dreams he is a king when he sleeps.

It happened once: Aurangzeb was very angry with a fakir. He sent for him one morning with the idea of punishing him. People had told Aurangzeb that it was impossible to displease this man. He said, "We shall see." It was a cold night, a cold Delhi night. He had the fakir stand naked all night in the river Jamuna, while all night there warmth and merriment in the palace.

The fakir spent the night standing in the cold river. In the morning Aurangzeb sent for him and asked, "How as it with you last night?

The fakir replied, "It was the same for me as it was for you, and at times it was better."

"I don't follow you," said Aurangzeb.

"I kept dreaming," said the fakir, "that I was king. I sat in a brilliantly lit palace and there was merrymaking all around. I took as much pleasure from my palace and my revelry as you did from yours, so my night was sometimes like yours. And when I was filled with awareness then my dream broke. You still do not know what awareness is like."

You complete at night what is half-finished during the day. You cannot fulfill all your desires in the daytime; there are difficulties. Besides, it is not easy to gratify desires for they are really unfulfillable. There is no way to fulfill desires; in fact, it is the very nature of desire that it can never be fulfilled. Even if you attain all the wealth in the world your desires will not be satisfied.

It is said: Diogenes told Alexander the Great, "The day you conquer the whole world you will really find yourself in great trouble. Forget about this whole business. As it stands you are facing great trouble. After you have conquered the world you will find yourself in even greater difficulty."

It is said that Alexander became sad and replied, "Please, don't talk like this, for the very thought of having conquered the whole world makes me sad. Once the world is conquered what shall I do? There is no other world to conquer. My mind will torment me no end, for it is never satisfied."

Kings dream and so do beggars; each completes what was left undone during the day. Dreams are kind to you; that is one of their qualities. If you are misled into observing austerities and fasts by some sadhu or sannyasin, and if you have almost died of hunger during the day, in the night when you dream you will find yourself a guest at a banquet. You will eat food that is tasty beyond description. Dreams are infinitely kinder than your sadhus and sannyasins. And there is no difference between the taste of the actual food and the dream food; possibly dream food is tastier! If you have been unsuccessful in your running after women then in your dreams you will find yourself attracting women as beautiful as your mind can possible imagine.

Dreams open the door to the fulfillment of all your desires. If a man lives for sixty years he spends twenty years in sleep, twenty at work and another twenty awake in other pursuits. Now if a man remains a king for twenty years in his actual life and another is a king for twenty years in his dreams, what is the difference? The sum total is the same. Besides, he who is emperor during the day has a thousand-and-one worries on his mind, but the dream king has all the leisure to enjoy his status.

Dreams are lost only when a man awakens in sleep. Then dreams become meaningless, for he who awakens in sleep has no desire left in him. All desires are part of unconsciousness.

Once Mulla Nasruddin got off a train looking very sick and unable to walk straight. ”Are you ill?” a friend asked.

Nasruddin replied, ”Whenever I travel and sit facing backward I feel sick and dizzy.”

The friend said, ”You should have asked the man sitting opposite you to change seats with you, Mulla.”

”I wanted to do that,” said the Mulla, ”only there was no one in the opposite seat.”

You go through life in exactly the same way, as if you are dead drunk or completely drugged. You will have to break this addiction. Where will you start? You will begin with the waking state. When you awaken in the morning make a resolution: Today I shall practice the witnessing attitude. Early in the morning when you first awaken your mind is very light and fresh, there are no dreams, no thoughts. After a full night’s rest there is a dawn within just as there is a dawn without. There are no tensions, no clouds. You are light and free. Soon the world will claim you and then the difficulties will begin.

As soon as your sleep is interrupted, don’t be in a hurry to open your eyes. At that moment the mind is very sensitive. As soon as you awaken remember your resolve, ”I am the witness.” Lie still for five Lie still for five minutes and meditate on this. Don’t open your eyes, for once the eyes are open there is the world in front of you, and you lost yourself in it. Keep your eyes closed and cultivate the feeling: ”I am not the doer, I am the witness.” Let this witnessing practice be with me throughout the day. Let me remember to practice it all day long.”

Now get up, immersed completely in this feeling and try to maintain the feeling for a while. In the beginning you will find it easy. Get up and sit up in bed, then put your feet down. Be fully aware. Take a bath; bathe with consciousness. Eat your breakfast; be fully aware as you eat it.

To be fully aware means to be fully conscious of the fact that all actions are happening outside. They are the needs of the body, not your needs. You have no needs, and indeed there are none, for you yourself are God. What could you need? You are complete, perfect. You are Brahma. Everything is yours. The soul has no requirements, it needs no fuel. The flame burns without wick and without oil. So you say, ”I have no needs. All needs are of the body – to bathe, to eat, to work, to move.”

Try to maintain this attitude. Keep this thread of the witness for as long as you can. Soon it will be lost in the hustle and bustle of the day. Your habits are so very old and deeply ingrained. Keep at it and water it each day, and the sapling will sprout and grow. At first it will not be apparent, for the growth will be slow, very slow; but soon you will find a thin ribbon of light shining perpetually within

you. This ray of light will make an alchemical change in your life. Your anger will abate, for how can a witness be angry? Attachments will become less and less, for how can a witness have attachments? Happenings will take place. There will be successes and defeats, there will be sorrows, there will be joys, but you will be less affected by them, for how can the witness be affected? Joy will come and you will witness it, sorrow will come and you will witness it, while a continuous stream flows within: "I am the witness, not the one who is enjoying all this."

No one will be able to tell how long it will take you. Everything depends on the sincerity of your purpose, the intensity of your desire, your speed of progress – whether you crawl like an ant or run like a deer. People walk in the realm of religion a slowly as if they are walking in a marriage procession. This way you will reach nowhere. The marriage procession has nowhere to go; it just circles around the town and comes back to the same place.

There was a man called Aesop. His moral fables are still the best the world has ever known. He was a man of great wisdom. One day Aesop was sitting at the side of the road when a man came up to him and said, "Could you tell me, sir, how far away is the village, and how long it will take me to reach there?" Aesop said nothing. He got up and walked alongside the man. The man was embarrassed and also a little frightened by this strange behavior. He asked Aesop not to trouble himself, all he wanted to know was the distance, and then he would be on his way.

Aesop said nothing but continued to walk with the man. After some fifteen minutes he stopped and said, "It will take you two hours to reach the village."

"You could have told me that at the beginning!" the man exclaimed. "There was no need to walk a mile with me."

Aesop replied, "How could I estimate the time before I knew your walking speed? The distance isn't decided by the length but by the speed of the walker. Now I can tell you definitely that it will take you two hours to reach the village."

Everything depends on your speed. You can run and you will arrive sooner. You can waddle along, and then we cannot say when you will arrive. Your speed can be such that in one moment you can take the jump. You can also move in a half-hearted, lukewarm manner; then it will take you infinite births to reach. If you stake all your being without holding back any part of yourself, if you put in all your effort with the utmost intensity of your life form, you can reach here and now. For this is no external journey; it is an inner journey. You have only to turn inside from wherever you are. If you postpone for tomorrow or the day after, or the day after that... well, that is what you have been doing for infinite lives!

Remember, nature is not interested in your religious attainments. Nature leads only as far as man has already reached. If you wish to go beyond that only your own effort will take you. Nature can at best make you an animal, and no further. Humanity has to be acquired. This is why man is in peril – he lives in great danger.

All animals are tranquil, except man. They accept what nature gives; they have no goals. You cannot get a dog stirred up by telling him that he is less of a dog than another. Whatever the breed, whatever the form, the essential feeling of being a dog is the same in all dogs. This is not so with

man; there is a grat deal of difference between one man and another man. A thin scrawny man can become a great man, a strong hulking person may be very ordinary.

A new quality begins with man. What is this quality? The more conscious a person is, the more human a person is. The day a person is filled with complete awareness, he becomes divine. But there is great risk involved, for he who can reach to the heights can also fall to the depths. He who does not rise cannot fall; therefore, we find no Buddhas and Krishnas among the animals, but you will also not find a Hitler, a Genghis Khan or a Stalin. The valleys are always at the foot of the peaks.

There is a zoo in Tokyo where there are animals from all over the world. There are lions and tigers, leopards and hippopotamuses, snakes and birds, deer and elephants, etcetera. After going around the zoo, when you come to the very last cage you find a sign which says: "The Most Dangerous Animal in the World". You are very eager to see what it is. You step closer to have a good look. There inside is only a mirror... and you are reflected in it!

Man is indeed the most dangerous of all the animals. He has the potential to become divine, so it is possible for him to fall also. If you cannot rise you will not be able to stay where you are: you will fall. There is no place to stop in this world; therefore, if you don't move toward consciousness you will gradually slip into unconsciousness.

It is a matter of wonder and also shame that small children are more conscious than adults. What makes them so? After a whole lifetime of experience an old man should become more aware, more alert; but alas, he only becomes more cunning. With all his experience he becomes more dishonest, he becomes an expert thief.

An old crow was advising his young son, "Look, son, I am telling you from experience, beware of man! You can never trust him. If you see a man bending over fly away, for he is sure to be picking up a stone."

The son asked, "What if he already has a stone hidden in his armpit?"

The old crow flew away as fast as he could. This son of his seemed even ore dangerous than man! It is unwise to stay around him.

With experience old men become more cunning and clever without becoming more aware, but what will they gain by their cunning? There is nothing in the world that can be lost by innocence and nothing to be gained by cunning and cleverness. Whatever we build here is no more than a sand castle. If you build one it is bound to break; if you don't you lose nothing.

Children are more conscious. Look into a child's eyes. They are full of awareness, they are more alert. We have to find ways to dim their awareness . We do not allow them to laugh out loud or cry aloud; we do not allow them to run and skip as they please. We restrict their life energy in every direction. We teach them to be dishonest as quickly as possible.

I asked Mulla Nasruddin's son, "How old are you?"

"Seven years at home, five in the bus," the boy replied. The father has given him a good start on the path to dishonesty.

Once I was guest in a household. One evening the hostess was putting her child to bed in the room next to mine. As she put him to sleep I heard her telling him, ”Go to sleep now. If you need anything during the night, call out to me; your father will come running.”

All mothers do this, but what is it that the child is being initiated into? Lying, deceit, trickery! We feed poison along with the milk. Our effort is never directed toward the child becoming more alert and more conscious. If ever the right culture is born on this earth the first thing that will be taught to the child is to become more aware, more conscious. The fourth state is the only thing worth teaching; all else is useless. All else merely helps you carry on your day-to-day life.

The child is fresh, just as you are a little fresh in the morning. He is still in the morning of his life. If he is taught the art of the fourth state from this very moment on and he learns the art of awakening while he is still fresh, he will reach the peak by the time he becomes an old man. He will reach buddhahood.

There is only one thing that needs to be practiced, and that is: to water the first three states with the fourth state, with consciousness, with discrimination, with alertness, with wakefulness.

SO BATHED HE ENTERS INTO THE STATE OF SELF-AWARENESS.

In this state a person invariably slips into self-awareness, and once a person knows the light of the fourth state he finds there is no joy equal to it. The intoxication of wine is so short-lived, while the intoxication of the fourth state never fades. It is an eternal stream. And he who is filled with the delight of the fourth state, who dances and rejoices in it; he who is filled n every pore with the fourth state, whose very manner of being has become awareness; he in whom it is the fourth state that sits and stands and moves about; he whose every atom is bathed in the fourth state, enters into self-awareness. Otherwise, you shall remain unacquainted with your self. You may know the whole world but you will be a stranger to your self.

You can say a great deal about others – their names, addresses, vocations, their lives – but about yourself, you know nothing. Until such time as you know yourself all your knowledge is not worth a penny, for it is all based on ignorance.

If you feed the oil of the fourth state continually to the other three states, then you will find the fourth state manifesting in your life.

The way Buddha sits, stands or walks is unique. There is a wakefulness when he gets up and when he walks. Whatever comes out of him does not arise out of unconsciousness. He is fully conscious; whatever happens through him is filled with awareness.

Whatever you have done so far has been done in a state of unconsciousness. You say you did a certain thing knowingly – that is not true. Your child comes home from school with a torn shirt and broken slate. You scold him and you beat him. You say you have done it knowingly, and all for the child’s own good. A little genuine introspection. Did you really act consciously? Or did something happen to you at the sight of the torn shirt and broken slate? You became angry with the child and vented your anger on him. You were angry that he disobeyed you. If you were in a state of anger all your actions followed in unconsciousness, for anger is a state of non-awareness. Everything you say serves only to justify your actions.

Mulla Nasruddin beat his son. "This is all for your own good," he told him. "A child like you has to be beaten at least twice a day to keep him straight. Now look at me. My father never beat me when I was a child!"

"Your father must have been a good man!" said the Mulla's son.

You beat the child and think you are doing him a favor. The child thinks differently, for his attention is focused on your anger and not on your beating. No amount of rationalization can prove that you are right.

Only yesterday a man came to me with his wife. The wife does not allow him to meditate; she does not think that this is the right way to meditate. She is very traditional, but this is only superficial. Deep down in the unconscious the reason is very, very different. No wife wants her husband to meditate, no husband likes his wife to meditate; as soon as a person begins to meditate all the old relationships are in danger. As soon as a person begins to meditate his sex desire begins to get less and less. This is the unconscious reason; all other reasons are excuses. A wife would rather her husband went to a brothel than meditate, for when he goes to a brothel he is still not entirely anti-wife; he is still interested in women. But meditation means that his interest in women will soon be lost.

So if a woman has to choose between his going to a brothel and his taking sannyas she will choose a brothel for her husband. She also worries that if her husband loses himself in meditation something will happen to the family. The fact is: meditation disrupts neither family nor business. In fact, a man who meditates carries out his work more efficiently than before, for meditation breaks your connection with the world that you carry within yourself, not with the world outside. The outside play remains the same. A new light is lit. Now you know that it is a play. A new light is born within, while life outside goes on as usual.

There is definitely trouble between husband and wife, thought; however much they may claim and even believe the reason to be different, the basic cause is the sex relationship. Sex relations begin to cool when one enters meditation, and as meditation progresses, sex gradually fades.

Everyday I have husbands complaining, "My wife was never interested in sex, but since the day I began to meditate she has become aggressive sexually!" Normally wives are not eager for sex, for they are confident of their husbands. In fact, they pretend to be doing their husbands a favor. They make a show of their virtue and piety, but once the husband becomes interested in meditation they are furious. Now it is necessary to draw the husband back into his body. It is the same with husbands when their wives become interested in meditation.

One such lady began to meditate. She is genuinely interested, and there could have been profound results if she went deeper into it, but her husband burns my books and throws them out of the house. He says that she has no need for advice from any outside person as long as he is there! He says he can provide any answers she needs, and the wife knows very well what his answers will be! The husband's ego is hurt. The husband cannot bear to think that another man is occupying first place in his wife's heart. This is a blow that he cannot bear, but he does not speak openly of this.

Whatever you do, whatever you say, is not totally authentic; the reason is different, deep down inside. The meditator has to ferret out the reasons deep within himself. He has to catch hold of the root

cause, for the root cause can be changed. If you consider the reason to be something other than the root cause, no change can be made. As you become aware of life, you will begin to see the root cause to all your actions and reactions. Then you will realize that you are not angry with the child because he made a mistake, but because you get pleasure out of being angry. The mistake was only a excuse.

The boss fires you from the job. You would have loved to retaliate, but that was not possible. You come home and want to take out your anger on somebody – on anybody. The wife is there and you could take it out on her, but that is not a very good bargain, for she will make an issue out of it for days, so the child becomes the target. He is a child. He is bound to tear his shirts. He is bound to tear his books. After all, he is not an old man. He bound to play with the wrong types of boys, for except for your son all boys are the ”wrong type”.

Once I asked a small boy, ”Tell me, son, are you a good boy? Everyone says that you are.”

The child replied, ”If I had to tell the truth, I am just the kind of child that I am not allowed to play with.”

All children except yours are ”bad”, so this child must have played with some of those wrong children and torn his clothes as well as his books. He may even have hurt himself. You will grab hold of him. He is not very strong. You will take out your anger on him, but you will insist that you are correcting and guiding him.

Only if and when you begin to become aware, will you begin to recognize the real reason. When once the real cause is known it is not very difficult to drop it. In fact, it is not difficult at all. When you see the kind of life that you have built around yourself you will laugh. You will see that you had become such a phony, and with this phoniness you wanted to reach truth. You wanted to reach God? Impossible!

To me sannyas means to know the web of deception you have woven within yourself and to eradicate it and live authentically and realistically. Whatever you are, if you are bad, be bad; if you are ill-tempered, know it! Don’t cover your defects with a gold coating. If you try to cover your wounds with flowers they will get worse. Just say, ”This is how I am” – whether good or bad. Offer no rationalization or excuse why you are like that. Do not seek good reasons for evil deeds, for then the evil cannot be eradicated.

When you are angry you always justify your anger by finding some cause; then how will the anger go away? This way you feed your anger and make it look good. You have decorated your prison with flowers so that it looks like home. Now you are satisfied. You look upon illness as health, then how can you ever get rid of it?

As a man begins to awaken he begins to realize that his wakefulness is false, that his dreams are the outcome of a twisted mind, that his very sleep is filled with restlessness. In all three states there is a restlessness, an uneasiness, a feeling of being harassed. As his perception sharpens he is able to recognize the lies he has been carrying and drop them. More light penetrates and his consciousness grows in strength and intensity.

The state you are in at present is something like this.

One night there was an earthquake. There was thunder and lightning and the house shook. The wife awakened her husband who had remained fast asleep. She said, "Wake up, it's an earthquake. I think the house is going to fall down."

"Don't worry," said the husband. "Go back to sleep. It isn't our house, we have only rented it."

You don't understand that even if the house is not yours, when it falls it is you who will die. The pseudo-truths you have built around yourself may not necessarily be your own creation, for some you have learned from the gurus, some you have picked up from the scriptures, and others you have gotten from your religion; but when they fall it is you who will be the loser. It is you who will die.

You have surrounded yourself with lies that seem useful; they help you to keep up a good front so you always appear poised and charming. Inside there is suffering and pain, but there is always a smile on your face. The suffering is authentic, the smile is false. It is better that you cry. Let the tears fall and wash the paint off your face. Let your genuine face be laid bare, for only the authentic and genuine lead to the truth.

As you wash your consciousness with wakefulness all the paint runs off; this is what is known as sannyas. As you become more and more authentic with yourself, you will find it is not so hard to be rid of your troubles. A genuine illness is curable, a pseudo-illness can never be cured.

Suppose you have a cancer but are too frightened to accept the fact. Instead you insist that you are suffering from a chronic cold and keep on treating yourself for the cold. How is this going to cure your cancer? How long will you be able to fool yourself?

Gurdjieff would always tell his disciples that it is imperative for a seeker to know at the very outset what his trouble really is. All seekers try to hid them. The one who hides the real disease cannot be diagnosed, and until that time you keep on trying to cure the pseudo-disease. You die during the cure because that was not the real disease.

People come to me and say that they are seeking God, that they are seeking their soul. Their faces give no indication of their search. Their search is misnamed; they seek something very different under the cover of God and soul.

A friend approached me – he was an old man – and said he has been seeking God for the last thirty years. "That is a long time!" I exclaimed. "You should have found him by now. It seems that God is avoiding you. If that is so, then even thirty births will not be sufficient. Or it could be that you are not seeking in the right direction, you have not taken the path to his house. Either he is avoiding you or you are avoiding him. Tell me exactly what it is that you seek."

"I told you. I am seeking God," he said. "I do my practices and my meditation regularly, but I have no results to show."

"What results are you trying to achieve?" I asked.

"I want to attain some occult powers."

Now this man is not seeking God; he is seeking power in the name of God. It is not only in the bazaar that we find one name on the label and something quite different inside the package. It happens in the temples too.

A husband was looking for salt in the kitchen. When his wife thought it was taking him too long she called out, "What has happened? Can't you find the salt?"

"No, I can't."

"It's right in front of your eyes in the tin labeled 'Tumeric'," she said.

Such is all seeking. You are not sure what you are seeking, nor why. As the water of wakefulness comes into your life, your life will gain a direction. The useless will fall away and only the useful will remain. The day that only the meaningful is left, the goal is not far off.

As your delight in the fourth state increases, as this intoxication spreads into your life... but the intoxication is something totally different. We have to use words to describe it; hence we call it intoxication, but it is not the intoxication of a drunkard – just the opposite! When a man is drunk he staggers and lurches about without direction; he loses contact with his senses, he cannot see what he is doing and he commits all kinds of excesses. In the intoxication of turiya it is just the opposite. Here you don't stagger! Your feet are firmly placed. Here he is filled with self-remembering. He is in total command of his senses. In the intoxication of the drunkard he can commit all sort of mistakes and go astray! In the intoxication of turiya it is impossible for a person to do wrong.

Akbar set out one day on his elephant to take a ride around his capital. As he was passing through the streets, a man standing on a roof began abusing him. He was immediately caught and brought before Akbar the next morning.

Akbar asked the man, "What made you behave so badly last night, you fool?"

"Your majesty, I was drunk. I was not there. It was the wine that abused you, not me! I was so repentant when I came to my senses. I pray you to forgive me, for I was not there at all!"

Akbar understood, for he himself was in search of the fourth state. He was a wise king. He realized that it was useless punishing a man who was not in his right senses. It is true that he had behaved badly, but if he had got anything right in that state it would have been a miracle.

When you do something right it is a miracle; you always do the wrong thing. That is only natural, for you are not conscious. Gurdjieff would say, "God will not punish you for your sins for they were committed in unconsciousness." Even a court of law forgives a man who is not in his right senses. If a man commits murder under the influence of drink he is let off with a lighter sentence. God will not punish you for your sins. He is at least as wise as the courts.

Your sins were committed in unconsciousness, your good deeds also! Therefore there is hardly any difference between your good deeds and your bad deeds; the quality is the same. Whether you are a householder or a sannyasin is all the same, for you are unconscious. You are unconscious in your shop; you are unconscious in your temple; you are unconscious in your office; you are unconscious

in your monastery. There is no difference if you put on your clothes or discard them; you are still unconscious. The real question is of breaking this unawareness, not of changing your mode of action, for that is very easy. If you are unconscious in one form of action, you are bound to be unconscious in another form of action also.

SO BATHED, HE ENTERS INTO THE STATE OF SELF-AWARENESS.

HE WHO EXPERIENCES THE DIVINE ENERGY PERVADING ALL THINGS, VIEWS ALL THINGS AS EQUAL.

As soon as a person enters into self-awareness he experiences prana, the life force, for the first time. Through this experience he sees how everything around him is permeated with the emanations of the divine energy; he attains dispassion and equality of vision. And as soon as a person knows his own self, he immediately comes to know that the same flame burns in every one of us.

As long as you have not seen and experienced your own self, the other will always remain alien to you. For as long as you have not recognized your own self, the other will remain the enemy. As soon as you witness your own self, you will see the light of the flame within the clay walls of everyone; you will attain equality of vision. Then there is neither friend nor foe. No one is your own, no one is a stranger. Then it is actually you who permeates everyone; then there is only one.

In this sutra Shiva says that now you receive tidings that there is one life force everywhere. All lamps carry the same flame. All drops contain the same ocean. The lamps are different. Some are fair, some dark, some brown, some yellow; the forms are different and the names are different, but the flame within has no form and no name. He who has known his own self, knows his own self in others.

In the very first occurrence of the fourth state you know your own state, but simultaneously the second even takes place – you know God. You become aware of the soul on one hand, and God, the supreme soul, stands revealed on the other.

Do not seek God directly, for then He will only be a figment of your imagination and no more. You can imagine Krishna playing the flute, but this will not reveal God to you, for this is no more than a dream. It is a pleasant dream but a dream all the same; it does not differ from any other dream. The mind imagines. You can imagine you are having a vision of Mahavir or Buddha or Rama. Many people do. All they are doing is dreaming. They are religious dreams, but all dreams are dreams just the same.

There is no way to seek God directly, for you yourself are the gate. Unless and until you pass through this gate, his gate will remain closed to you. The soul is the door to God. Here you know your self and here God stands revealed. Then you see him and him alone everywhere – in trees and stones, in rocks and streams. It is he and he alone. Somewhere he is asleep, somewhere he is awake, somewhere he is dreaming, but it is he, and he alone!

This experience of the one, Shiva refers to as ”EXPERIENCING THE DIVINE ENERGY”. This is his greatest revelation. But it is only attained by him who knows his own self.

HE WHO EXPERIENCES THE DIVINE ENERGY PERVADING ALL THINGS, VIEWS ALL THINGS AS EQUAL,

AND HE ATTAINS TO SHIVAHOOD.

When a person sees all things as equal he becomes like Shiva. Then he becomes God himself. You are the ”I” as long as you do not know your self. This seems very contradictory. You cry out ”I... I..I” as long as you do not know yourself. The day you know, the ”I” falls, the ”you” also falls, and you become like Shiva. You become God himself. That day the music of aham brahmasmi – I am God, will arise spontaneously within you. Then you will not be repeating ”Aham brahmasmi”; you will know! You will not have to understand it, it will become your very existence, your very experience. All around you the air will vibrate with this music, the music of the one. As the drop loses itself and becomes one with the ocean, so all boundaries fall and you become boundless – you reach Shivahood.

Shiva’s efforts, and all those who have attained buddhahood, are directed towards you becoming just like them. What they have known, the supreme bliss, should be your treasure also, for it is your possession also. You are still a seed; they have flowered into trees. These trees keep calling, ”Become trees! Do not remain seeds!” You will never attain peace until you reach Shivahood, for man cannot be contented with less; his soul will not be fulfilled. The thirst will continue no matter how much you try to quench it with the waters of the world. It will only be quenched when you drink from God’s vessel. Then the thirst is quenched forever; all desires, all ambitions, all hurry and scurry, all striving and struggling end, for you will then have become that which is the highest, the supreme. There is nothing higher.

Keep pouring the oil of the fourth state into the three states, so that you are so filled with delight that you enter into self-awareness, so that you get tidings of the life force, so that you may know that it is the one that resides in all, so that you attain the vision of equality, so that you become like Shiva himself.

CHAPTER 9

Right Search, Wrong Direction

19 September 1974 am in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

[Note: This is a translation from the Hindi series Shiva Sutra, which is in the process of being edited. It is for research only.]

KATHA JAPAH.

DANAMATMAGYANAM.

YOAVIPASTHO OYAHETUSHCHA.

SVASHAKTI PASCHAYOASYA VISHVAM.

STHITILAYAU.

WHATEVER HE UTTERS IS JAPA.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE ITSELF IS HIS GIFT.

HE IS THE MASTER OF THE INNER POWERS AND THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE.

THE CONSTANT ENJOYMENT OF SELF-ENERGIES IS HIS UNIVERSE. LIFE AND DEATH ARE UNDER HIS WILL.

Prayer does not depend on what you say; it depends, rather, on what you are. Worship depends not on what you do but what you are. Religion is involved not with your actions but with you existence. If

love is at the center of your being there will be prayer at your periphery. If there is perpetual peace at your center there will be meditation at the periphery. If there is awareness at the center your life itself becomes an act of self-purification, but the reverse is not the case.

By bringing about a change at the circumference you cannot change the center, but a change at the center automatically brings about a change at the circumference, because the circumference is simply the shadow of the center. By changing the shadow you cannot change yourself the shadow changes accordingly.

It is very important for us to know this, for the majority of people waste their lives trying to change the periphery. They stake their all in to bring about a change in their behavior and their conduct, but even if these are altered nothing else changes along with them. However much you may modify your conduct, you will remain what your were: if you were a thief you will become a good man, if you were amassing wealth you will start giving to charity, but the you within will remain the same. For you the value of money will not change. Money had a certain value for you when you were a thief, and it will remain the same when you become a philanthropist. You certainly don't regard it is dust, for who makes a gift of dust?

If wealth has turned to dust in your eyes will you go about giving away your rubbish others? And if someone accepts it do you think you have done him a favor? Would you expect him to thank you? In fact, if wealth is no more than dust for you, you should be grateful to the person who accepts you rubbish and does not spurn it, but a philanthropist never thinks in these terms. If he gives even one paisa he expects some return.

A miserly Marwari died. He went straight to the gates of heaven and knocked. He was confident that the gate would open for him, for had he not given alms? The gate opened and the sentry looked him over from head to foot. There people are recognized by their actions but for themselves. The sentry said, " Sorry, sir, but there has been a mistake. Perhaps you did not know that you had to knock at the other door. Kindly go there."

The Marwari fumed. "How dare you!" he exclaimed. "Do you not know who I am? Have you not heard of my alms? Why, only yesterday I gave two paisa to an old beggar woman, and the day before I gave one paisa to a blind newspaper boy."

When he spoke of alms the guard had to open his ledger. He scanned the page under the Marwari's name, but except for these three paisa the page was a blank. He asked, "What other alms have you given besides these?"

"Plenty, plenty," replied the Marwari, "Only I cannot recall them right now." Imagine someone who doesn't forget a paltry three paise saying that he cannot remember! And on the strength of these three paisa he knocks at the gates of he knocks at the gates of heaven!

The guard consulted with his associate as to what should be done with this man. His colleague said, "Give him his three paisa and tell him to go to hell!"

Can the doors of heaven be opened by money? Whether you hold on to wealth or whether you let it go, its holds the same value in your eyes. Whether you live in the world or run away from it, its hold

on you is complete. It makes no difference whether your face is toward these things or away from them; unless you bring about a radical change at the center, the journey remains more or less the same.

An inner transformation is necessary and not a change in the pattern of your behavior. As soon as there is inner change, everything changes with it. These sutras are for the inner transformation. Try to listen to each sutra very attentively. If there is even a fraction of dry powder within you, it is bound to explode; but if the powder is not dry then the sparks will fall but they will be put out immediately.

The trouble with you is not that you do not get an opportunity to hear truth, but that you are adept at smothering it. Your powder is not dry. It is soaking wet. How have you managed to make the powder wet? The more knowledge you have the wetter becomes the gunpowder. The more you think you know, the wetter your powder becomes; it is because of this knowing that you smother every spark of wisdom. Your knowledge prevents the sparks of wisdom from igniting you. Your knowledge stands as a sentry barring all entry.

You are unconscious in your knowledge. Remember, there is no intoxicant more potent than the arrogance of learning, for nowhere is the ego more subtle than here. Wealth does not feed the ego half as much. For wealth can be stolen, the government can change, communism may come in – anything can happen. You cannot rely completely on wealth, however knowledge cannot be stolen or snatched away from you. Even if he is thrown into a prison, a man's knowledge goes along with him. Therefore a wealthy man is not half as arrogant as a learned man. It is this arrogance that dampens the powder inside you. Remove This arrogance and your powder will dry out and when it is dry a tiny spark is enough to ignite it.

These sutras are like sparks. Put all your knowledge aside and try to understand them. If you try to understand through your knowledge you will never succeed.

The first sutra is:

WHATEVER HE UTTERS IS JAPA.

The last sutra discussed yesterday-like state that is reached by the seeker. Whatever such a person speaks is japa, repetition of a mantra. Whatever he says is japa, no matter what words he uses, for there are no more desires, no more darkness; the world is absent from his heart. His heart is a light unto itself; whatever comes from such a heart is japa. It cannot be other than japa, for how can darkness come from light, hatred from love, or anger from compassion. Whatever comes out of him must be japa.

There is a very well-known saying of Jesus: The kingdom of heaven is not determined by what you put in your mouth but what comes out of it. Whatever comes out of you indicates who you are. He who becomes like Shiva does not need to practise japa, for whatever he does is japa.

Kabir said: My very sitting and standing is an act of 'circling the temple'. Kabir was asked: When do you pray? When do you worship? We never see you performing any sadhana. You are called a great devotee, but we never see you performing any devotions. All you do is weave your cloth and sell it in the market. There is no sign of worship or meditation or going to the temple.

Kabir would answer: Whatever I do is 'circling the temple'; whatever I say is japa, and my very being is my meditation.

What do you do when you become interested in meditation? You give a small corner to meditation in your world of actions, but meditation is not an action, it is not an act. You look after the shop, you look after your job; you have to, it is required. Now you do your work and attend to the day-to-day necessities of life. They form a procession on the periphery of your life, and you treat meditation the same way. You say: Let me go to the temple before I go to the market.

Be aware of this distinction. You make meditation one more act to add to your daily activities. There are a thousand involvements in your life already, and you add God as just one more, but you will miss God, for God cannot be at the periphery. God has nothing to do with the market and the shops. He is the very core of your being – where you actually are. Where all work becomes rest, where you simply exist, where there is no doer, where only the witness is – this where He lives.

God does not occupy a part of you. He is vast. He is all-pervading. Only if you are not prepared to be enveloped by Him completely will you attain. If you allow Him only a part of your time and attention you will go astray. The day you give yourself completely to Him...

This does not mean that you will give up all your activities; rather, you will do your work better, more efficiently. Remembrance of God will pervade your very being, it will be your very breath. When you go about your work, when you are busy in your activities, you do not stop breathing! Respiration goes on in spite of you; it is not a voluntary process. In just this way the remembrance of God should become an involuntary function within you. You will be doing your worldly duties and the stream of remembrance will keep flowing inside incessantly.

There is no question of competition or rivalry here, for this is not a part of your mundane world. Actions form the mundane world; therefore, as long as the person is involved in actions he remains attached to the world of objects, samsara. When he attains to non-action, he attains God. Non-action means your existence, where there is no question of doing, where there is you and you alone, your being only. There you are united with yourself.

Every utterance of one who becomes like Shiva becomes a remembrance, japa. You will not find him praying because he does not need to set apart a time for prayer. You will not find him worshipping for that is no longer part of his 'actions'; he himself is worship. If you observe such a person minutely you will find that whatever he does is worship; when he breathes it is remembrance, it is japa. When he moves his hand that is also worship. When he sits or stands he is performing the ritual of circling the temple.

All acts of the Shiva-like person are acts of devotion. He need not observe any specific practices. That would be unnatural. If something has to be practiced we are bound to get tired of it at times. Then when we are tired we are bound to relax, and to relax means to switch over to the opposite.

If you have practiced saintliness you will be diligent for six days, but on the seventh day you will have to relax. On that day you will become a non-saint. Thus our so-called saints and sadhus have to take holidays from their saintliness. The sadhu has to go on leave. If he does not the tensions mount alarmingly.

Thus the sadhu finds moments of worldliness within him and the non-sadhu finds moments of saintliness. There is no sinner who has no virtuous moments in his life and no saint without moments of sin in his. The one is tired of virtue, the other is tired of sin, so that have to relax and rest by doing the opposite, in order to remove the burden from the mind.

A saint is a person whose saintliness has not been acquired through practice; it is the outcome of his nature. Then there is no question of a rest. You do not need to take a rest from breathing. You do not have to take a rest from such time as the Shiva-like state goes deep inside you, whatever you do will be superficial. It is like covering a stinking body with perfumes and fine clothes. You may succeed in deceiving others, but how will you hide it from yourself?

That is why we see our sadhus looking so depressed. There is no trace of cheerfulness in them. To others they look like sadhus, but they themselves don't feel like sadhus; there is no dance, no music in their lives. Their anger and greed and lust is the same – just repressed. Their outer garb may hide the fact from you, but how can they hide it from themselves? And this keeps pricking at their conscience and makes them unhappy happy. As long as a sadhu does not laugh and dance spontaneously, know that his saintliness is cultivated; and cultivated saintliness is false. The only true saintliness is spontaneous; therefore Kabir says time and again: Spontaneous samadhi is best, my friend.

Spontaneous samadhi is that which needs no looking after, but this will happen only when the Shiva-state becomes the core of your being, when you become Shiva-like. Remember that this is no ideal to be achieved at some time in the future; if you understand then it can happen this very moment. Actions need time, and this is no action; it is a jump. This is knowledge, you need only recognize it. It is just as if a man has a diamond in his pocket but he stands in the marketplace begging alms. Then suddenly someone reminds him, "Why do you beg for alms? There is something sparkling in your pocket!"He puts his hand in his pocket and is shocked to find that he had a diamond there all along.

Shivahood lives inside you. It is your eternal treasure. There is no need to postpone its attainment: you have only to turn your eyes inward. Had it been somewhere in the future then perhaps you would have needed time – maybe a number of births – to attain it. But Shivahood has not to be attained; it has to be uncovered. It has to be unfolded. As you would peel an onion layer by layer until ultimately you find mere emptiness, so also man has to uncover himself layer by layer.

Shivahood is like emptiness. Let us understand the various layers so that it becomes easy to unfold them, so that your life becomes Shiva-like and your every utterance a remembrance, a japa.

What is the first layer? The first layer is the body. The majority of people build their identity on their body and consider themselves to be nothing more than the body. It is like spending your life on the steps on the palace gate, taking it to be the palace. You have no idea that this is just the stairway leading to the palace. You drink and eat, you marry and raise a family – all on the porch outside. Your children know nothing about the palace, for the were born on the steps!To them the steps are their home. They never go and knock at the gates. Perhaps the gates have rusted or become one with the wall, so that now no one even knows where the gates were.

The first layer is the physical body, and you live there, entirely within the body. You establish an identity with it, which makes you feel that you are the body. The body is mine, but it is not me. That

which is mine can never be me. Whatever is mine is within my control, but it is not myself. If your leg is amputated you do not feel yourself to be diminished by that amount. If you lose your limbs or lose your eyes, or any other part or faculty of your body, you still remain an integrated whole. The body is crippled but you are a perfect whole.

For this reason the most ugly men does not see himself as ugly, for inside each one of us is beautiful. And the worst of sinners is not prepared to call himself a sinner for he catches glimpses of the good and generous aspects of himself. He will admit that a particular action was wrong, but he will insist that it was a mistake, for he is not a bad man. He calls the act wrong, but not his own self. This is as it should be though he does not know why it is so.

People around you, in your family, in your neighborhood, in your town, die; but you never feel that you too will die. This must be a deep seated, innate feeling, for is it not astonishing that you don't think about death for yourself when others are dying in front of you? You may philosophize outwardly, but deep inside there is the peeling of bells proclaiming your immortality: Others may die, but I can never die! If this were no so, it would be difficult to live where death is taking place every moment. All around, death occurs with such persistence. Each man stands in the queue awaiting his turn – even you! And there you live with such nonchalance, as if life were eternal. There is an intrinsic reason, which is: that which is within can never die. No matter how much you identify yourself with the body, you are not the body. The truth within cannot be falsified by any means. You may drown yourself with intoxicants but the sound of truth keeps reverberating within.

One morning I found Mulla Nasruddin sitting outside his house. He was laughing so loudly and so long that I had to ask him what made him so happy. He said, "A most wonderful thing has happened, but you will not understand it unless I tell you the whole story."

"Please tell me the story," I asked.

"I had a twin brother," began the Mulla. "We were so alike that it was difficult to tell who was who. This gave me no end of trouble. He would throw a stone at someone in school and I would be caught and punished. He would steal something and it was me who was punished. He started rows in the street and the neighbors would catch hold of me. It was the same at home. And as if this was not enough, he ran away with my girl."

"Then what is there to be happy about, Mulla?" I asked him.

"Seven days ago I got even with him!" gloated Nasruddin.

"How come"? I asked

"I died, but they buried him!"

Now no one can be as stupid as this! The Mulla was dead drunk. But you have also spent many lives just as drunk; yet you are never so drunk that your consciousness is completely absent. It surfaces again and again. Somewhere deep within you are aware of the immortality of your being. All the facts point to one certainty: – that you will die! And yet you keep believing that you will never die.

The body belongs to you, but the body is not you. You are in the body, but you are not only the body. It is the first layer, but you have identified with it over innumerable births. It has, so to say, become your twin brother, and you find it difficult to tell one from the other. You cannot distinguish between the two faces. Moreover, the world outside knows you by your physical appearance, for they only see the body. They consider the form of your body to be your form. Now, since you are only one against the collective opinion of all the others, you are naturally influenced by them. If your body is ugly they call you ugly. If your body is beautiful they call you beautiful. If the body is old they tell you that you are old. Now, this collective opinion gives strength to your belief that you are the body, for no one can see the soul that is you.

There is a very old story from the Upanishads:

King Janak once called a meeting of all the wisemen of his kingdom. Invitations were sent to all those who were considered well-versed in spiritual knowledge. The idea was that these luminaries would engage in discussing spiritual matters with a view to discovering the supreme truth. As you would expect, only the most eminent scholars were invited: those who had written scriptures, those who had taken part in religious conferences and who were expert in the art of debating. There was one such person who was deliberately left out. He was Ashtavakra. He was so named because his body was bent in eight places. His appearances was ugly and repulsive. How could so distorted a form belong to a man of spiritual knowledge? However, his father was invited.

For some reason, Ashtavakra had to go to Janak's court to see his father. When he entered he found a conference of the wise in congress. As soon as he appeared, these people forgot their wisdom and burst out laughing at the sight of him. Indeed, he was a funny sight. His walk, his speech, everything about him evoked laughter. He should have been a clown in a circus. He was a caricature of a man. When Ashtavakra saw how these noble scholars were laughing he too began to laugh. He laughed so loud that all the rest fell silent.

They could not understand why he should laugh so. At last Janak asked him"I can understand why these people laughed, Ashtavakra, but I cannot understand why you laughed."

"You have taken this conference to be a conference of the wise, but I see only dealers in skins and hides gathered here," said Ashtavakra. "They can see only as far as the skin and no further. Their knowledge is limited to the body. Here I am, the most upright and straight in this room, but they see only my mutilated body. These are the mutilated people, Oh King! If you want to get knowledge out of them you are trying to get oil out of sand. If you want knowledge come to me."

Ashtavakra was absolutely right, for the physical eyes see only the external form.

You are also plagued by the external eyes, for all around there are eyes and eyes... that look at you. They decide for you whether you are ugly or beautiful. Their sin is so great, so loud are they, that you are helpless. You stand alone; the whole world is on the other side. If you give in it is no surprise. It is only natural that you should believe 'I am the body'. It would be a wonder of wonders if you could tear yourself away from the eyes around you and recognize the fact that you are not the body.

To be liberated from society means only this. It does not mean running to the Himalayas, it means to be liberated from the eyes of the crowd that surrounds you. It is very difficult, for when an untruth

is repeated incessantly from every side, it also appears to be truth. You may be a healthy person, but if the people around you decide to drum it into you constantly, 'You are ill, you are ill', you will soon feel ill. It will not take long. The hypnotic power of suggestion is difficult to overcome.

All the world declares that you are the body. Not only men, but even stones and rocks, earth and sky seem to be in the conspiracy to proclaim that you are the body. When a thorn pricks, it pricks the body, not the soul. If someone hurls a stone at you, the blood flows from the body, not from the soul. Everything – all the world – proclaims: 'You are the body! You are the body!" When this constant repetition comes from all sides it is difficult to break.

And you stand alone! You are one against the whole world; for only you are within, and the rest of the world is outside. Besides, they are not wrong, for they can only see your body. Your neighbor can only see the facade of your house, not the interior. He takes the facade to be your house, for that is all he can see. The trouble begins when you too begin to think the facade is the house.

To be freed from society is to be freed from the influence of external eyes. He who is thus freed begins to see clearly that he is within the body, but he is not the body.

Gradually start breaking the first layer. Intensify this remembrance that you are not the body. Experience it! Mere repetition is of no use. When a thorn pricks, remember it has pricked the foot; the pain is in the foot and you are only an observer. The thorn cannot prick you; the pain cannot reach you, for you are only the light that knows. Because of this, anesthesia is used in surgery. Once you are unconscious you are not aware of what is happening to the body. This could not be so if you were the body. You are not the body; you are the consciousness. The surgeon merely severs the connection between your body and your consciousness before he can start to work on the body.

Those who have carried out intensive research in the field of life and death have experienced – and I endorse their statements – that when a person dies he is not fully aware of the fact that he is dead for three or four days! Normally it takes three days for the person to realize that he is dead. The reason is that death takes place in unconsciousness, and the physical body drops; but a similar body – the mental body – remains within you. It takes three days or longer for the person to realize that he is dead. Until then he wanders around the house and his friends and his family.

The soul wanders around the physical body and its earthly connections for three days, and it is perplexed at what is happening. No one seems to look at him or recognize him. He stands at the door and his wife goes on weeping. He cannot fathom the mystery for he is just as he was before – entirely! Nothing is lost with the loss of the body. It is just as if you removed your clothes. If you removed your clothes and stand naked you do not changed in the least. You are the same, with clothes or without. You will remain the same. There is a still subtler body that stays with you. It has the same shape, the same feelings. It takes you a long time to realize that you are dead.

There is a method in Tibet called the Bardo. When a person is about to die this process is begun. People sit around the dying man and give him suggestions: 'See, you are about to drop your body. Be filled with the thought that the body is falling away. Be aware that very soon the body that you find yourself in will not be the physical body; it will be your subtle body. Now you have left the body. Now it is up to you to choose what kind of womb you want to enter'. Such are the suggestions that are given.

Nowhere else in the world has there been such extensive research into death as in Tibet. Until his last breath a dying man is made to listen to the suggestions. Even after his death, the instructions continue, for to the monk who is giving the instructions the man is not dead although the body has been left. The monk knows that death has made no difference to the dead man; he is still listening.

Now the monk influences and directs his next rebirth. It is a very good moment to give directions, for the man who has just died can be freed from the attachments of his past life. In these moments he can be reminded and made aware of the fact that he is not the physical body; otherwise, this is very difficult to accomplish. Now he can see clearly that he is, while the body lies inert on the ground. Now the monk tells him; 'See, you are above while the body lies below. 'Look carefully! This is the very body with which you identified yourself. Now your dear ones, your friends, will take the body to the burning ground. Follow them! See the body burning, see it burning to ashes; yet it has made no difference to you. Remember this is your onward journey. Do not be involved with the body again. In your next birth from the very first moment remember that you are not the body. Everyone will tell you that you are the body, but keep your remembrance alive; let it not be smothered by any outside suggestions.'

If you can only succeed in throwing off all external suggestions, then spiritual knowledge is not far away.

In this century none equals Picasso as a painter, yet he was not spared by people. There was no shortage of people coming to him with free advice. The truth is that only a feel gives unsolicited advice. The wise have to be approached. You have to beg and entreat them for advice. You have to work hard for it. Only the fool gives free advice.

People would come to Picasso, people who did not even know the ABC's of painting, and say: 'Perhaps a little more color here would help' or 'Perhaps a different angle would have conveyed your meaning better'. Picasso was tired of them. Finally he hit upon a plan. It would be good if you also followed the same plan. He made a beautiful basket and printed the words 'Suggestion Box' on it. Everyone who came was direction to bring his suggestions on paper and put them into the box. People were thrilled to think that he valued their opinion so much, but there was a slight snag – the basket had no bottom. Instead there was a hole that held a dustbin. Every day the dustbin was emptied by his servants. You should do likewise!

If you want to be freed from society – and that is what sannyas means – then free yourself from other people's opinions. They are outside of you, and their opinions have to do with the outside world; they can only be a hindrance on the path of inner knowledge. Do not listen to them. If you want to hear the inner voice then shut out all outer sounds. Shut all the doors through which they come, for these sounds are so terrible, so sharp, that they will smother the soft wound within and you will not be able to hear it. This inner voice is always calling, but you are lost in the sin of the marketplace.

The first layer is the body, and there is only one key to open it. It is a master key, for it opens all locks. All locks are alike. The key is: become fully conscious of the body. When walking be aware that the body walks, not you. When you are hungry, know the body is hungry, not you. When thirst, know the body is thirsty, not you. Let this awareness always be with you. Gradually you will find that this consciousness creates an abyss between you and the body. As the awareness increases, the distance between you and the body will become greater and greater. There is an infinite distance

between you and the body. Remember! As your awareness deeps the connecting links will begin to separate; then one day you will observe the profound fact that the body is just a shell; you are life, the body is death; you are consciousness, the body is matter, a play of atoms. You are not a collection of anything. You are consciousness – integrated consciousness – that always was, always is, and always will be.

As soon as the first layer is peeled off, like the first layer of an onion, the second layer comes into view. This second layer is the mind. This illness is more deep seated, for the body is further away from you than the mind. If the body is a conglomeration of atoms, the mind is a conglomeration of thoughts. If the body is gross matter, the mind is subtle matter. Thoughts are subtle vibrations, and vibrations are matter. You are total in the grips of the thoughts. They are not like the body, which can be compared to clothing that is worn. Thoughts are more like the skin of the body; they don't come off as easily as clothing.

You have always been under the illusion that thoughts are really 'yours'. You are always ready to find on the grounds that 'that is my idea'. you always try to uphold your views, whether right or wrong. You are always afraid that if your viewpoint is wrong you are wrong. You identification with your thoughts is much stronger than your identification with your body.

If someone is told, 'Go to a doctor, your body is ill,' he won't object; only the body is involved. Tell a person he is ill and he will not be offended, but tell someone that his mind is ill and he should go to a psychiatrist and he will not like it at all. Tell him that he is mad and he will immediately come flying at your throat. This is because there is some distance between you and the body, but your identification with the mind is more deep-rooted. Thoughts envelop you from all sides like smoke; as long as this smoke persists, your eyes will remain blind to this fact.

The second experiment – and it is a difficult practice – is to become aware of your thoughts, all thoughts. It does not matter what kind of thoughts – good, bad, right or wrong, whether they come from the scriptures, whether they are traditional or non-traditional – just know that 'I am not these thoughts'. All thoughts are borrowed. They are given to you by society; they come from others and you have learned them. You are that which is within you – the untaught. You are only the consciousness, not the thoughts. Thoughts are the surface ripples on a lake. They are like flotsam on a river. You are the river. You are the eternal stream of consciousness.

Slowly, slowly you must begin to peel off the layers of thoughts. Whenever a thought catches hold of you, immediately remember; It is not me! It is only the outside dust. As dust gathers on a mirror, so thoughts have gathered on you. Never consider any particular thought to be so much your own that you are ready to come to blows over it.

If people were to break their connection with their thoughts there would be no more war in the world. All wars, all conflicts, all violence is caused by your identification with your thoughts. Someone is a Hindu, someone else is a Moslem; one is a communist, another is a socialist; this is nothing more than being identified with thoughts. You are only God. You are neither Hindu nor Moslem nor Jain nor Buddhist. Your purity is your Shivahood.

Unfortunately, you get caught up in what is cheap and worthless. You think it is more important to be a Hindu than to be God, or more important to be a Moslem than to be God. Your being a Hindu

or a Moslem only causes the temples to fight against the mosques, and this earth is being deprived of religion in the process. All religions cause strife with one another because all religions become mere ideas. Religion is only one – your Shivahood. You yourself are God. Religion is no more than this; it cannot cause any strife, for how can there be fighting when there are no thoughts? What kind of opposition can there be? What kind of support can there be?

The body separates you from others. Thoughts separate you still further. Understand one thing clearly, though it may appear contradictory: that which disconnects you from your own self also disconnects you from others. The body has separated you from yourself; it has also estranged you from others. Thoughts have disconnected you even more from yourself, and just as much from others. The day you have peeled away the covers of the body and thought, and are established in your own nature, the day you become pure existence without any shell, you will find that you have become one with all, for these are not two Gods. Then the God outside you and the God inside you merge into one. The space within the walls of the vessel of clay and the space without will become one. The vessel will break. Identification is the vessel.

As you continue removing the layers – and by layers I mean the identification with things, which are not you! – you are proceeding into meditation. Meditation is breaking identifications. Meditation is the key. By and by all that remains is what you are. When you have removed every layer of the onion you have nothing in your hands but emptiness. This emptiness, this very void, is your godliness, your Shivahood.

Have you ever seen a Shivalingam? It is a phallic representation of Shiva, but its form is the void. It is made that way intentionally. It has no face of Shiva. There is no more beautiful statue or image of anyone, for it has no face. It is the form of the void. As you go deeper and deeper and deeper into yourself, this very voidless form will begin to appear within you, and you are getting nearer and nearer to Shiva. The day you become an illuminated emptiness, a light that is formless and nameless, from then on whatever you say is japa, the mantra, the remembrance.

Right now, whatever you say is a deception. Your religious actions are non-religious. Right now you cannot do otherwise. You try to save yourself from one mistake and you commit a thousand others. The best thing to do under the circumstances is to do nothing. Start breaking your identifications. Just be awake... and do nothing! Otherwise, in trying to correct one error you will find yourself caught in another.

Mulla Nasruddin was sitting at the seashore, very calm. Another man sat next to him, who was very upset. At last, with great anger in his voice, he said to the Mulla, ”Excuse me, but is that your child who is throwing sand at me?”

No,” said the Mulla with a kindly smile. ”That is my nephew. The one who just broke your umbrella and is busy filling your shoes with water is my son.”

You try to right one thing and another goes wrong. The excuses you put forward for your mistakes turn out to be bigger mistakes. In ancient times a king always kept a fool in his court to remind him always of the fact that man’s intelligence is not much of an intelligence.

A king kept a jester at his court. One day, as the king stood before a mirror, the jester suddenly came from behind him and gave him a sound kick. The king fell down and was badly bruised; the

mirror fell and broke. When the king saw the jester he could not believe his stupidity! ”Unless you give me a plausible explanation for this I will have you hanged. I have seen many fools, but none to surpass you.”

The jester replied, ”I did not know it was you, your majesty. I thought that it was the queen!”

The king had to let him go.

Wherever you stand, you stand in darkness. You make one mistake, and in your efforts to correct it, you invariably make another; so a vicious circle is set up. You want to avoid going to your shop so you go to the temple; but you convert the temple into a bigger shop. In essence, you are never able to reach the temple. You break away from one place and get caught in another, and the reason is within you, not without. You are in darkness; wherever you go, you will create problems.

Mulla Nasruddin was in jail. I went to see him. He is an old colleague of mine, so I had to visit him. ”You are so clever, Mulla,” I said to him. ”How come you got caught?”

”What can I say?” said the Mulla. ”It is all a result of my own foolishness.”

”How come?” I asked.

”For three months I worked hard getting friendly with the dog of the house that I planned to rob, but as look would have it, as soon as I got inside I tripped over the cat’s tail.”

All your life this is what you have done. You try your best to win the dog’s friendship and you step on the cat! You have no eyes to see. You stumble here and there in the darkness. The real problem is not one of seeking: the real problem is the lack of light. By groping in the darkness you reach nowhere. If there is light then the door becomes visible and you can walk through it.

He who is preoccupied with changing his pattern of behavior is groping in the dark. Once he ate too much, and now he fasts. What he was doing until yesterday he does even today – but in reverse! Whether you overeat or fast makes no direction. Until now you were seeking in one direction and now you seek in the opposite direction; however, in both cases you have your eyes closed. You go astray not because the direction is wrong, but because your eyes are closed. The eyes must be opened! And when I say ’eyes’ I mean your consciousness. Your unconsciousness must break and your consciousness increases. Do not walk like a somnambulist. Wake up! As soon as you awake you become Shiva-like.

WHATEVER HE UTTERS IS JAPA.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE ITSELF IS HIS GIFT.

He does not give wealth, for wealth is no better than rubbish. Giving wealth has no meaning for him. What is the point in giving what he himself has renounced? There is no sense in giving what he considers useless. He performs no service for your body. He gives only one thing, which is in fact the only thing worth giving: that is self-knowledge. This is his gift, but you take no account of it. You have to look very carefully to see it.

Ask the Jainas, for they have kept a full accounting of exactly how many horses and elephants and chariots, how many precious stones, etcetera, that Mahavir gave in charity. He couldn't have as many horses and elephants as the Jainas say. According to their count, he would have had to be emperor, not just a local king. The astronomical figures are totally wrong. He could not possibly have possessed so much, for his kingdom was very small, no larger than a district, about the size of Sikkim today. In Mahavira's time there were about two thousand kingdoms in India. Mahavir would have been on the approximate level as a deputy tax collector of today.

Now what is the reason for inflating the figures? The Jainas think that ordinary charity does not befit such a great tirthankara, as they inflated the figures in order to convey the greatness of his renunciation. Little do these blind people know that Mahavira's renunciation has nothing to do with this charity. The real diamond that Mahavir gave was self knowledge, but this is never mentioned at all.

You see only what corresponds with your desires. You see only that which interests you. Self knowledge? The word does not sound very valuable. If I place the Kohinoor in one hand and self knowledge in the other, tell me in all honesty which one you would choose. You will say to yourself: 'Self knowledge can be attained any time, if not in this life time then in the next, but the Kohinoor – who knows if it will come my way again?' So you will invariably choose the Kohinoor. Your interests lie in things that are useless, for you are blind.

The contribution of a Shiva-like person is only one: – self knowledge. What he has attained he distributes. What he has tested he offers you. He gives away his very self. He does not give away possessions, but gives of himself. He makes you the joint owner of his inner possessions, for the external possessions are not worth a penny; they have no value. It doesn't matter whether you die a prince or a pauper, whether you die of illness or of heart failure. What really matters is that you live in full consciousness and die in full consciousness. All else rests on this. Your life's destination depends on it; it is this that decides the essence of your existence. All else is valueless.

HE IS THE MASTER OF THE INNER POWERS AND THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE.

Only self knowledge can make you master of your inner powers. Only self knowledge fills your life with light, knowledge and splendor. The day you become capable of awakening, or becoming aware, you will realize that you were always a king. You will wonder. You will laugh at your foolishness in considering yourself a beggar for so long! you will be shocked that you 'remained in the nightmare of sorrow for so long; for that is what life is without awareness.

Sometimes while asleep you put your hand on your chest; then you dream that someone is sitting on your chest, or that someone has placed a huge boulder on you, or that you are being crushed under an avalanche. You will begin to perspire and your sleep will be interrupted. When you wake up you will find that it is only your hand, your own hand. Dreams are such exaggerations that your own hand turns into a mountain! If the hand falls over the edge of the bed you think that you have fallen into an abyss!

Try a few experiments. You can induce dreams in a person who is asleep. Place a small fire at his feet. He will dream that he is in a desert and his feet are burning in the sand and he is dying of thirst. He burst into a sweat. Or touch his feet with ice; then he will dream that he is climbing Everest, that

his feet are frost-bitten, and he is dying of cold. Or put a pillow on his chest and he will see Satan riding on him; or put his hand around his neck and he will dream he is being hanged. But all this can be verified only on awakening. Dreams are much exaggerations. He is bound to laugh when he awakens. How much he has suffered – and for no reason at all! A slight gesture and the mind swings into action, the imagination running wild!

You never suffer nearly as much as you imagine you suffer. You never suffer the illnesses you most dread nor the miseries that you fear. Ninety percent of your suffering is psychological; only ten percent is real. If the ninety percent, the imaginary ills, were to be eliminated, the real ills would be easily overcome. There is a way to overcome them. There is a way to step outside of them and be freed from all ills. It is you who magnify them so much that you become small; then you tremble and think you can do nothing.

As soon as the ray of knowledge awakens and the flame within is lighted, you become the master of all your energies, which is in fact the very source of your knowledge. Knowledge is the ultimate happening. Knowledge means the inner eye, the ability to see, the ability to see through and beyond. Then life has no more sorrows, and there is bliss, and bliss alone. All sufferings are caused by your own blindness. Your sleep turns your dreams into nightmares. Consciousness knows no ills; it knows bliss, and only bliss.

THE CONSTANT ENJOYMENT OF SELF ENERGIES IS HIS UNIVERSE.

He who attain knowledge and constantly enjoys his self energies is in permanent bliss. The enjoyment of self energy, the energy within, gives rise to infinite pleasure. Bliss flows in a continuous stream, like a river that is constantly flowing. Infinite springs of bliss flow within you but you have turned your back to them.

Remember, religion is not renunciation. Religion is supreme enjoyment. God is not someone who sits and weeps. He is always dancing. Do not seek a weeping God; You will never find him. And if you do find him he will not be God but an imposter. God dances – always dances!

All of life is a great blissful festival. Life knows no suffering; it is only your imagination. You have created misery and sorrow; you have thought it all out and planned it. What else can a blind man do? Wherever he goes he is bound to hit against something; however, he is under the illusion that the whole world is ready to bang into him. Why should anyone want to hit you Does the wall or the door have any reason to knock you down? Wherever a blind man goes he is hit by a wall or a door, but he is always ready to find fault with the wall or with the door. No one hits the one who has eyes. No one is out to knock against you. It is you who is at fault. It is you who is blind. The responsibility is entirely yours but you throw it onto others.

The words of this sutra are well worth understanding: THE CONSTANT ENJOYMENT OF SELF ENERGIES IS HIS UNIVERSE; it is bliss. When this state of knowledge is reached bliss occurs every moment. There are flowers, flowers everywhere, and no sign of any thorns. There the elixir of life flows, and death is nowhere. Not a ray of suffering dares to enter.

There is a kingdom of supreme happiness within you, and it is this that you are seeking; but you are searching outside. Your search is right, but the direction is wrong. The sage who knows himself

gives you the direction and that is his contribution. He takes you in the direction that he had taken. The man of self knowledge gives no explanations, for there is no way to explain. He merely takes you by the hand and leads you there. But you are so timid and fearful; you are afraid even to take his hand! You cannot surrender, you cannot have faith, you cannot believe anyone. You have been so frightened by your sufferings, you have been made to feel so insecure, that you cannot trust even one who offers to lead you out of them. You feel that he will create new problems for you. You are so surrounded by problems that you see problems everywhere.

If you do not put out your hand, the man of self knowledge cannot help you. How can he give to you when your hands are closed; you will have to accept his gift. If you are not prepared to open your hands, if you are not prepared to accept his generosity, the one who knows himself will have to turn back without giving.

THE CONSTANT ENJOYMENT OF SELF ENERGIES IS HIS UNIVERSE.

THERE IT IS CONSTANT PLEASURE, WHILE HERE YOU ARE IN CONSTANT PAIN.

TO MERGE INTO THE VOID OR REMAIN BEHIND IS WITHIN HIS WILL.

This is difficult to understand, for it can only be known through experience, but if you have some idea of it, it can sometimes be helpful.

As soon as a person becomes capable of knowing himself, a unique energy – which is the greatest energy in this world and the greatest miracle – is achieved by him. The miracle is: he can be when he wishes, and he can not be when he wishes. He can come into existence when he pleases and he can lose himself in the void when he pleases. Now you sleep and get up, but not voluntarily. If your sleep is done then you wake up, and you cannot go back to sleep again. Just as you are with sleeping and waking, the one who knows himself disappears into the void and comes into existence at his own will.

There is a story in the life of Buddha: When Buddha reached heaven and the guard opened the door, Buddha turned his back to heaven. He said, "I will not enter until each and every person is liberated. When the last person enters I will follow behind him."

This is a beautiful story. In this world there are two types of self-realized persons, and all religions have known these two kinds. One attains self-realization and becomes one with the void; the other type attains self-realization but still remains in existence to help others. The first type of enlightened person is called kaivalya, he who has known the ultimate aloneness, by the Jainas. There have been so many kaivalyas who have attained enlightenment and have disappeared into the void. They have reached their destination. They enter and don't wait at the door.

The Jainas have named twenty-four of these enlightened souls, 'tirthankaras'. These twenty-four waited at the door. They are the ones who guided others, who paved the way for them. The Buddhists have also recognized these two types. One is the arhat, who attains self-realization and merges into the void; the other is the bodhisattva, the one who waits for others.

So there are two kinds of self-realized souls. When you also reach this ultimate state, if a desire to help others – for the urge to help others is also a desire – remains within you, you will wait. If it does

not, you will merge with the void. This is why the true master tries to develop those of his disciples who have the greatest capacity for compassion into bodhisattvas.

Two elements remain at the end: compassion and wisdom. Among you there are those who have either a greater proportion of compassion or a greater proportion of wisdom. Those who have a greater proportion of wisdom will immediately merge into the void. They cannot be trained to be gurus. Those with a greater proportion of compassion are qualified to become gurus and tirthankaras and bodhisattvas.

So it falls to the guru to train his disciples. Those in whom he finds the element of love, compassion and service to a greater degree, he works on so that the longing for compassion stays with them to the very end. When such a disciple's knowledge ripens, the element of compassion and love is still there. When his boat is ready to set sail one post will still hold the line – the post of compassion. When there is plain, dry knowledge within, there is nothing to hold the boat back. As soon as it is ready to sail it disappears into the void.

A person who has attained Shivahood either remains or is absorbed, according to his own will; he can remain in existence to serve or he disappears into the void. It is entirely up to his own will. Remember, only he has a will of his own, not you! You are not present in your being, so how can your actions be by your own will? You may say, "I wanted to do this and therefore I did it," but this is not correct; whatever you do is due to the pressure of some longing or desire.

What is free will? You may say that you have free will if, when somebody swears at you, you do not get angry. It is possible you may not show it, but as soon as someone insults you the anger is there inside. You possess free will if, when someone insults you, you are as calm inside as if nothing had happened; or if, when someone praises you, you are as calm and unaffected by the praises as if it were directed to someone else. There should not be the slightest change within you; only then can you say that you are the master of yourself. This mastery can only be decided in the ultimate moment.

Correspondingly, Buddhism has two major branches; hinayana and mahayana. Mahayana means the greater vehicle; this is the 'big boat' of the bodhisattva. Even after he sits in his boat he waits so that others may join him. Hinayana is the lesser vehicle, the 'small boat' which can carry only one person, and that is the boat of the arhat. As soon as he is ready he steps in and sets sail.

It is difficult to say who is right and who is wrong, the arhat or the bodhisattva. From this state it is difficult to judge; what suits a person's nature is best for him. Those who have a feminine heart become bodhisattvas. Those who have a masculine heart become arhats. There are these two types of hearts, and in the final analysis, it is the heart that decides. Either you have a heart saturated with love and compassion, or you have the heart of a plain, dry man of knowledge; you are either a devotee or a sage.

This world is created by the combination of opposites: there is light and darkness, male and female, birth and death; and so also there is knowledge and compassion. At the last moment both these elements are present at the shore; whichever is stronger becomes the deciding factor. Then you have to use your own free will, for a liberated person has no ties. For the very first time his free will comes into existence. It is only a self-realized person whose will is free, who can really reach a

decision. Before that, anything the person does is determined by his desires; it just flows from his longings. He cannot really decide.

Someone once asked Gurdjieff, "Please tell me what I should do." Gurdjieff's answer was, "If only you could do something I would surely have told you!"

Right now you are incapable of doing anything. You are merely flowing blindly. You are like a wisp of straw in a racing river. You go wherever the current takes you. Where are you?

Someone once told Buddha that he wanted to serve people. Buddha looked at him compassionately and said, "You, yourself, are not yet; so how will you serve?"

The decision happens at the last moment. Only after Self-Realization do you attain the power to decide, for then you are Shiva-like. Then you are no longer the creation but the creator. Then you are no longer a part of this universe; you are God, Himself. Then the play is in your hands; then you are in control. Then, when the time comes to depart, it is you who decides whether to stay back and wait for the others to board your boat, and you become a tirthankara; or you want to be concerned about them. You will say that each man must find his own path; each man has to follow his own way. Who can guide whom? Who is to sit in whose boat? And you will open your sails and set forth.

It is necessary to remember this sutra: TO MERGE INTO THE VOID OR REMAIN BEHIND IS WITHIN HIS WILL; for by paying attention to it you may begin to think about what you will opt in that last moment, if you are given the chance. This thought will invariably rise within you, and it is useful, for this very seed of a thought will grow into a tree by the time you reach the end of life's journey.

CHAPTER 10

The Eternal Spring

20 September 1974 am in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

[Note: This is a translation from the Hindi series Shiva Sutra, which is in the process of being edited. It is for research only.]

SUKHA-ASUKHAVORBAHIRMANANAM

TADVIMUKTASTU KEVALI

TADARORHAPRANITESTATKSHAYAJ JIVASANKSHYA

BHOOTAKANSHUKI TADAVIMUKTO BHUYAH PATISAMAH PARAH

OM SHRI SHIVARPANAM SATU

HAPPINESS AND SORROW ARE BUT EXTERNAL MOODS – THIS HE KNOWS CONSTANTLY.

FREED FROM THESE, HE ACHIEVES HIS ALONENESS.

THE YOGI WHO IS ESTABLISHED IN HIS ALONENESS CEASES TO DESIRE, AND THUS ATTAINS FREEDOM FROM BIRTH AND DEATH.

THE LIBERATED PERSON, FOR WHOM BODY AND MIND ARE NO MORE THEN CLOTHING, ATTAINS TO SHIVAHOOD.

OM! THIS IS DEDICATED TO LORD SHIVA.

Before entering into the sutras...

I told you before that I would say more about mantra, for I would like you to know how the right use of mantra can bring about a transformation in your life. The first thing is, as I said before, your personality contains a number of layers like an onion. You have to peel off each layer so that you can reach the center that is hidden within. The diamond is hidden. It is not lost; for you yourself are the diamond, and you can never lose it. It is only that the center is concealed under the various layers, but so is a diamond. A diamond lies concealed under layers of stone; it also looks almost like a stone, but that does not alter its intrinsic quality as a diamond.

Perhaps you do not know why diamonds are so valuable. Behind its worth lies the search of man for the eternal. The diamond is the most stable object in the world. All things change, but a diamond dies not change. Thousands of years can pass and it will not deteriorate. In this ever-changing world the diamond is the symbol of changeless existence. Hence its value; otherwise, it is just a stone. Its value lies in its changelessness, its stability.

You eternal nature is a diamond. All sadhana is designed to remove the layers of dust that are covering this diamond. Since the covering layers ar dust, they are easily removed. It is the constantly-changing that covers the changeless, so it is not difficult to remove it. Mantra is a method for removing these layers.

Let me tell you a short story:

Mulla Nasruddin met a friend who he had not seen for many years. The friend asked the Mulla about his family. ”What about your daughter, Nasruddin?”

”Oh, my daughter,” said the Mulla. ”You won’t believe this, but I have to tell you she is happily married. Not only that, her husband is a famous doctor.”

The friend knew Nasruddin, and he couldn’t believe a word. He said, ”For give me, Mulla, but I find that difficult to accept. Not only was your daughter... well, not beautiful, she was very ugly – really ugly. She had a body like an army tent. It is hard enough to believe that she got married at all, but to a doctor? How did you hood wink a doctor?”

”All right! All right! replied the Mulla. ”He may not be such a big doctor... He may not be a doctor at all, but he has relieved me of my headache, so for me he is the world’s greatest physician.”

The one who removes your headache is a doctor; but that which removes the head, is mantra. The proverb says: Without bamboo there can be no flute. But as long as the head remains there will be headache. There is a technique by which the head ban be removed. All your troubles are caused by your head; your thoughts, your reasoning, your arguing, your obsessing and wondering. If the thoughts are lost, then the head is lost; you will be, but not the mind! That which kills the mind is mantra. When the mind is not, then the bridge between the body and you is broken. It is the mind that connects you to the body; if the bridge breaks you stand here and the body stand before. He who knows himself to the apart from the body and without mind, attains Shivahood. He is the ultimate ’aloneness’.

Therefore understand what mantra is. The definition of mantra is: that which destroys the head so that the mind is no more. There is a method for cutting through the layers of the body and of the mind. It is very necessary to go step by step; you have to exercise the utmost patience. It is a method that demands immense patience. Impatient people will not only not benefit from mantra, but they will quite possibly harm themselves. Understand this will. As it is you have troubles enough? Mantra will just be an added problem for you if you are impatient.

Once, during my travels when the train stopped at a station, there was a man selling toys and shouting himself hoarse: "This toy is unbreakable. No child can possibly break it!" It looked at the toy; it appeared to be quite strong and it was very costly. It immediately thought of Mulla Nasruddin's son. Mulla's wife was always complaining that he broke his toys before he even got them home, so I bought the toy and took it to Nasruddin's house and left it for the child.

A week later I went to visit them again. No sooner had I entered the Mulla's wife said, "We are in a terrible fix."

"What happened," I asked. "Has your son broken the toy?"

"No," she answered, "In trying to break it he has broken all his other toys. Not only that, he has smashed every mirror in the house with it, and now we have to do something to save ourselves from this deadly weapon."

As it is you are already in a state of madness. Mantra can destroy the craziness, but there is also the danger of its getting worse. As it is you are already burdened in life, and mantra may just bring an additional burden. This offers and explanation for something very curious; those people whom we generally take to be religious often look more troubled than the worldly men. The worldly man carries his worldly troubles. The religious man has the same worldly troubles, but to this he has added another – his religion. His mind retains all its old activities and this becomes something additional; he becomes even busier.

Mantra requires that you have the utmost patience; otherwise, do not dabble in it. It has to be used like medicine. You don't consider drinking the whole bottle in one swallow. That won't cure anyone; it might kill him. The action of mantra is very subtle, so it requires homeopathic doses. The first requirement is patience, great patience. Do not expect quick results; the fruits of mantra ripen very slowly. It is not an annual plant which you can expect to flower soon after planting; it takes numerous birth for the flowers to come. Though it appears difficult to understand, the more patient you are the sooner the flowers cone, and the more impatient you are, the greater the delay.

A man was walking along the read in great pain for his shoes were too small for his feet. He was swearing at the shoes and greatly upset. Nasruddin happened to pass by. He said, "Where did you ever buy such narrow shoes?" The man was already in a bad mood, and Nasruddin's question just made his blood boil.

"Where did I buy them, you ask? I plucked them off a tree!"

"Well," said Nasruddin, "you should have waited a little and allowed the tree to mature; then they would have fit your feet. You broke off an unripe branch."

Don't ever pluck an unripe mantra or you will be in trouble. It is easy to throw a shoe away, but the mantra or you will be in trouble. It is easy to throw a show away, but the mantra cannot be so easily got rid of, for the shoe is external and the mantra is internal. If you get involved in mantra by mistake it is almost impossible to get free of it. Many religious people go mad, and the reason is only this: they are in such a great hurry that they pluck the fruit while it is till green. A ripened fruit is very sweet, while an unripe fruit is not only bitter but acid, and possibly poisonous.

The first layer is the body, so the mantra practice should begin on the body; you are in the body, so it is there that the cure must begin. If you skip this layer your illness will remain, and in due course you will find yourself with unripe fruit on your hands. Remember, you can only start from where you are; if you start somewhere else you are merely dreaming. Tight now you think you are the body, so you have to begin the mantra experience with the body.

Understand the technique. First, you have to sit quietly for ten minutes, but before you sit you have to purge yourself off all your restlessness by being totally active for five minutes; dance, jump, skip and run, whatever is required to satisfy your restlessness. It must be cleansed from every pore, from every part of the body; only then can you sit in silence for ten minutes. This catharsis is necessary before you begin to sit in silence; it will require from five to ten minutes, depending on the extent of your restlessness. Let your body shake, totally, completely, in every possible way, so that for then minutes it will have no more desire to more to satisfy its craving for activity. Then sit down – so still that there is not even a hint of movement. Keep the eyes half-closed.

Do not attempt this practice in an open place. A closed room, preferable small and empty, is ideal. There should be nothing inside the room. A church or temple or mosque is ideal because of its emptiness. If this is not possible, clear out a corner of your room; let there be nothing in it. Remove all the pictures of gods and goddesses, for they too can create problems.

Only emptiness is God. All else is a play of the mind. And the mind is so crazy! Look for yourself at the shrines that people set up in their houses to worship in. You will find pictures of gods and goddesses hanging all over the walls. They may be cut out of the newspaper or they may be calendar pictures; it is the same thing. The walls are plastered with them. By looking at their walls you can tell what goes on in people's minds.

When people worship their household gods they hurriedly enter the shrine room, sprinkle a little over the whole collection of deities, fold their hands and believe that they have satisfied every one of them. None of them has been worshipped. If you try to satisfy them all, you haven't paid homage to any of them; but if you truly pay homage to one, they are all satisfied. Achieve one and you have achieved all; and the one is within, not without!

The emptier the site, the better it is; fir the search is for that very emptiness; the room will be the symbol for your internal emptiness. The room should be small; that helps the mantra. And it should also be empty; that also helps. Let the eyes be half-open; for when the eyes are fully opened you stand at the door with your back to the house and face towards the outer world. You cannot make a complete about-face, for a complete change is not easy. So keep the eyes half-open and half-closed; let them be half-closed to the world and half-opened to your inwardness. Begin here!

Remember, there is no hurry. When the eyes are half-opened you experience a state of drowsiness. Keep looking at the tip of your nose; keep your eyes open only to that extent. You are not to

concentrate. Observer the tip of your nose with a feeling of peace within. Then begin to say 'Om' loudly. You are using the body, you start from the body, because that is where you are right now. Repeat 'Om' loudly, so that the sound strikes the walls and rebounds and falls back on you. This is why an empty room is essential, for that resonance is only possible in an amply room, and the greater the resonance the better it is. Christian cathedrals were designed for mantra; whatever is spoken reverberates and echoes a thousandfold from all sides. The Hindu temple is also constructed for meditation; the dome serves the same purpose. No vibrations can escape from a circular place; the sound turns inward.

Sit and repeat 'Om' as loudly as possible. Remember, you have to use the body. Your whole body should be bathed in the vibrations of 'Om'. You should feel that you have expended all your life-energy in that 'Om'. Hold nothing back; treat it as a matter of life and death. The mantra cannot be complete with anything less than this. If you repeat it softly, halfheartedly, then it is of no use. You have to say it with all your strength, and all your being, as if you very life depended on it; unless you say 'Om' with all you might you will die. Stake you all! Let 'Om' roar like a lion from within you. Eyes half-closed... half-opened... and a loud repetition of 'Om'. Remember, the vibrations are created like ripples in a pool when a stone is thrown. Similarly, your 'Om' will create ripples and vibrations everywhere; it will strike the walls and come back to you.

Also, repeat the 'Om' quickly, so that each repetition overlaps the previous one. Leave no interval between this, no space. Exert all you strength, until you are bathed in perspiration. In a few days you will find that the whole room is filled with 'Om'. You will find that the room is assisting you; all the sound will be coming back to you. If you can find a circular room it will be very good; if you find one with a dome, even better! The room should be absolutely empty, so that the vibrations rain on you from all sides. You whole body should be bathed in those vibrations. Then you will find a wonderful freshness that is unattainable even after bathing in water.

Scientists are carrying out extensive research on vibrations. They have discovered the plants flower and bear fruit earlier when they have been exposed to music of a particular vibration. In Russia and in America music has been used in agriculture to promote richer and earlier harvests; the results have been quite successful.

Ravi Shankar used his sitar in an experiment in Canada. He played the sitar when seeds of different plants were sown. When the plants come up the most astonishing thing was that they are all leaning towards the place where Ravi Shankar had played. When they grow taller they were still leaning in the same direction, just as a deaf person leans forward and brings his ear closer in order to hear better. All the plants have their ears to the sitar! And they grew twice as quickly! A plant is a gross body in which everything is asleep, unconscious; but even so, the body vibrates with sound an begins to sway.

When 'Omkar' – the sound of 'Om' – begins to shower on you from all sides the vibrations will from a circle. You will find that every pore of your body is filled with joy, and all the bodily illnesses are draining away; you will find a peace, a profound sense of well -being. It will surprise you how many body illnesses will disappear on their own, for it is a profound cleansing that penetrates you deeply.

The body is a concentration of vibrations, and there is no vibration more wonderful than 'Omkar', the repetition of 'Om'. Repeat 'Om' loud for ten minutes, using the medium of the body to its maximum.

Then close your eyes. The tongue should touch the roof of the mouth, which should be completely closed. Now you have to use the tongue and lips no more.

The next step is to repeat 'Om' inside, in your mind. Until now the room was outside, surrounding you on all four sides; now the body surrounds you on all four sides; now the body is the room. Let the mantra reverberate within the body for the next ten minutes. You are not to use the lips or tongue or throat at all. The mind should repeat 'Om... Om... Om...' but you must keep it the same rapid rate, the same speed. As you filled the room with omkar, so you fill the body, leaving it trembling with vibrations from head to toe. Allow no gap between two oms, so that the mind has no chance to intrude. The mind cannot think two thoughts at the same time.

If your repetition is so fast and intense that there is no gap between two repetitions, no thoughts will come in between. If you relax your peace is the slightest, thoughts will creep in. So, repetition without any gaps! Do not worry about overlapping of the repetitions. Let them pile up on top of one another like railway cars in an accident. Remember, you are not to use the body any more; therefore now the eyes have to be closed. The body must now be very still. The 'Om' vibrations should hit the walls of the body from within and fall on the mind, just as in the beginning they hit the walls of the room and were then reflected back to the body, which purified the body, just as the internal vibrations cleanse the mind. As the vibrations deepen you will find that the mind is beginning to fade. You begin to experience a deep silence that you never before tasted.

Keep this up for then minutes; then drop your head until the chin touches the chest. For a few days you might feel a strain in the neck, but pay no attention to it, and soon it will disappear. So in the third step you drop your chin on to your chest, as if the neck is cut off, lifeless. Now, no more repetitions – not even in the mind. Now just listen, as if the 'Omkar' is reverberating within and you are only the listener, not the doer. You can only step completely out of the mind when you abandon all sense of the doer. Become only the witness. Put all your effort into this. Let you head hang down all the way to your chest, and try to listen to the 'Om' resonate within.

There is a famous verse by Galib:

THE BELOVED PICTURE IS ON THE MIRROR OF THE HEART.

WHENEVER I CHOOSE, I MERELY BOW MY HEAD TO SEE IT.

This bowing of the head is necessary. No sooner does the neck band than the picture of the beloved appears before the eyes. But alas, you do not yet know how to band your head. You take pains to cultivate a stiff neck. When the question of bowing your head arises, you become even more stiff. If you failed until now to attain God the only reason is that you are not prepared to bow your head; you are not prepared to surrender.

Bowing the head is merely a symbol. Hang your head down as if it is severed from the body; this is only so that you may bow down. No sooner does the head bow down, then it becomes easier to see; no sooner dies the neck bend, then thinking becomes difficult.

Now just try to listen. Until now you were repeating the mantra, first with the body, then with the mind. Now you try to become a witness to the mantra. You will be surprised; there is a very subtle

sounding of the mantra going on within. It is exactly like 'Om' though is it not 'Om', for it is difficult to express it in any language. If you listen very silently you are bound to hear it.

Now you are standing apart from the body. The first step severed your connection with the body; the second step severed your connection with the mind; now the third step is the witnessing attitude, the feeling that 'I am the witness'.

No mantra is greater than 'Om'; no mantra is more wonderful. Ram, Krishna, Mahavir, Buddha are all beautiful sounds, but they cannot take you beyond the mind, for they have an image, a form; whereas 'Om' is formless. Besides, you have a relationship with Buddha, Krishna and Jesus; you have feelings of love, attachment, fondness, affection. These will not allow you to step out of your mind. 'Om' is absolutely meaningless. It is unique. It has no meaning, no form, no image – not even an outline. And it is not a part of the alphabet. It is closest to the sound which is actually continuously resonating within you, which is the very nature of your existence. Just as the brook does not babble, but its very flow causes the babbling sound; just as when the wind passes through the branches and the leaves rustle in the same way, your being is such that 'Om' resounds within you. It is the sound of your being.

Hence, 'Om' does not belong to any religion. It is neither Hindu nor Jaina nor Christian, nor Buddhist, nor Moslem. It is the non-sectarian mantra. You will be surprised to know that the Jainas, the Muslims, the Christians all make use of this mantra, though there are slight variations: the Muslims say amin, the Christians say amen. These are only altered forms of 'Om'. On the course of its journey from India to distant lands this mutation took place. 'Om' is not connected with any thought. Whoever was observed into the no-thought state, heard it.

For the first two steps you will pronounce the mantra, and in the third step you will just listen to it. You will be the listener, the witness. In the first two steps you are the doer, for the body and mind are parts of the doer; the third is the witness state. In it you listen, just listen. The body is cut off, so is the mind; the layers of the onion are peeled off, and only pure existence remains – only you! And that is Shivahood!

Also, once you get the taste, you will thirst for more and more. The taste will draw you, pull you inside; it becomes like a magnet. We are drawn towards things that appeal to us and we naturally go towards them. The trouble only arises of you do not get the taste; you meditate but you do not enjoy it. This is because you have not yet got the taste of meditation. Once you get the taste there is no difficulty; for then the mind hovers there by itself. Whenever you are free, even for a short time, your eyes will close, your head will drop and you will see the beloved's face in the mirror of your heart. Then it does not matter where you are, in the house or in the marketplace, it is all the same.

It is only the first step that is very difficult. It amounts to one-half the journey hover there like a bee, ever thirsting for more and more. It is the mind's nature to go again and again to the place of pleasure. It is only because you have not yet enjoyed the pleasure that you have to find ways to turn the mind towards meditation.

Now your mind keeps saying, "Why not go to the market! Why waste time just sitting here! You can do all that later on when you have the time; now is the time for the shop or the office!" The mind takes you to the place where it gets pleasure. The mind is not to be blamed for this. Once you have

the taste within, you will find it more and more difficult to focus the mind outward. first it was difficult to draw it in; now it is difficult to draw it out.

Sariputra, Buddha's disciple, attained the taste for 'Omkar'. He attained the highest state of the mantra; he heard the supreme manta within.

When this happened Buddha ordered him to go out and preach to the people.

He told Buddha, "Now I have no desire to go out."

Buddha replied, "That is exactly why I want you to go. First you were caught by the outside; that was one form of bondage. Now don't let the 'within' bind you."

The perfect, enlightened soul is one who has no difficulty either way. He goes in and out like a gust of wind. Now the in is no longer in, and the out is no longer out; they have become one. Just as you go easily in and out of your house, life is like your house; you should have no difficulty going in and out of it. There are people who are attached to the world and there are people who are attached to the soul; both are in bondage. They have yet not reached the ultimate salvation. The knowing one has no ties-neither inside nor outside. He flows naturally in and out!

You should try to maintain this third stage of the mantra for as long as possible. The first stage is to sit silently. The prelude it is to shake up the body by dancing, jumping, wriggling, for about ten minutes, so as to get rid of all the body's restlessness. The body is filled with restlessness; that is simply a scientific fact.

If you want to slap someone your body energy immediately flows into your hand. That is why someone who is quite weak can give you a hard blow; his hand does not remain in the ordinary state but is filled with energy. suppose for someone reason you cannot slap this person. There may be many reasons; life is very complex. Perhaps you are indebted to him, or maybe you want to use him to get something, so you restrain yourself; but the energy that has accumulated in your hand is blocked and has no way to go back.

Recent scientific research reports that there are ways to discharge the energy from the body, but there is no way to draw the energy back into the body; so if you so not hit somebody or something, the energy will remain in the hand. It does not matter whom you slap; even if you hit empty space, you will discharge that energy; but there are no channels to draw that energy back to the center. In this way energy gets blocked in various parts of the body. In any twenty-four hour period energy will be blocked in many different parts of the body, and that blocked energy is bound to hinder you. It is responsible for the feeling of numbness in your feet, or the feeling of ants crawling on your legs, or you back beginning to hurt, or suddenly feeling itchy. These things are not your imagination; they are really happening, but you have perhaps never noticed them before because your energy was always occupied and you never sat doing nothing before. Now that you sit doing nothing, wherever energy has been blocked causes restlessness.

Tell any little child to sit quietly for five minutes and you sense how cruel you are being to him, how difficult it is for him to sit quietly. Sometimes he lifts a foot, sometimes he presses his hands together, or he moves his lips or twitches his eyes; he will do anything in order to move. The energy flows

on all sides. The legs want to run, the hands want to move, the eyes want to see, the ears want to listen. These are all old habits. That is the way that energy has always flowed.

That is why I always insist on catharsis before any meditation. It is very helpful. Rap, jump and skip around for ten minutes to eject all the blocked energy, then sit for meditation. The peace that follows catharsis is the calm that follows the storm; the body becomes light, it loses its restlessness. These ten minutes are only preparation, not an actual stage in the meditation of mantra. It is the step outside of your house. The real journey occurs inside the house.

FIRST STEP, BUT THE BODY: SAYING 'OM' – TEN MINUTES

SECOND STEP, BUT THE MIND: SILENT REPETITION OF 'OM' – TEN MINUTES.

THIRD STEP, LISTENING SILENTLY TO THE RESONANCE OF 'OMKAR' WITHIN – TEN MINUTES.

Repeating Rama, Krishna or Buddha will not be suitable for this journey, for they can only take you up to the second step; they cannot go any further, for in the third step the actual resonance in the head is the sound of 'Om'. Sometimes a person repeating 'Ram... Ram... Ram...' can attain the third stage. It is like when you are traveling by train, you hear the wheels saying anything you fancy. You might think they are saying 'Ram-Ram-Ram' or 'Allah-Allah-Allah', but the fact remains that the sound of the wheels is actually 'Chucka-Chucka-Chucka'.

'Om' is that pure sound. If you repeat Ram you will also hear Ram, but this is just a superimposition, which indicates that the mind is still alive and working to some extent. We should experience only that which is. We should see only that which is, without giving it our own color. Hence, the ultimate mantra is 'Omkar'; all others are secondary, inferior. They only take the seeker as far as the second step. In actual fact they become an obstruction in the third step.

Use 'Om' as I have specified. For at least three months without worrying at all abut results. You are not to even think of results; just carry out the practice. Do not worry whether you are progressing or not progressing. Fix a date; in exactly three months you can start to think about the results, not before! If you can summon this much patience you will succeed.

A little child digs a hole, puts in a mango seed and covers it up. After half an hour his curiosity makes him dig it out to see whether it has begun to sprout. He is disappointed. He puts the seed back in the hole. After another half-hour his patience again runs out and he digs up the seed. Now he is really miserable, for nothing has happened. Now the seed will never sprout. Everything has its own timetable. A seed must lie in the dark earth for a specific period of time before it can sprout.

It is for this very reason that your meditation also fails to bear fruit. You are too impatient for results. Jesus said, "Let not your left hand know what the right hand is doing." Act the same way! Bury the mantra deep inside you. This is why the mantra is referred to as a seed. All it means is that you should not keep digging it up over and over again to examine its progress. It has its own rhythm. It will sprout in its own good time. Your impatience can only spoil thing for you.

Take this ultimate mantra along with you and carry out the experiment. If you do it with total patience for three months you will be filled with a sweet nectar, and then it will be what Kabir calls the taste of

'raw sugar to the dumb' – what can never be spoken of. When you have tasted of it, wherever you are you are alright, whatever you do is alright. Then the world becomes like a dream for you, and all of life is no more than a drama; you become a witness and that itself is Shivahood.

Now let us take up the sutras:

HAPPINESS AND SORROW ARE BUT EXTERNAL MOODS – THIS HE REMEMBERS CONSTANTLY.

He who attained Shivahood is constantly aware of the fact that happiness occurs outside, and so also sorrow; neither of the two penetrates you interior. But you are disturbed by both. You cling to happiness and identify yourself with it and think that your are happy. In this way you have created the sorrow. From this point on the journey to suffering begins. In fact, it has already started.

As soon as you say, "I am happy," you have sown the seed of unhappiness; now it will not be long before it comes. Suffering means to identify with your moods. Then, when the suffering comes, you identify with that. Your trouble is that you identify with whatsoever comes before you. You do not remain the observer, but become the reactor to whatever appears before you. If sorrow comes you beat your breast and tear your hear; if happiness come you dance with glee. Both happiness and sorrow come from without and have no way of going within. It is you who identifies with them and suffers from them. As soon as a person goes beyond the mind, he begins to see that all this happens outside the temple, and that nothing enters within.

HAPPINESS AND SORROW ARE EXTERNAL MOODS – THIS HE REMEMBERS CONSTANTLY.

Here the word 'constantly' is important. You also remember this sometimes, especially when you are advising or counselling others; then you know it for certain. If only you were as wise for your own self as you are for others. You are so wise when you counsel others. It would be very good if you could apply the same understanding to your life's journey.

What is the reason for this deep understanding and wisdom for others? If someone is in great trouble you say, "Why are you so upset? That is life! That is the way the world is! Don't get so involved with it!" When you find yourself in the same trouble it is quite possible that this very person will return your good advice and say, "Do not worry, brother. Happiness and sorrow are only external states."

Now what is the reason behind this? It is simply that, when suffering comes to others you become the witness, so understanding arises within you. The sorrow has come to others, not to you; you are merely the observer. To the extent that you become an observer, when sorrow comes to you, this understanding will remain with you. Right now you have given your understanding away.

Mulla Nasruddin went to a psychologist and said, "My wife's condition is very bad. You will have to do something."

The psychologist worked with her for a few weeks, then he told the Mulla, "She has completely lost her head. I am very sorry, Mulla."

I knew she would," exclaimed the Mulla. "Every day she used to give me a piece of her mind and eventually everything has come to an end."

You advise and counsel others. You give you wisdom to others, but you never use it for yourself. When happiness comes your way the next time, observer it as if it is happening to someone else. Try to stand a little apart from it and observe it. A little distance is enough. Do not remain so very close to yourself. You are your neighbor; keep a little distance.

Once I told Nasruddin, "Mulla, the owner of the restaurant at the end of the street says that he is a close relative of yours."

"Certainly not!" replied the Mulla. "That is not correct. He is a distant relation of mine."

"How distant is the relationship?" I asked.

"Well," said the Mulla, "we have the same father, but he is the first child and I am the twelfth. So there! We are quite far apart!"

What you are you neighbor will be enough of a distance between the two of you. Do not stand so close to your neighbor. When there is no distance the perspective is lost. Anything you want to look at should be held at some distance. If you hold a flower right up to your eye can you see it? If you press your face against a mirror you will not be able to see your reflection. A little distance is required. A little distance from yourself – that is all that sadhana is about. As this distance increases you will be surprised at how meaningless all your troubles were! Things happened outside you – not to you! Because of your closeness they were reflected in you, the vibrations touched you and you took it as yourself vibrating. You allowed it to affect you.

A house caught fire. The owner beat his breast and wept loud. A man standing next to him said, "You are tormenting yourself unnecessary. It was only yesterday that your son sold the house for a good sum.

The man could not believe his ears. He stopped his lamenting. The house was still burning, but he looked on unconcerned. He stood at a distance; he was no longer the owner of the house.

After a little while his son came running, "Oh, 'god, how did the house catch fire? I made a deal on the house but the payment is still to come. Now who will pay for a ruined house?"

The father began to wail again. The house was unaffected. The happiness or sorrow of its owners had no effect on it. It was burning before and it continue burning after, but the owner's mood would have changed again if the buyer had appeared and said he would honor the contract although the house was burned down.

Everything happens outside you, but you stand too close; that is the trouble. Keep your distance! When happiness comes stand apart and watch. When sorrow comes stand a little away and watch. Mind you, start with happiness, not with sorrow. Generally people try to dissociate from themselves at times of sorrow in order to escape from it. That is a general tendency of the mind, and it gets you nowhere. Create the distance when you are happy, because everybody wants to escape from sorrow. If you want to establish a genuine detachment just running away from sorrow will not do.

You have to do just the reverse. Your journey so far has only taken you astray. You will have to turn back and retrace your steps. This turning back and doing the opposite Mahavira called pratikraman.

Patanjali used the word, pratvahara, which literally means recovering or removing the sense organs from the object; it means returning to the source.

You have to retrace a few steps. When happiness comes stand aside; do not let your heart run wild with joy, do not dance with glee. Know that this too will pass. Nothing is permanent; everything is transitory; nothing stops for you. Any mood is like a gust of wind that comes and goes. You are hardly aware of its presence before it is gone. Stand apart of watch – like an observer.

Why do we not act as witness to our happiness? What is the fear? There is a reason behind it. As soon as you relate to happiness as a witness, it no longer gives you joy; it no longer is happiness. The closer you are to yourself, the more intense the happiness. The more you stand apart from yourself, dissociate from yourself, the more you realize how transitory are those times of happiness. The more you associate yourself with it and forget your intrinsic being, the more you experience the joy of happiness. This is why nobody wants to be an observer of happiness, but this is the only place from which the journey can begin.

When happiness comes, witness it. Soon you will find that as you watch happiness fades and only you remain. Once you succeed with happiness, you will also succeed with sorrow. Then the key is in you hand – come joy, come sorrow. A little effort will bring success. All you have to do is stand a little apart from your body. There is already a great distance between you and the body. No two wings can be further apart – for it is the distance between matter and consciousness. Even the stars are not as distant from earth as you are from the body. One is living and the other is inanimate; one is made of clay and is perishable and the other is the spirit. They are the two extremes.

Begin with happiness, and the word towards unhappiness, remembering only one thing all the time, you are involved! You will have to practice it again and again. Time and again there will be lapses; it will not be continuous right off. The remembrance can be constant only when you are will-established in the soul, when the mantra has succeeded in cutting out the mind. Until then you will have to practice it, keep at it as much as possible. This cleanses the way. The seed may not yet be sown, but the ground is cleansed at least. When you are ready to plant the seed the soul will be ready. The remembrance will disappear time and again, a slight unawareness and happiness will again overwhelm you, but do not give up.

The yogi who has attained Shivahood is constantly aware that happiness and sorrow are external states. Constant means incessant – without a moment's break. Only what is your very nature can be that constant. What is not your nature cannot be constant. How long can you remain angry, for example?

Bodhidharma went to China, where the king who came to visit him said, "I am troubled by my anger. What should I do?"

Bodhidharma replied, "For how long can you be angry?"

The king was surprised. "For an hour or two at the most," he answered.

"What you can do for an hour or two is not your nature," said Bodhidharma. "Can you be angry for twenty-four hours a day?"

”An hour or two of anger is torment, and you ask me if I can be angry for twenty-four hours. I have not come to find out how to be angry all the time,” said the king.

Bodhidharma said, ”That is why I am telling you that what you can do constantly is your nature. So why are you troubled?”

What is it that you can do constantly? Think about it a little. You cannot remain constantly happy. You may find this difficult to understand, but it is a fact. Think a little: how long do you remain happy? After a while happiness wanes and you begin to be unhappy; if nothing happens to disturb you happiness you will start getting bored with it yourself. A palace to live in, rich food to eat, a beautiful woman for your wife and no trouble or problems – then what will you do? Soon you will be fed up an yearn for a change.

It often happens that a man who has a very beautiful wife begins an affair with an ordinary servant girl. People wonder what he sees in such a plain Jane when he has such a beautiful wife. They wonder because they are witness to it. The man is only seeking a change. He is bored, even by beauty. How long can you keep looking at a beautiful face? How long can you listen to a lovely melody? After a while it just hammers at your ears and you will want it to stop. If it continues it becomes sheer hell.

The mind cannot bear anything constantly; it cannot bear even happiness for too long. That is why whenever happiness comes the mind looks for ways to create unhappiness. The mind keeps changing its tasted; when there is happiness it wants sorrow; when there is sorrow it craves joy. You cannot sit quietly for any length of time; soon the mind becomes restless and bored by the tranquility.

Bertrand Russell wrote: ”I would not choose liberation, for I have heard that people in the realm have just been sitting on the magic, wish-fulfilling rock for eons.” There is nothing to do there, for doing means the mundane world, samsara. What could Mahavira do sitting on this rock? Besides, who knows how long he will have to sit there? What can one so sitting doing nothing? There is no newspaper to while away the time, and nothing ever happens there. Things only happen in the wrong sorts of places. In hell there must be lots of news. Perhaps they produce twelve or more editions a day, for news always involve killings, arson, looting, violence. Nothing ever happens in heaven. It must be very boring.

Bertrand Russell says, ”My mind dreads to think of heaven. It would be better without it.” The mind speaks the truth. Bertrand Russell doesn’t know that there is no salvation as long as the mind exists. Only he whose mind is annihilated, he who is constant, prefers salvation.

Is there anything that you can bear continuously? Neither suffering nor happiness can be constantly tolerated because they cause tension. The only thing that is tolerable for any length of time is peacefulness; it holds no excitement. You can be serene constantly for it is a state between the two, and beyond the two.

One day I was having dinner at the Mulla’s house. His son was sitting with us at the table. When he started the meal he was eating with his left hand. Soon he switched over to the right hand. After a while he resumed eating with the left hand, then again switched to the right. Nasruddin said, ”How may times have I told you, young man, to eat only with your right hand?”

The boy said, ”What difference does it make which hand I use, my mouth is in the middle either way?”

Only he can be constant who finds the point of balance between happiness and sorrow. The equilibrium between rightness lies exactly at the mid-point between happiness and sorrow. Here there are no extremes. It is like the movement of the indicator on the balance scales; the stable point is right in the middle. Any slight weight and the needle deflects either sad or happy, constantly you will soon tire of the weight of it and will want to move it to the other side.

When people are carrying a body to the burning ghats they bear the wight of the bier on one shoulder and soon they tire and change shoulders; the weight does not decrease but the shoulder is relieved. Happiness and sorrow are your two shoulders and the attitude of being the doer is your bier. You keep changing shoulders. Sometimes you identify with happiness and sometimes with sorrow. Be the witness – stay in the middle – then you will be able to be constant.

Buddhahood can be constant for it is a state of peacefulness. There is bliss in it, but it is not like the sharp rays of the sun. It is cool and refreshing like moonbeams. Bliss is not like burning rays but like a cool luster; there is no tension in it, no restlessness.

Have you noticed that it is often when a man is happy that he has a heart attack. Suddenly a man wins the lottery. He is extremely happy... and he drops dead!

A man won a lottery of ten lakh rupees. When the news came he was not at home. His wife was terribly upset. She knew her husband, and if he were to hear that he had won two paise he might die of a heart attack. She ran to a nearby temple where she knew the priest was a wise man. She asked for his help. He told her not to worry and returned home with her, promising to break the nows immediately to her husband.

When the husband cam the priest thought it would be best to start with a smaller amount, so he said, ”I would like you to know that you have won one lakh rupees in the lottery.”

The husband replied, ”Really? If that is true then I shall donate fifty thousand rupees to your temple.”

The priest dropped dead of a heart attack. It never occurred to him that fifty thousand rupees would be too much to bear.

Happiness can also kill. It is not only sorrow that kills, for both contain a stimulant that causes excitement; and wherever there is excitement something is bound to break. The only thing that can remain constant is your non-excited nature, and this need not be practised. It is always within you. You cannot lose it, for it is your very nature.

Hence the search of all religion is the search for the individual’s basic nature. The search for one’s true nature is religion, for it is eternal; you can never feel bored by it, for it is your true self. There is no way you can separate yourself from your nature; you cannot stand back from it and see it. If what you see bores you when you create a distance from it, know that it is not your true nature.

When the mind is killed by the mantra, when the mantra causes the mind to commit suicide, the eternal spring arises within. When this eternal spring has arisen, the individual is liberated from the

external states of happiness and sorrow, and he achieves the ultimate aloneness. Now he is alone! Now he is drunk with his own self; now he needs nothing ; all his wants, all his desires are now dead, because happiness and sorrow are external. He neither longs for happiness nor wants to get rid of sorrow. All his external ties are broken. Now he is stable, and fixed within his own self. He is constantly in bliss; there are no further desires. Now he is absorbed in his own consciousness. His satchitananda, his truth-consciousness-bliss, now flows constantly. It is in his every breath, in every stomp of his being.

FREED FROM THESE HE ACHIEVES HIS ALONENESS.

THE YOGI WHO IS ESTABLISHED IN HIS ALONENESS CEASES TO DESIRE, AND THUS ATTAINS FREEDOM FROM BIRTH AND DEATH.

Then there is no birth; then there is no death. Birth and death are necessary when we journey in search of happiness. We desire happiness and happiness can only be attained through the body; so we have no choice but to take on a body. The happiness we desire decides the kind of body that we take on. The desire for happiness lingers at the moment of death and becomes the seed for the next birth.

What does a tree do before it dies? It draws all its life-energy into its seeds. The seed is the desire of the tree to exist after death. A seed is a wonderful phenomenon. The vast spreading giant of a tree extracts its essence and deposits it in the seed, which i sends off on the journey of life. Its own body will die, but the tree has already made arrangements for a new body to live once again. And this explains the fact that although the tree is born from a single seed, it produces millions of seeds in the course of its lifetime. The tree takes no chances. It has to take into account so many factors; what if the seed falls onto rocks or barren ground? What if it gets no water? It may be eaten by animals or crushed by someone. The tree cannot take a chance, so it produces millions of seeds, and by various means scatters them far and wide, so that at least some of them find a suitable place in which to grow.

In India there is the silk cotton tree. Nothing can grow beneath the tree, for its roots such up all the water; so the tree has a wonderful way to scatter its seeds; it fills the seed pods with cotton so they can fly away from the tree when the wind comes. It has arranged that the seeds don't fall on the ground below, for that would be certain death to them.

It is not easy for a plant to grow under a bog tree, almost impossible, therefore all trees have devised their own ways to exist. Trees are clever and cunning in their own way; do not take them to be simple and guileless. In this world nothing and no one is plain and simple; no one can be, for complexity and cunningness are necessary qualifications for existence. As soon as he becomes simple and guileless one has attained liberation.

Trees and plants have devised thousands of different ways to scatter their seeds. The sweet nectar in flowers is only there for the bees and the butterflies. They settle on a flower to such the nectar, thinking that it has been provided expressly for them, little knowing that while it sucks at the flower it picks up hundreds of seeds on its legs in the form of pollen. Then the bees carry the seed to distant places. When plants devise so many methods for survival, now many must you be inventing? You cleverness has no limit.

One man contains within his body sufficient sperm to father as many people as there ar living in the world. An ordinary person, neither celibate nor libertine, has intercourse at least four thousand times in his lifetime. With each act he ejects about a hundred million sperm. Each sperms is capable of creating life, if given the opportunity. Since a woman's capacity to produce ova is restricted to one or two at a time, this is not possible, though some day it will be possible. Thus it is that kings in older times kept so many wives.

Science is now making it possible for the semen of a single individual to fertilize all the women in the world. This is a real possibility, for the discoveries of science can ultimately be put into effect, no matter now dangerous they may be. The scientists to today maintain that not everyone has the right to procreate – only people of the stature of an Einstein, let's say. When we are so careful about the quality of plants, when we take so much trouble to improve the quality of flowers and animals, it is to be expected that we will start to think the same way about the human race; so in the near future it is possible that the scientists will decide which people should be given the right to procreate. Consideration will be given to various factors: health, intelligence, age, alertness, genius. Those who are acceptable in those categories will be chosen, and their seed will be used. Then it is possible that one man's sperm can populate the whole world. There is also a desire for survival of each individual.

You will be surprised to know, and it has not yet been written in any book, that when a man reaches 'aloneness', when he is beyond happiness and sorrow, his body stops producing semen; but the formation of sperm only stops when the desire for survival is completely extinguished. As long as the desire to survive remains, the body keeps producing sperm whether in this body or in another.

Thus you keep the body alive on one hand and your soul desire-ridden on the other, so the soul will keep seeking a new womb. You will wander as long as you identify yourself with happiness and sorrow, for then you will be longing for pleasure and more pleasure, and your dreams will lead you to new births.

Because all his desires have tone, the yogi who is established in the state of 'aloneness' is completely freed from the cycle of birth and death. He takes birth no longer; and he who is not born has no reason to die. If you are born you must die. Death is the other side of birth. They are the two sides on one coin. He who wishes to be liberated from death will have to free himself from birth also.

Everyone wants to be freed from death, but not from birth. That is our difficulty. Everyone wants to be rid of suffering and sorrow, but nobody wants to give up joy and happiness. The day you seek freedom from joy your life will undergo a transformation; on that day you become religious.

Mulla Nasruddin went on an ocean voyage with his wife. It was the first time that the Mulla had gone to sea. He felt terribly sick; he could hardly lift his head. Besides, the sea was very rough and that made things so much worse for him. He called his wife and said to her, "Listen, I made my will before embarking on this journey, and it is just as well that I did. I have transferred everything to your name, and the will is in the bank with all the necessary papers. Bury me on the other shore – even if I am not dead – for I will never take another sea voyage. You can go home and claim all my possessions."

The day that life appears worse then death – as truly it is – the day that life appears so hideous, grotesque and meaningless, that under no circumstance will you undertake a new voyage, on that

day you undergo a transformation. Right now if you are interested in religion it is only a part of your search for happiness – perhaps a new kind of happiness; and that is why you never attain religion.

Your search for religion will be real only when your are not prepared to step into another life journey. You have seen it all and found it meaningless. You have experienced happiness and found that it also gets filled with suffering and sorrow. You have seen sorrow and found it full of suffering. Sorrow is suffering all right, but even joy is not free of suffering; rather it is another name for suffering. All that tastes sweet turns out to be poison. That which is proclaimed to be nectar is just another brand of poison. The day you recognize how useless and meaningless everything is, and also that it is all outside of you and has nothing to do with your intrinsic being, on that day religion is born in you.

Remember to ask yourself whether you are only interested in religion in order to gain happiness. Then you are not interested in religion at all. Dedication to religion is true only when you are looking for peace and serenity. Happiness is useless, suffering is useless; good riddance to both!

The yogi who is established in his aloneness is rid of all desires. Without desires he no longer wants to undertake any new life journeys. The journey itself has become meaningless to him. It is then that the cycle of birth and death is forever destroyed.

THE LIBERATED PERSON, FOR WHOM BODY AND MIND ARE NO MORE THEN CLOTHING, ATTAINS TO SHIVAHOOD.

He is Brahma! It is he who is God, the ever-abiding supreme spirit! The Sanskrit word for such a person is liberated, refers to the five elements and the clothing. It means that all five elements – earth, air, fire, water and ether – that go into forming the body are no more than clothing for such a person. Body and mind are made of the fie elements. The gross forms of the five elements form the body, and the subtle forms make up the mind. When such a person recognizes the fact that the mind and the body are no more than outer clothing, that his real self lies hidden deep within the folds of his clothing, he peels off the layers like we peel an onion and he knows the Shivahood within himself. Such a liberated person becomes God himself.

In our country we do not believe in one lone God sitting somewhere high in the sky ruling the universe. No! In this country we believe that every life journey ends in God. It is through gradual flowering that one become godlike. God is not an existential state. God is man's future possibility.

Try to understand this further. Judaism, Christianly and Islam are the three significant religions born outside of India. Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism are the great religions that were born in India. There is a basic difference between the two. Islam, Judaism and Christianity put God at the beginning, as the primal cause, the maker of the universe. We in India see God ahead of us, as the ultimate fruition. This makes a great difference. God is the future, not the past. God is the flower, not the seed. Hence we have placed our Buddhas on a flower, seated on a lotus flower in full bloom, with its thousand petals.

If God stands at the beginning of off things and is the creator, then he is the one. Then this world is a dictatorship. Then there could not be any liberation, for where can there be independence once you have been created? A thing that is created has no freedom of its own, for the creator can create and destroy as he chooses. Then you are mere toys and puppets. Then your soul, your freedom,

has no meaning. Hence in India we do not look upon God as the creator; we look upon him as the ultimate culmination, the ultimate completion. He is your final development.

God is not the first step of your evolution; rather, he is the final peak. He is the Gourishankar, the Mount Everest. He is the holy Mount Kailash, where all consciousness ultimately reach. Everybody is heading to this very place. Sooner or later everyone has to reach there. Every day you are becoming God, evolving into God. God is not a happening that once took place. God is a stream that is constantly flowing. God is happening every moment. He is growing within you; you are his womb.

Hence this Shiva sutra ends with this ultimate happening. All scriptures end here. They start from you and end with God! What you are now is the first step. What you will ultimately be is the last and final step. You are right now like the seed; that is your wandering. When you develop fully your totality, like a tree in full bloom, that will be your ultimate culmination, your fulfillment.

When the flowers bloom the tree's life is completed; in its blooming the tree has attained the full fragrance of its life. What is was born for has come to pass. With the blooming of flowers the tree is filled with an ecstasy. It is filled with a dance. Each pore of its being is thrilled, for it has not lived in vain. Its purpose has been fulfilled because it has bloomed to its ultimate fragrance and beauty.

When a tree is so filled with joy at the blooming of a flower – a flower that begins to wither as soon as it opens, a flower that blooms for not even one single day – then now much more ecstasy must there be in the universe when a Vardhaman becomes Mahavira or a Gautam Siddhartha flowers into Buddha. We call such a flowering that never fades shivahood, and that is God!

Use the mantra so that all that is useless and meaningless in you drops away, and all that is meaningful and purposeful is cleansed and purified. Make use of the mantra so that all that you are right now may shatter, and you may be scattered on the ground so that what is you possibility may sprout.