

The Satguru - By Sant Kirpal Singh From Crown Of Life

Sant Kirpal Singh explained: The first condition is that of finding a Satguru or true teacher who is an adept in this mystic science. The subject is one of practical self-realization, not of philosophic dissertation or intuitive feeling. If it were one of mere theory, then books and scriptures would be enough for our purpose, and if it were one of mere feeling then each could trust the promptings of his own mind. But the question before us is that of unlocking a "sixth" sense, one of direct transcendental perception, of inner hearing and seeing. However, this cannot be attained by reading books only. One born deaf and blind may, with the help of Braille, learn the most detailed expositions of man's rich and varied audio-visual experiences, but his study can never give him direct experience. The most that he can get from books is the realization of an extensive plane of experience wholly beyond him, and this can generate in him the urge to discover means whereby he can overcome his physical limitations...

The attempt to interpret the rich spiritual heritage in our religious literature wholly in terms of our own limited experience might lead to a distortion of the true meaning. We might gather a great deal of psychological wisdom, but the inner significance would be lost on us, and all our intellectual theorizing would only land us in unending theological contradictions with which the various institutionalized religions are encumbered today.

Only one who has himself experienced what the great scriptures describe, can guide us to their real significance. But the task of a spiritual teacher does not end there. The elucidation of the true meaning of religion is no more than a first step. After the aspirant has understood the nature of his goal, he must pursue it practically and rationally. To know is one thing, and to do is quite another. It is only after he has explained to the aspirant the end to be attained that the Master's real task begins. It is not enough that the doctor diagnoses the cause of the blind man's ailment, he must perform the operation as well. So too the spiritual guide at the time of initiation gives the disciple a first-hand experience of the inner Light and Sound. He puts him into touch with the Divine Stream, be it at its lowest level, and instructs him in the sadhnas to be followed for consolidating and developing this inner experience to its full extent.

He is the inner guide as well, leading the soul from plane to plane to its ultimate destination, a guide without whose aid the soul would mistake the intermediate stages for the final goal and would encounter barriers which it would be unable to surmount.

The role of the Master being what it is, it is little wonder that all mystics who have pursued this way should have sung of him with superlative reverence and adoration. Without the munificence of the Master one gets naught, even if one engages in a million meritorious deeds.

Gurbani

All great spiritual teachers have maintained that without the help of a living Master, the spiritual journey is difficult and impossible to traverse to the very end. Jalalud-din Rumi, the Persian mystic, suggest this forcefully when he says:



Only the kiss of a living Prince (Master) could bring the slumbering Princess (Soul) back to life and only the touch of a breathing Beauty could restore the Beast to his native pristine glory.

The kingdom of God cometh not with observation,

The kingdom of God is within you

(St. Luke 17:20-21)

He is a Guru in vain who cannot turn the darkness (gu) into light (ruh). And Nanak has said, "I will not take my Master at his word until I see with mine own eyes." If he is a genuine teacher, he will never promise salvation that comes only after death. Accordingly, to him it is always a matter of now and here. One who has not attained liberation in life, cannot hope to achieve it after death. Jesus too always urged his disciples to master the art of dying daily...

Life is one continuous process which knows no end, though it may assume different aspects at different levels of existence. As one passes helplessly from one plane to another, he is supposed to have died at the plane quitted by the soul; for we have yet no knowledge and much less experience of the life on other planes, where one is led by the propelling force of karmic vibrations. It is from this bondage and forced comings and goings that the Master prepares the way to liberation in this very life, by connecting a jiva to the eternal lifelines pervading endlessly through the creation, and gives one an actual foretaste of the higher spiritual regions, provided one is prepared to forsake the flesh for the spirit. "Learn to die, that you may begin to live," exhorted the Master Christian...

On this mystic path reasoning is the help, but reasoning is also the hindrance. Love alone can bridge the gulf, span the chasm, and knit the finite to the Infinite, the mortal to the Immortal, the relative to the Absolute...

The relationship of love between the Satguru and his initiate, the Godman and his disciple, covers many phases and many developments. It begins with respect for one knowing more than oneself. As the disciple begins to appreciate the Master's disinterested solicitude for his welfare and progress, his feelings begin to soften with the dew of love and he begins to develop faith, obedience and reverence. With greater obedience and faith comes greater effort, and with greater effort comes greater affection from the Master. Effort and grace go hand in hand and each in turn helps in development of the other.

(from the book "Crown of Life" by Sant Kirpal Singh)