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Who Are We? | Preparation for the Spiritual Path

Sebastopol, California USA — February 18, 2012

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCrr5hJPr-I>

Welcome, friends. I am very happy to see all of you again today. It's nice to be amongst friends. We are all friends. We don't know it, though. Sometimes we forget. There are no strangers; they are all friends. Sometimes we are friends who've known each other. Sometimes we are friends who still get to know each other. The reason is our limited vision of time. We think time flows only in one direction from past to present to future, and we think what is in the future has still to come. It may or may not come. It may be different than what we think. It may not be according to our anticipation, may not be according to our hopes. But the truth is, as deep meditation can reveal, the truth is that time is a fixed thing, as fixed as space. I can't say because I have to travel from California to Chicago that, as I travel, Chicago will come up. Chicago is already there. And I just travel on space, in space and arrive in Chicago.

In the same way tomorrow, day after, next year, thousand years from now, are already there. We're time-traveling. People used marvel how the Egyptians found a way to time-travel, without realizing we are all time-traveling, all the time. We are traveling from moment to moment, minute to minute, hour to hour. But the belief that we are not traveling on time, time is passing through us, creates the illusion that nothing has really happened in the future. It will happen as we go along, and we can change it and lot of changes will take place. This is a great mistake because of the illusion of the nature of time. If we knew that time was flat and that all things that could be placed on time have already been placed there, that all future events have been pre-determined, our view on time would be very different. Our approach to time would be very different. Our life would be very different.

I had a very strange experience in India. I had gone for an interview to join the Indian navy. After the interview I came out, and there was a man with a turban standing outside. And he said to me, "Good luck. Do you have a piece of paper?" I had some pieces of paper, so I gave a piece of paper and he said, "Do you have a pen or pencil to write with?" So, I gave him my pen. He took the paper, looked at my eyes and began to write something on it. Then he folded the paper twice and said, "Hold this paper in your hand." So, I held the paper in my hand, and he said, "Do you have another piece of paper?" I said, "Sure." I didn't know what he had written, and I didn't know why he wanted another piece of paper, but I had in my pocket another piece of paper, so I gave him. Then he said, "Now you write on this piece of paper any number between 1 and 10," and I said, "This is an old trick people play. When they say, 'Write between 1 and 10,' everybody has a tendency to write 5, which lies in the middle. I'm not going to go. I'll call his bluff and I'm not going to write '5.'" I wrote 3. He said, "Write the name of a flower," and I knew that the most common flower in India is rose. And everybody will say, "Write the name of a flower, the first reaction will be [to] write 'rose,'" and this man is hoping that I'll write rose, and I'm not going to write it. I'll write the name of a flower this guy may never have heard of. Because this interview took place in Uttar Pradesh, another state and I said, "I know the name of a flower that occurs in another state, in Punjab where I come from, and I will write the name of an unknown flower, a rare but good flower called *chameli*." So, I wrote *c-h-a-m-e-l-i*. I wrote that, and I had a smile that I was calling off his bluff. He said, "Write your date of birth." I wrote, "1926." That was the year I was born. He said, "No, no, I wanted you to write the date of birth, not the year of birth." So, after "1926" I wrote "November 26." Normally we don't write like that — we write the year at the end.

He said, "Now open the paper I gave you before you wrote all this." I opened the paper. It said, "3. Chameli. 1926 and then my date," exactly what I wrote, and he'd written it beforehand. I was completely amazed. How could he write something that I had not even thought of? I was so non-plussed by this event, I said, "How could you possibly do this because I was making my decision on what to write after you had written the paper." He said, "Shall I tell you little more?" I said, "Go ahead." He said, "When I said write a number between 1 and 5, you thought *I am going to call his bluff off and not write 5 but write 3*. When I asked you to write the name of a flower, you said *Everybody writes rose, and I'm going to write the name of a flower he's never heard of*, and you wrote *chameli*." He gave me exactly the words of my thought which occurred after he'd written the paper.

That was the first very strong evidence to me that what we think is a future we are determining by our free will, by our free choice, is not only pre-determined, the process of choosing, the process of going through the factors of choice — what we should choose and not choose — is also predetermined. And because those factors of choice are so designed to give us a feeling of free will, we think that we are now making a decision, and this was not in the future ahead of it.

The truth is...and he demonstrated to me. I asked him how he did it. He told me he has a *baba*, a psychic kind of person who has taught him how to do this. And it needs certain kind of meditational practice to be able to see five minutes or ten minutes in advance of what a person will be thinking. He could not only read my thoughts, he could read my thoughts that were still not there, that were still in the future. That means he could read, in great detail, the next five minutes of my own thinking process. What confuses us is, what confused me was that I am making a decision whether to choose one or the other, and he knows beforehand that how I will choose and what choice I will make, which I am thinking is totally free will, it's unknown, the options are mine completely, I could write one or the other. But he knew that when we think that we have a free will and we can do whatever we want, what we will do with the free will is predetermined. And that makes free will look absolutely real.

Free will is the greatest illusion that we ever had because it looks absolutely real. Illusion means something that looks real but is not real. Free will is a great example of that. I was studying in this country at Harvard University and there was another student of psychology who used to call me every day and discuss whether the spiritual stuff we talk about is all psychological suggestion. Is it just the power of suggestion that we think these things, or is it something more real than that? And we had discussion every day, and there were a couple of professors who were also interested in that. So, they used to tell me that this idea, that through meditation you can see lot of things, can all be induced by the power of suggestion. "The mind is a very powerful instrument we have, and by suggesting something to it you can hypnotize people. You can make them believe things. You can cause strange scenes to appear before them. You can cause hallucinations to appear by suggestion. So, don't you think that what you think is a meditational experience could be merely a power of suggestion, auto-suggestion you're giving to yourself? And being told by some guru, some master that you will see this light and this color, and you then suggest to yourself you are going to see that, and you close your eyes and begin to see that by power of suggestion only — what makes you believe that it's something real?"

And I told them, those professors, "You are absolutely right. It could be the power of suggestion. Indeed, I agree it's the power of suggestion." I said, "All that we see is power of suggestion. But I go a step further. What you are seeing outside now is no more than the power of suggestion too. What you think is real life around you is being created by the same process. Do you have any evidence that it is occurring any other way? Through meditation at least you can find out that not only the scenes that you see in meditation are being created by your mind, you also find out that the entire life that you lead is being created by your own mind. So therefore, I acknowledge that the power of suggestion is very strong.

Then one of the students said that "If this is so then we wouldn't have any free will. Because as a religious student, I have to believe in the power of God." He said, "I believe there is a God,

and he is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent. That means he's not only present everywhere that God knows everything. Omniscient means he knows everything. Then God must know what we are going to decide. If God doesn't know that what we are going to decide, that means that we are superior to God, that we are going to make a decision with our free will and we can choose whatever we like, and God doesn't know about it. How can he be God? How can he be omniscient?" Based on this theory, he came to the conclusion that we cannot have free will, because God's will must cover what we think is our free will. And what we think we are going to decide is already known to God. Therefore, if you believe that God is omniscient, then we cannot have free will.

So, early morning one day he called me. He said, "I found out. Eureka! There's no free will because either God knows everything, or we can do/choose things freely. Both cannot co-exist." I said, "Thank you for informing me. Will you come over and have a cup of tea or coffee with me? I'd like to discuss this further." So, quickly he came to my apartment, and I prepared for him, on a tray, a cup of tea and a cup of coffee and an empty cup. So, when he came, I said, "Would you like to have tea or coffee or nothing? I've got all three here, and you have no free will, so without free will tell me what you're going to have?" And he said, "All my knowledge you have stumped with just three cups like this?" I said, "No. You say you have no free will, and I am presenting to you three options. Tell me you have no free will. I am going to prove to you you not only have free will, you are trapped by free will, that there is no way you can escape free will because you *have* to make a choice. The moment we have to make a choice, we have to exercise free will. So, what makes you say that you have no free will? I am presenting just a cup of coffee and tea and say, 'what do you want?' and you have to choose. Every day in our life we have to make choices. Every day we decide which way to turn. Every day we decide what is good for us, what is not good for us. Every moment we are making decisions. How can we say we don't have free will?" He said, "This has been a big setback for me and my knowledge. I thought we had no free will and you just proved with this cup of tea and coffee."

I said, "Now, I will be the devil's advocate. Now I will tell you that you have no free will. With the same cups, I'll tell you." He said, "How is that possible?" I said, "Look, when I say, 'Will you have tea or coffee?' how do you decide freely? What are the factors of choice in your head that make you decide one or the other? Let's look at all the possibilities. What possibilities exist for you to choose between tea and coffee? There are only two sets of factors. One, hereditary, genetic — your dad liked coffee, your grandfather liked coffee, somebody in your family — it comes in your genes: you like coffee. Second set of factors are environmental, that you lived with people who liked coffee. You got a cultivated taste for coffee. Therefore, you like coffee. There is no third set of factors influencing your free will. When I offered you tea and coffee, both those factors were completely fixed already. You could not change your genetic makeup, nor could you change the environment through which you had come up to that point.

Therefore, though the experience you had was of free will and choice, you had no way to choose anything but coffee. Therefore, if I could read the factors of choice in your head beforehand, I could write in advance that “free will will be exercised by him, and he will choose coffee.” What kind of free will is that? There is no free will, because what we think is free will is predetermined by the way we freely choose.”

So, that is why it's the greatest illusion that we have. And yet it's a very wonderful illusion. And I want to tell you — and that is the subject of my talk today — how wonderful this illusion is. Because this illusion of free will makes us a seeker of Truth. If you didn't have the illusion of, experience of, free will, you could never be a seeker. Seeking cannot take place if you don't feel you have a choice. That is why although the experience may be just an experience of choice, it's a real experience. The experience of making a choice is a real experience. How it happens, at what level it is pre-determined it's a separate thing. But you do experience that you have to make a choice. It is the choice-making capacity in a human being that makes that human being a seeker of Truth, a seeker of God, a seeker of Reality or seeker of anything. And when you seek, you will find. If you don't seek, you will not find. Therefore, the illusion of free will has been granted to us as the greatest gift to a human being in order to be a seeker and make this life purposeful. People want to know what is the purpose of human life. The purpose of human life is to seek and to be able to find who you are, to find what is the Truth behind all this show that's going on.

We forget that no matter what the mechanics of this free will are, the seeking is being given to us as a unique favor. In the Indian literature or the scriptures, they have recorded that there are 8.4 million species of life forms. Starting from plants and going into insects and birds and mammals and human beings and angels. They listed them all as different forms in which life can exist, in which consciousness can exist. In that list, more than half of the list, about 5.4 million, are in the plant life, plant world. And then finally, in the final list of 400,000, comes a human being. Out of 8.4 million species of life forms, only one life form has the experience of free will — the human being. Do you see the uniqueness of it? Only a human being has the experience of choosing between different alternatives and have that actual experience. Only a human being can use this free will to seek and therefore to find. That's the main purpose of a human life. It's the greatest form of life that can be created. The human being has been created as the next best thing to the Creator himself.

They say that man has been made in the image of the Creator. Might have heard that. Does it mean the Creator has eyes and nose and ears like us and a body like us? Of course not! Creator is just a power. It's a creative power that creates everything including creators. The creative power is not something that you can compare in form with a human being. But then what is great resemblance between a human being and the Creator? This is the resemblance. The Creator's will has created the whole show and was real, true free will, and the human being has

an illusion, an experience of free will and makes choices the same way and thinks he's next to God and begins to create things the same way. But the same free will, the experience of free will, is the greatest gift we have in order to prepare ourselves for the real purpose of human life. That is to seek who we really are and to find out that while we are still here in this human body. So, that is why, when we talk of how do you prepare for the spiritual path, the answer is: The first step is to seek. The first step is that you must find that where you are, what life you are leading is not, not what you want.

A man came to me once and said, "I am very happy and leading a great life. I enjoy myself. Why should I join the spiritual path?" I said, "You should not. You don't need to. You are happy. Go and enjoy yourself." After a week he came back crying to me. He said, "No, no, I have so much problems and so on. I have some moments of joy and pleasure but most of the time I've been disappointed in this, I have been disappointed in that." So, we sometimes do not realize that the spirit in us, the soul, which is pure Consciousness, it is not a form. Our real form does not have any form. It is a power of Consciousness which is the power to be aware, the power to become conscious of anything that it wants to be. That's our real Self. That Self is always seeking, automatically, to seek where it originates from.

So, the seeker is built into us. If we ignore the covers upon ourselves, we'll find we are automatic seekers. The longing for truth, the longing for the spiritual reality, spiritual truth is automatic in all of us. We don't realize it because of the big, thick covers we have put upon ourselves — the cover of the mind that thinks and attaches itself to outside things, to outside experiences; the desires that link us through the sense perceptions to experiences outside; the physical body that's a big, thick cover upon us. It doesn't let us see who we are. The light is hidden inside. These covers upon us have made it even impossible for us to know that our longing for the Truth has always been there.

When we are able to have an experience without these covers, we discover that we had a longing for the Truth. We were seekers right from the beginning and the seeking is in all of us. One of the ways the seeking is expressed is through loneliness. We want to feel that we are separated. We are lonely. We want to see how the loneliness can be overcome. Instead of trying to find out that our origin itself is not lonely, is Totality, we go about looking outside to take care of our loneliness. We make relationships outside. We feel we have found our soulmates and we find that the soulmates are no soulmates after a little while.

People have come to me, young people have come to me, and they say, "We are in love with each other. We found we are soulmates. We are just exactly like each other." And three months later they tell me they are in the divorce court. And then they tell me, "We knew from day one we are not made for each other." But that's the same day they told me they were soulmates! You see this idea that we are able to find our partners in life... Yes, we can find

partners in life for some time. We can find partners that last longer. At one time the average rate at which people could stay married, the length of time for which people could stay married in this country (I understood from statistics) was 40-50 years people lived together. Then it came down. And do you know what the average today is. It's astounding. The average marriage stays for one week. What have we come to? Where are the soulmates gone away? I sometimes feel that maybe there is some truth in the theory of soulmates. Because the truth is that when we transcend these divisions created by the mind, we are just one soul. And that one soul has no sex or gender. It's not male or female. Our reality is not male or female. It's one of the levels of illusions created to separate. The same soul, when it becomes split into two, into two genders, begins to believe it's looking for its soulmate. It descends into different kinds of life forms. And as we go through life in different forms, we are always searching for our partner, our soulmate. And when we can't find the soulmate, anyone close by who looks like that appeals to us. We say, "Soulmate!"

I sometimes give an example. If you go to a dinner party and there's a stack of plates ready for them to take for the buffet dinner and pick up your plate. And before the party starts the stack of plates suddenly falls and there's a crack in each plate. And then you quickly try to put them together and you can't find which plate really matches each other. And you try to match as quickly as you can, and some chinks remain between them because they are not the exact, matching plates. You stack them all together with little chinks. That's what our life is like in our searching for soulmates. We think we are putting our self together, and we don't see the chinks to start with, and after a little while we start seeing the chinks. It happens all the time. So therefore, this search for soulmates in this world is itself an evidence of our loneliness, of our seeking for something that should make up for what is missing. Even when people have good relationships, they know internally that the relationship is skin deep. They know that this relationship is not going right to their hearts, is not going right to their souls. It is dealing with some things in a common way but that you are not really meeting spiritually at one place. And therefore, the seeking continues. The loneliness does not arise because you are alone. You can be in the midst of a crowd and still be lonely. I see the most lonely people are in the biggest cities that I have visited with big crowds around. And some people sitting up in the mountains, in the Himalayas, in their little caves, are not lonely at all. So therefore, loneliness is not affected by the number of people around you. It's affected by the state of your own mind, the state of separation that you are experiencing.

The mind is a great separator. It separates. It's method of dealing with situations is analytical. Analysis means separate things and see them out, break them into pieces and then see how the components work. That's the mental way. On the other hand, the spirit, which is our Truth, which is our real Self, has a synthesis, a way of putting things together and seeing the big picture all at once. They are two different systems. But the mind and the soul, they sit together

in our Consciousness in our head. When I first came to this country, I met lot of philosophers, and they all thought that mind and soul is the same thing. And they say, “You know this power of consciousness, mind, soul...whatever you like to call it.” They would talk to me like that. And I said, “Don’t you distinguish between the mind and the soul?” They said, “What’s the distinction? That’s consciousness. You can call it soul; you can call it mind.” I said, “Of course not! See the big distinction that the mind will always function in time and space and follow the law of cause and effect. Always.” In fact, Emmanuel Kant, the German philosopher said that the mind is not a mind, it’s only the category. These three categories put together we call it the mind. He’s gone that far, that unless you have time to think, you cannot have a thought. There is no thought in zero time. On the other hand, the soul, the spirit of consciousness per se can have an intuitive feeling with no time whatsoever. Not even a nano second. You don’t know a thing and suddenly you say, “I know it!”

Therefore, there’s a big distinction that the soul, the spirit of a human being, of consciousness works beyond time and space, whereas the mind works in time and space. When you put them together and tie them together in a knot and think you are the mind, then you lose the sense of intuition. You lose the functions of the soul, and you begin to believe the functions of the mind alone are real. And because the mind believes in time, space and cause and effect, you come through a cycle of events which in the East, and now in the West, is called the Law of Karma. What is the Law of Karma? It’s the law of cause and effect. We are not bound by the law of cause and effect — but our mind is. When we identify ourselves with the mind, we become tied to the Law of Karma. When people do spiritual practices and they rise above the mind, they discover they were never bound by the Law of Karma. There was no Karma. Karma was as much as illusion as free will was illusion. And if there is no free will, there can be no Law of Karma. Do you realize that? If you don’t have a real choice, how can you be punished or rewarded for it? You can only be punished or rewarded if you are really making a mistake or making a good decision. If you can’t even make it, it’s already made, how could you have karma?

So, you have to see that this lack of knowledge of our own Self — we don’t know who we are. We are identifying ourselves with our minds and all this stress is being created around us. And instead of enjoying the beauty of this grand creation, we are trapped into it. Why did we happen to come here if this is not our True Home? If our True Home is beyond the mind, beyond time and space, in a state of immortality, in a state of eternal bliss, what drove us to come back into this? What drove us here was adventure! We said, “We are going to go into Adventureland. It’s a Disneyland in a big scale.” And we thought we’ll have a great show in the carnival and after the show we’ll go Home. Somehow, we got caught in the rides here and we never knew how we came here, how we got caught. The reason was we got caught by misidentification. We misidentified ourselves with a thing that was given to us to use. You were given a mind to use. You were given sense perceptions to use. You were given a physical body

to use and have experiences here. And if you use these three things, it's a great experience even today. You just know that these three things have been given for use in an Adventureland and after that you go Home. If you know that much, you'll enjoy life. Your whole perspective on life will change.

The reason why we are trapped here is we don't think. We think we are the body first of all. And the body, any aches and pains of the body are our aches and pains, that the body if it gets damaged, we are damaged. Something is wrong...we try to beautify this body. We try to feed it all kinds of junk food, all kinds of tasty things which may not be good nutritionally. We don't care, we think this body is our Self, and we are having a good time. Therefore, that's a big mistake.

Second mistake, we think the sense perceptions that we are having through the body are real perceptions. We don't realize that if you don't have a body, you have better perceptions. You never experienced them. With meditation one can. On the spiritual path you can experience perceptions much clearer, much better than you can do than when enclosed in a physical body. We have another ethereal body, an astral body inside this body which has much better power of seeing, touching, tasting. The sight is better than 20/20 in that eyes, even if you are blind with these eyes. Every sense is very acute with that, but we are covered with the physical body, and we think all sense perceptions are arising because of the organs on this body. We have never had that experience. If we can have experiences by which we can withdraw our attention away from this physical body and have experience of who we really are, hidden inside the body, we will find that our perceptions are themselves a cover upon ourselves. The sense perceptions are a body by themselves. There is no astral body as a separate body. The sense perceptions make it the body. And inside that is another body hidden and we think it's a thinking function of our self. It's not. The mind is not a function of Consciousness. Mind is being powered by Consciousness to think. It's a different thing. Mind is given to us as an accessory. As a tool. As a computer. It's a great, one of the finest computers installed in our Consciousness which Consciousness powers and then the mind can think. Just because we got a thinking machine to use, we think we are the mind. And because we think that is what we are, we get into a trap.

We are identifying ourselves constantly with the covers upon ourselves and that is creating all the difficulties and mess-up in this world. There would be no unhappiness whatsoever if we knew that this was just a show. We have put on costumes to come and see the show, that these are all three costumes that we are putting on. And none of this stuff is going to affect us. We'll just cast them away and go back Home after the show is over. We've come into a great stage, in a great play in which we're putting on our costumes and playing. We are the audience and the actor at the same time. We forget that part. When we say that...a person comes to me and says, "My name is Don." I said, "Okay Don, do you know that Don is not your name?" He says, "Why not?" "Don is the name of your body. It is given only to your body. Do you know your

name?” He said, “What do you mean? There’s another name I have?” I said, “Don. This is your body’s name — Don — given by your parents or whoever gave you this name. But if you just withdraw your attention and find out that there is something else in Don who’s today functioning as Don and hundred years ago was functioning as something else, and three hundred years ago was having a different name, that you have had ten names in the last ten centuries, in different bodies, in different forms that you have come. Which is your name then?” I said, “Don, not only that, out of ten names, you can’t choose which one you have. You go further up and you’ll find those names were also given to something that has only a thousand or two thousand years life. Inside you, inside those two is a third thing called your mind, called your causal body which has its own name and that has been existing for three million years. The same mind has been existing. We have different life spans of different covers. The costumes don’t have the same length. The physical body is just 100 years and anything...110, 120. It won’t be more than that, compared to the life of the astral body inside which has been lasting for 1,000 to 3,000 physical years.”

When you go into meditation, deep meditation on the spiritual path guided by a Perfect Living Master, you’ll find that you can withdraw your attention from this body and discover who you were. It’s like waking up from a dream. And then you not only discover that you have been there before, you discover that was your identity for a long time, and this physical body was a very temporary, dream-like state. An analogy would be a dream in the physical universe that we have. When you go to sleep at night you forget where you are sleeping. You adopt a new body that moves around in the dream. Now that’s a different body in the dream but you think that is yourself. It’s the same Self that awakes in the body and the same Self that’s in the center of the dream body. The dream body is not working separately, and you are watching it. You are watching. You become that character in the dream. And therefore, you take a different body and move about in the dream. You meet people. You have incidents. You have events and you think they are all real — till you wake up. When you wake up, you discover that was not your body. That was a dream body. That your real body was sleeping in the bed, and you find that your real body was different and that the sleep dream lasted a very little time, that the physical body is going to last much longer.

But the fact that you had a dream does not mean that when you wake up, you still don’t know if you are woken up or not. People ask me, “Are you sure that when we go to the next higher level of consciousness in meditation, are you sure it’s not something that we are just making up? Imaginatively? Is there any evidence that we were really there for a long time?” And I said, “When you get up in the morning from your dream, are you sure you have woken up? Have you ever pinched yourself to see if you are awake? Have you called people to say, ‘Am I awake?’ Or do you know you are awake?” I said, “I’ve never met a person in my life who was unsure on waking up in the morning that ‘I am awake’. He didn’t have to get any evidence. What made

him so sure?" When we get up in the morning from a dream, and we know we are awake — we don't even open our eyes; we don't even move our body; we are lying in the bed; we had finished our dream and we are awake — and without opening our eyes we know we are awake. And at that time if somebody came and said, "You are not awake. You are dreaming," we'll never accept even if a thousand people came and said that. What is that proof that you are having? What is the kind of experience you are having that makes you so certain that you are awake? The experience is very simple one. The experience is you remember that you went to sleep. You connect with the time before you went to sleep. That's the evidence. When you wake in morning, you know you had gone to sleep there. The connection between the past in the physical body and the connection with the wakeful state now, immediately tells you what happened in between was a dream. That's the real secret.

It's the same secret that applies to the higher levels of consciousness. When you rise to the astral level of consciousness, you don't feel you're seeing some funny things there. You feel you were always there; you've always been there. You just had a little dip into another experience called the physical world and that you have been there for a much longer time than the physical span that you had here. When you waken again to the causal plane, you have the experience that you have been there forever. For millions of years. Same being. Same memories. Same. You can trace back your memory of a million years back and remember it. Recall it. That is how you know for certain that these are actual shifts in the levels of wakefulness, the levels of consciousness. It is not a make-believe that you just make auto suggestions to yourself and see strange experiences in meditation.

True meditation under the guidance of a Perfect Living Master gives us knowledge of this truth, that our Truth is that we are a Soul. We are Consciousness, that we are covered by these bodies of a mind which created thoughts, reasons, analysis, putting things together, interpreting sense perceptions. That's what the mind does. It's a great tool enabling you to communicate, to write, to speak. It's great. Such a great gift given to us. The mind is one of the greatest gifts given to us, if we use it. It's a terrible master if you allow it to tell you what to do. Because that's what we are doing. We are not using the mind to think what we want to think. We are letting the mind think randomly and then we follow it, what it is telling us to do. We have put the cart before the horse. We've done exactly the opposite of what the intention was, the intention of having a body, the intention of having sense perceptions. The intention of having a beautiful, wonderful device called the mind was to use all of them and have a good time in the show that we are witnessing here. Instead of that we began to take this as the only reality.

There's no other reality available. We are discussing it all the time. We are questioning it ourselves. We stay in the same level. We don't even try. We don't even... Somebody comes and says, "Look, this is not real. You wake up by meditation." "No, first prove to us that we will really wake up. First, give us all the answers before we even try." Reminds me of a story in

India. In the villages they have some wells with no parapet walls. There's no wall so the well is flat with the ground. So, one philosopher, intellectual professor, he was walking — he fell into the well. And it was not very deep so in the water he couldn't climb out. He was moaning and groaning, "Where have I got trapped into the well?" And hearing his groaning and moaning and sounds, a passer-by came, and he said, "Oh, I'm sorry you fell into the well. I'll go and bring a rope to pull you out." He said, "Hold on. First tell me that you'll really bring a rope. First tell me why I fell into the well?" He said, "Look, I'll bring the rope. You come out. We can discuss these things afterwards." "No, no, I must get my answers first." He says, "Wait." He goes and brings a rope. He says, "Hold on to the rope and I'll pull you out." "First guarantee that you'll really pull me out. First, what is the certainty that you won't drop me halfway?" The questions are unending! He says, "All right, you keep the rope, and you stay in the well."

Many of us are thinkers like that. We want all the answers before even trying to find out what's there. We are not willing to take any leap of faith. And the reason is we have been made the slaves of our own minds. We've been taught to be the slaves of our minds. I remember in the '60s when I came, in the classrooms of the universities, it was written *Think*. I don't know if you remember many of them. Just think. Think hard. Well, we think too much I believe. We are thinking ourselves into all the mess. Imagine if you stop thinking for a while. Life would change because then you would live an intuitive life. You would live with a gut feeling. And how many of you have seen how often the gut feeling has been more true than all the rational thinking that we did? Because rational thinking has a little handicap, has a little disadvantage and that is, we only think what we feed into the mind. Whatever data we have in front of us, we can't think beyond that. Therefore, we make our conclusion, we make our decisions based on that. And new thing comes up and all our data goes wrong, and our decisions go wrong. Our inferences go wrong.

The mind does not function except in logic of two kinds: the deductive logic and the inductive logic. Some of you might have studied logic in school, would know that deductive logic means that you are given a certain data and the inference lies within that data. And that is deductive logic. For example, if I say, "That wall in this hall is painted in blue color and that's part of that wall — that's also blue. That's deductive logic. The answer is known in the premises that have been given in the beginning. No new knowledge can come through deductive logic.

Inductive logic says, "This wall is blue and turns around. In all probability, it's also blue." In inductive logic there's always uncertainty. It's called "the great uncertainty principle" in inductive logic, which means you can never have certain information from any kind of logic. And yet we rely on the mind's logic for all our decisions. See, we are trapped into a very small segment of using our consciousness and thinking that that's the only instrument we have. And we pooh-pooh the very fact that we have the soul which is giving us intuitive knowledge all the time. Intuitive knowledge doesn't come from the data in front of you. Intuitive knowledge

comes from all your past experiences, maybe of a million years. They all accumulate and that's the knowledge that's pulled out by intuition. Intuition is coming from the soul which has no fixed life. It is immortal. It has always been there. So, instead of getting knowledge from that source which lies inside us, which is our real Self, we are relying upon a little instrument that's given to us with all its limitations which we can easily see.

So, how do we go about the spiritual path? First, we should be a seeker. We *are* seekers, but we should recognize it. If we recognize that there is something missing somewhere, then we are a seeker. And anybody who says, "I am very happy with what I have," well, enjoy it! Don't go after spirituality. You don't need it. Your spiritual thing is right here. Which reminds me of a little naughty joke I heard. It's about a church and a pastor who had two parrots. And he trained those parrots to hold beads in their hands and pray. And they would pray and, you know, take God's name and "Hail, Mary," whatever they were taught to do. They were praying with their beads in their hands. Very impressive to have two parrots in your house always taking the name of God and worshipping in your house. Good atmosphere.

Another one of the parishioners who used to go to that church, he used to admire these parrots in the pastor's house. And he said, "I also want to have this." So, he went and bought two parrots also and he brought them home. But he didn't discover they were female parrots. And when he opened the cage the two female parrots said, "We are hookers. Have a good time?" He was shocked, "What kind of parrots have I got?" He immediately covered them up. He said, "This is not right." Every time he would open, the two female parrots would say, "We are hookers. You want to have a good time?" He said, "I've got into a mess." He went to the pastor. He said, "I tried to get two parrots to imitate your parrots and be good worshipers of God and look what has happened!" He said, "Oh! I'll do something. I'll send my good parrots and in their company your parrots may improve and may also start holding beads and may also start praying." So, he said, "Okay." So, he borrowed those two parrots from the pastor and brought them home. And when he put those two parrots, the male parrots, in front, and he opened his two parrots, the female parrots said, "We are hookers. You want to have a good time?" And one of the male parrots said to the other male parrot, "Throw your beads away. Our prayers have been answered."

What are we looking for? We think everything has to come from here. We think our prayers have to be answered by the physical things we can get here. What do we pray for? Think of it. Do we pray for knowledge? Do we pray for reality? Do we pray for real self-realization? God-realization? Have you heard people's prayers? They pray like the parrots. So that's why it's very important that if you want to be prepared for the spiritual path, you should feel this is not the place that you belong to. If that feeling is not there and you feel you belong here and you are having a good time, throw the beads away! Then just have a good time. But if you feel this is

not your place, this is not where you belong and you have seen this world looks alien to you, that you belong somewhere else, then you are prepared to be a seeker — and then you seek.

And then the greatest preparation is to treat the body into which you are going to seek with great respect. All religions, to the best of my knowledge, have described the human body as the temple of the Creator. They have said that the human body is a “Temple of Living God.” They not only say it’s the “Temple of God,” they say it’s the “Temple of a Living God,” a conscious God, a God that you can access, talk to and be with. Not one that you can just worship who is sitting somewhere else, but one who resides inside you and can be accessed by you and discovered by you. That living God is in the body. Then the body is really a temple. It’s a more valuable temple than any temple that we can make. Any churches, any synagogues, any mosque that we build outside are all copies. If you study the architecture, temple architecture in history, you’ll be surprised that it’s a copy of the head of a person, whatever headgear they wore. They used to wear tall-type of headgear – they made the steeples of the temple, of the churches like that. The dome, Buddhist domes are all the shaven and shorn monks. And all the domes are similar to that. You’ll see that the outside buildings that we made were supposed to be a replica, a copy of the real temple which is our own body. And in this body also the whole of the body is not the temple. Only the area above the eyes is the temple.

The head from the eyes up is a real temple of God, is a real temple of Reality into which you can find everything. All the answers of the world, all the reality of the world, the reality of the soul, the reality of God lies inside, behind the eyes and on top of the head. This little space is all that you need to go into. In the name of the same God who resides inside, how many people are killing each other today? In the name of God! They take the name of God. Look at history. History is full of... We, in order to protect a building made by us, if some brick is broken in a building that we made, we destroy the temple that God has made. By thousands! How can we be seekers of the truth if this is the way we are treating the Temple of the Living God, the temple in which he resides, where he can be found? We have to give respect to the human body. To give respect to the human body, to put all kinds of strange junk food into it? You don’t throw anything into a place of worship that we have built! We say no, it’s a very holy place, we can’t throw trash into the place. But we are throwing trash into this body. So how can we say we are preparing for spirituality if this is how we are treating the body? In the church, in the temple we don’t speak loudly, we speak in whispers. And in the head we are shouting, screaming all the time in our thoughts. What are we doing to the real temple? So, if we are really going to prepare for spirituality, we ought to treat this temple with the respect that it deserves, the sanctity it deserves. So, the very first step is to make it a sanctified place. Good thoughts. Good food.

On the matter of food, the mystics for a long time have said that it is good to have vegetarian food, food that does not involve killing of animals. They realized that life subsists on life. You

can't live on stones and on dirt. You have to live. Even plants have life. Even if you are a vegetarian, eating plants, you are still consuming life. But the life is of different degrees of consciousness, different degrees of awareness. The plants have a lower degree of consciousness, also a more simple element. Element of water is 90 percent in the plants. Single element, lower degree of consciousness and that food is extinguishing life at the lowest level. You go on to higher levels — insects and birds — the number of elements increases and the level of awareness increases. You go to mammals it's gone almost the same. And when you go to human beings, it's the highest. All five elements are there, and the highest level of awareness is there.

If you kill a human being, the penalty is greater than if you kill an animal. If you pluck a plant, the penalty is even less. The effect on meditation, which involves the power of concentrating your attention...because that's really the secret of meditation, is how to use your attention. And how to concentrate it where you belong, inside the head — that's the secret. How to use your attention which is the only maneuverable part of consciousness that we have. What is around us, what we can see, we can't change, but where we put our attention, we can change. We can look this side or that side or inside or outside. It is the power to move our attention that enables good meditation to take place. So therefore, if we have to move our attention inside, then it should be the simplest distraction on that attention. The power of concentrating attention is the secret of meditation. Now...but we use that power of attention every day. For example, when we read a book. Now if you read a book and you have a certain rate of reading it...say you read a book at one minute a page. That's your normal reading rate. And then you go and kill a man and come and read the same book. You won't even cover half the page in ten minutes or five minutes. What has happened? What has distracted your power of concentration is the extinguishing of life of another person, which sits with you. And no matter how hard-hearted you are, it still affects your power of concentration.

If you kill an animal, the distraction is less, the recovery time is less to get back to normal. Even if you pull a plant, pluck an apple, there is still a distraction, but it is so little the recovery is almost immediate. So, that is why these practitioners, the mystics who have practiced the spiritual path through meditation, they have recommended take the simplest of food. Not only simple food, basically vegetarian, vegetable food, they have also said take small quantities of that food. Because large quantities, even of vegetarian food, can be equally an impediment to meditation and concentration. So, take limited quantities. And I tell you this if you take, eat — just a general suggestion — if you eat half of what you are eating today, you'll be in better health. It's just a simple observation. We overeat. We don't need to. So, a preparation for that would be eat less, eat the simplest of food and think good things, keep good company. You are in preparation for the spiritual path. The basic thing is still your seeking, but your seeking will sparkle.

Then what will happen? If you are a seeker and following this method of preparation through your food, through your thoughts, through your company that you are keeping, you will find a human being in your life who will tell you, "Come along, we are on the same track."

Automatically. This is marvelous. In India people say that a *guru* or enlightened person who can take you up can never be found. Because they are hidden amongst ordinary, common people. They look ordinary people. You can never know. And those who claim to be gurus, which is a larger number, are not gurus at all. Because a true Master will never say he's a Master. He doesn't have to say that. He comes into your life through coincidence and doesn't have to say anything. So therefore, when your seeking is strong, that person comes into your life. They say in India when the *chela* is ready the guru appears. When a disciple is ready, the Master appears. They don't say when a disciple is ready, he'll find a Master. You can't find. If you can really know who a Master is, then you are a Master yourself. There is no other way to really know who a Master is. The Master reveals himself or herself to you in stages depending upon how much progress you make on the spiritual path. The Master is an ordinary person, exactly ordinary, sometimes more ordinary than most people. Therefore, how can you ever say who is a Master?

So, the Master comes into your life through coincidence because he knows who the seeker is, where the seeker is and can come there. If he cannot know who the seeker is, where the seeker is, he's not a Master. He's not the type of Master I'm talking of. I'm talking of a Perfect Living Master who has united himself in the Consciousness of all Totality. And therefore, he can see himself in everyone that he meets. He can not only go into the minds of people, he can go into the souls/spirits of people and be one with them. And such a person of course knows us better than we know ourselves. So, that is why when somebody like that comes into our life we begin to recognize, "There is something going on here," and then it moves on further. The number of coincidences begin to increase, and we begin to see these things didn't happen before and now they started happening. The more we seek, the more these things start happening. And therefore, gradually we come to know that this was a preparation we were making to meet the Master. And then the Master, at the right time when he thinks we are really ready, he initiates us. And I will talk to you little bit more later in the afternoon about what initiation and the actual method of meditation is which Perfect Living Masters have been teaching all the time.

And now we'll have a little break.

I want to mention this question and answer. You can give answers to my question or to your own questions. And you can ask a question on what I've just been saying in the last one hour or you can ask a question on what I've not been saying. It's up to you.

Oh, I asked a lot of questions. I will spend the whole day telling you how many questions I asked. I was a great skeptic. As I was growing up, I was a skeptic. I thought that why I found a

Master was because of my Dad. I said, "If I were born in another Christian family, I would be worshiping Christ. Born in a Hindu family, I would be worshiping the Hindu deities. Born in a Muslim family, I would be worshiping Allah. And depending on Christianity, which denomination — Methodist or Baptist or which one I would be born in. I'll just grow up believing that's the truth. And therefore, I've just been born in a family where my father followed somebody, therefore I've followed. I can't follow that. It's just blind, it's a blind faith." And I was not a believer in blind faith from a very early age. I said, "No, unless I can see something I can't believe it." And I still tell people today, "Do not believe anything unless you see it." And that's what the Great Master taught me also. He said, "True spirituality has no place for blind faith. True spirituality only goes step by step. Whatever you see, you believe. You take the next step after that. You do not have any scope for blind faith." Therefore, I was not willing to believe anything on blind faith. If I could see, yes, I would believe it. And that is why I asked lot of questions.

I asked him questions about the Truth, why I should think it's good for one person or not for another person. He answered that spirituality is not the privilege of any particular group. It's open to all humanity. He explained to me same thing that I am sharing with you, that the Truth is inside, and it doesn't belong to religion. It belongs to the spirit of a human being, and any religion you can be. And he pointed out that amongst his disciples were people from almost every country of the world, lot of them from United States. And he had people who believed in different religions. He never asked anyone to change their religion. He said, "Stay and follow your religion. Try to understand what your religion is saying." And they found out that the founders of all religions said the same thing — "the Truth is inside us." But when we go to an outside ritual of a religion we get deflected from true spirituality. Your religion teaches us how to repair the building; how to make more donations; how to, you know, pay for this thing or that thing; or that somebody else will pray for you. I can't believe that somebody else will pray for me better than I can pray. How come somebody says, "You send me twenty-five dollars and I will pray for you"? I mean, then I find that we have converted the spiritual path into religious business. And that was a big problem in my mind.

And the second problem was of course this concept of the soul being separated from the Creator and having to travel back through a spiritual journey in order to meet the Creator and then merge in the Creator. And the analogy given was that the soul is a drop of water, and the Creator is an ocean of water and that we'll one day go and merge in that ocean. Never appealed to me at all! And I questioned the Great Master on that, and I said, "I'm a drop. Okay, I acknowledge I'm a drop of water, but I am a drop of water. You want me to go and destroy myself by getting into this ocean? Where will I be? I'll be finished! At least as a drop I have some identity." I was very particular about identity. I said, "I have an identity and I lose it. What will the ocean gain by it? One drop will make no difference to it. Who will be going to be

winning? It's a lose-lose situation." And then he explained to me that "You are indeed a drop that never left the ocean, that you have lost the awareness that you are the ocean. And spiritual path is not a journey. Spiritual path doesn't make you move anywhere. Spiritual path stays you where you are, and you discover that you were always that, but you lost the awareness. And you shrunk your awareness to the level of a drop. When you expand your awareness, you become the ocean." The spiritual journey is a journey through the expansion of awareness and not what was made out in the books that I was reading. "Oh, you have a spiritual journey. Then you go from one stage to another."

And then the whole concept of stages I didn't like too much. And I questioned him how these stages function, that you are in one level, now you go to another higher level, another heaven will come up, then a third heaven will come up and we will go on rising like this, flying in the sky. I said, "Doesn't make any sense to me." "Oh, you can be able to fly from one place to the other." I said, "I can buy an airplane ticket. What's the big deal? To be able to fly somewhere doesn't make any sense to me unless there is some purpose in it." So, there was a lot of questions that I was asking. And the answer that he gave convinced me to a point.

But I was willing to go ahead and test out. I have been to more masters than anyone that I know. I have been converted to more religions than I know. I've been baptized. I've been to the synagogue. I've been to the mosque. I've been to all through that in the period of eight years of research. Eight years during my college days I went through all that. And therefore, today I can speak with some kind of experience behind me that I have seen all this. I have done the *Hatha* yoga, the *Kriya* yoga. I've done the *Kundalini* yoga. I've lived on sand and water. And I've lived on all kinds of things. I've taken plants that make you sexually impotent, that you can't do meditation unless you are not given up your lust and all that. I met all kinds of yogis. And Great Master answered all these questions that I was going through, as I went through them.

Eventually, in 1942, I asked him my last question about my internal experiences. I didn't have to ask any question after 1942. That's a long time back, if you think of it. And people have asked me questions since then all over the world, and the answers were there which he had given me earlier. So, how can I describe the beauty of this knowledge that he gave? The Great Master was indeed great. He answered everything and he said...he initiated me, and he said, "What I am sharing with you I got from my Master. It worked for me. I hope what I'm giving you works for you. If it doesn't, give it up." He didn't bind me down to a cult that now you are trapped in this, and you can't go anywhere. He said, "It worked for me. If it works for you, good. If you find something better than what I've given you, take it. No need to come back to me to get my permission. If somebody gives you a better spiritual gift, a better way, take it. But do me one favor," he said, "that when you get something better, come back and tell me so I'll also go and get it." The Great Master's words! I took him very literally. I've been searching till today. If

today I find something better, I'll take it and I'll go and report to him, "You take it too." That's the deal.

So therefore, he told me that this subject of spirituality is not based on blind faith. It's not based on somebody's statement saying, "God is sitting there, therefore you worship him." It's not based on that. It's based on personal realization within yourself. It's based on your own personal experience. It's based upon a wakefulness with certainty. It's not based upon conjecture or speculation at all. It's an actual experience that you have. And you have your own experience. Nobody can deny it, it's your experience. People, inexperienced people keep on saying... Supposing I have been to the Hawaii beach in Honolulu, and I have seen the beauty of that paradise there and I come back and people who have read books about it keep on commenting upon it. What will I say to them? They are making mistakes. They are misunderstanding what it's like. They don't know, they have never been there. I'll not be able to argue with them. I'll just smile. Sorry, they haven't been there.

There's a big difference between seeing a place and reading about it. But somehow, religion has put us into a state where we read, and we think we have got salvation. We have heard somebody give a sermon and we think we have got salvation. Hearing and reading doesn't give us salvation. Acting upon what they are telling us gives us salvation. We don't do that. We think just reading, keep on reading more and more, as if the books contain the whole thing. Well, the books do contain information. If I want to go to Hawaii and I read all the guidebooks on Hawaii, I've got all the information. I want to travel there by air, and I buy a timetable or time schedule of airlines. I get all the information. But supposing I keep on reading the time-schedule, will I reach there? I won't go anywhere. I'm just reading the book! But that's what we think. Religion has taught us that you just keep on reading, you're getting something, you're getting somewhere. So, Great Master gave lot of answers to my satisfaction gradually.

And it's a gradual process. I must say because I realized — and I still realize today — that the human mind automatically creates doubt. Every part of us has a function to perform. The mind's function is to be a skeptic, to create a doubt. For the sake of advancing towards Truth it creates a doubt. But we forget that part that the mind is creating skepticism and is creating a doubt so that we can overcome the doubt by knowledge and move forward. Not that we should be stuck in the doubt and not move forward. But that's what we do. The mind creates a doubt, and we are afraid, and we get stuck there. We don't move any forward. So, lots of things ran and Great Master clarified, and then I began to understand that the mind is doing its own job. I have to do my own. So, we do not stop the mind from thinking. Mind never stops thinking. If the mind were to stop thinking, we'd be dead. The thinking of the mind is like the beating of the heart in the body. When the heart stops, the body dies. It has to be kept beating all the time. It beats all the time so that the body is alive. The mind thinks all the time for the mind to be alive. If the mind is not alive, the senses cannot be alive. The senses are not alive,

the body cannot be alive. So, the thinking of the mind is a function of the mind. And the more you think the more doubts you have.

Unfortunately, that's the truth. I did go into long seclusion for some time as an experiment because I wanted to make sure that this is a verifiable science. It's not just a theory. It's a scientific thing that you can go within and have these experiences. So, there was a period when I said, "Okay, doesn't matter how long I have to meditate. I'll do it for long periods." And I did it. But then I discovered something else. It's not merely the time that you spend in meditation, it's the intensity of the seeking with which you go into meditation. And secondly, it's the absence of distractions during meditation that help you. If you are distracted all the time, if you have a problem occurring which is bothering you, and you want to meditate and the problem keeps on bothering you, you can't meditate. Doesn't matter how long you meditate.

Indeed, there is a story. There was a judge from Kapurthala state, Diwan Daryai Lal, a disciple of Great Master. And he left his job after retirement and he came, and he said, "I'll be your doorman." He had been a judge. He had been a finance minister of his state. But he wanted to be doorman for the Great Master, and he stood outside the door. One day, he said, "Master," he told Maharaj Sawan Singh, he said "Master, I have been very happy to be your doorman, but I missed out on one thing. I missed out on meditation, and I should be able to catch up. This summer you are not going to your holiday resort in Dalhousie which is a hill station. And can you give me the keys of your house, so I'll go and meditate three months straight and catch up with the lost time?" Great Master said, "Oh, sure. Sure. Here are the keys."

So, he took the keys and went to the resort where Great Master used to go every summer when it was very hot. And he went there, and he said, "Now is the time for me to meditate three months at a stretch and catch up with the lost time." As soon as he opened the house, some maintenance people came, "Thank God you are here. We have to take care of the plumbing." He said, "Okay. Do it quickly, quickly." Then another man comes in. Then other *satsangis* come in. They said, "Oh, we are glad you are here." And he spent three months with less meditation than he was doing at the *dera*! Thoroughly disappointed he went back to the Great Master, and he said, "Master, I failed." He returned the keys and he said, "Master, I failed." The Master laughed. He said, "How did you fail?" He said, "I thought I'll catch up on my meditation. There were so many distractions there. I couldn't even meditate what I normally do here."

Great Master said, "No, you know you didn't fail. You succeeded." He said "So, how did I succeed?" "You succeeded in find that effort is not the only way to go on this path." So, he made another point that there are two things that affect us, our progress on the path: Effort that we make and the Grace that the Master gives us, if without Grace we think with our effort we can do everything (which is the mind's belief). The mind believes that our effort leads to

everything. We are used to that. We are trained to do that. We are told that you must make your effort to get any results. So, he said he made the best effort and he failed. Great Master said, "This was a proof to you that effort is not the only thing on this path, that there is something else, that effort must be accompanied by Grace of the Master which is revealed to you by the love and devotion that you have during your meditation."

Many people forget that true meditation, spiritual meditation, does not succeed unless you do meditation with love and devotion. The reason for that is very simple: that whereas thinking, reasoning, understanding belong to the mind and they are all parts of mental functions. Love and devotion are not mental. They are spiritual. All love and devotion is spiritual. And therefore, if you be on the spiritual path without love and devotion, you are not really on the spiritual path. You are in a mental game. So, lot of people think that the meditation is just a matter of putting your effort in a certain bodily position and using a mantra and keep on repeating...you'll get something. You get nothing by that. You can just keep on repeating. It's like Great Master used to say, "Like trying to churn water to hope butter will come out of it." It doesn't. So, we are doing an empty meditation if love and devotion is missing in it. The spiritual meditation requires love and devotion in it.

And what is love and devotion? We don't know how to love. We know how to attach ourselves. Our attachments we call love. And we don't know how to love. Therefore, love is something that is pulled from the other side. That pulls us. When we are attracted to something, we are being pulled by love. When a human being comes and pulls us, attracts, then the love is flowing from that side. Our being pulled is not that we are loving. If we try to love, it becomes a mental game. Therefore, when love pulls us and we respond to it, the response is called devotion. And that is why the term love and devotion is used together. Love and devotion. Love comes from the pull that we get, and devotion is our response to it. Without love and devotion there is no good meditation. In good meditation you must have love and devotion.

There was a disciple of Great Master in a city called Ludhiana in India. He had a factory where they used to manufacture, you know, fabricated things or something. And he was initiated by Great Master. I used to visit that place sometimes. And one day one of the local masters — there were several masters there — one of the masters was visiting his house because even Great Master had visited his house one day. So, out of that courtesy that he is an old *satsangi* that master was visiting, I happened to be there, and the master showed lot of courtesy to me. And then people following the master were asking me questions. So, this man whose name was Hira Singh, he asked me a question after they had left.

He said, "I want to ask you a question. You and I have been initiated by the same Master, Great Master. I have been following the rules of the game, two-and-a-half hour meditation every day for forty years. I have been a strict vegetarian, teetotaler, no alcohol, no drugs, led a very pious,

holy life and done forty years of meditation and got nothing. How come you seem to be giving discourses and talking to people about your experiences and so on?" I said, "First of all, let me clarify that I am like a parrot and just speak what the Master told me. So, don't attribute anything to me. Secondly, you have asked a very fundamental question which you should have asked the Great Master. After all, he was alive for some years after you were initiated. Why didn't you ask him?" He said, "I did ask him." I said, "What did he say?" "He just smiled." I said, "Then that wasn't a good enough answer. Then did you ask somebody else?" "I asked several masters the same question." I said, "If Master didn't give you an answer, what makes you think that I can give an answer to you?" He said, "I saw other people asking questions. You gave answers to them. So, I am taking the courage to ask you this question."

I said, "You know, it's a very difficult question. I have to refer it to my Master. When difficult questions come up in my life, I have no recourse but to go back to Great Master. So, I will put this to Great Master and get you an answer one day." He said, "Come, do it now." I said, "No, it takes time." "How much time?" I said, "It'll take six months. I'll give you the answer in six months." I left. So, after six months I visited him again and I said that the answer I got is very simple, "that what you did for forty years was your mind telling you, 'Do put your effort like this and you'll get it.' The element of love and devotion was missing. You did not see the picture of your Master and ask for His Grace and see the love flowing from him during your meditation. If you had done that, the result would have been different. Try it now. Never too late." I visited him again after six months. He made more progress in six months than he made in forty years! So, that's why it's so important that this spiritual path is a path of love and devotion. Without love and devotion, it's hollow. It's a mental game then. Becomes just a mind game. So, just keep this in mind. And love and devotion doesn't mean that you can do what you want. You have to be pulled by it. A person has just sent me an email yesterday, "There's a *guru*. I want to go and get initiated. Should I go?" I said, "Sure! Go wherever a guru pulls you. Oh, that's the secret." If you are pulled by somebody, that's where you go. If there's no pull and you say you have to foist yourself upon somebody and say, "You are my Master," that doesn't work. The Master pulls you.

Yes?

Q. You mentioned that the mind creates doubt and then doubt creates fear. I would like you to address the problem of what you do with fear. How do you respond to fear in a way that frees you from it?

A. We deal with the problem of fear by going to the root of fear, which is the mind. The real fear goes away when we are not dependent on the mind, when we are able to ignore the mind. Through meditational practice you can come to a stage where you totally ignore the mind. The mind thinks and you say, "You keep on thinking. I am going beside you on my own track." The

mind says, "Do this. Do this." Don't do it and you will see that the mind ultimately, when it finds it doesn't have its own way, it begins to follow what you wanted it to do, and fear also disappears with it. A person who meditates and goes to this point where he transcends the mind or is able to ignore the mind is totally fearless. There is no fear in that person. And I've seen that.

Yes?

Q. I don't know exactly how to phrase this question. When you came in, you looked at us and I think you looked at me.

A. Yes.

Q. And tonight I will stand in front of the crowd, and I will try what you did. Never having tried it before because ordinarily I am avoiding that while doing what I do when I stand in front of you. And I was wondering if you could say, or if you wanted to say, what it is that you could see when you looked at me?

A: I saw a friend in you. I saw you are my friend and I saw everyone. If you noticed I saw each one who's sitting here. It was a beautiful view. It's wonderful. I saw the seekers sitting here. I saw the seekers who are ready. It was a very beautiful experience for me. And I recognized you. Good enough? Welcome.

Yes?

Q. You were talking earlier about Perfect Masters and that really only one true Master can recognize another, and my question is, did Sawan Singh ever share the dais with somebody else that was purported to be a Perfect Master like Sawan Singh?

A: Yes, he did. He did. He recognized another Perfect Living Master in his lifetime. So have some other Perfect Living Masters recognized other Perfect Living Masters. The point I was making is that if we just look at a person and try to find out what his level of his realization is, we can't do it, because we have only realized as far as we have ourselves realized. There are a large number of masters today in this world. In India particularly there are a lot of masters. Great Master used to say even in his time there were more masters than disciples in the country. Masters, mastership has become a big business too. This religious teaching and spiritual teaching is becoming big business.

Whereas Perfect Living Masters have never charged for their services ever. They have never claimed to be Masters. They have never gone out performing public miracles to show to the people that they are Masters. They never do that. They don't have to. Their job is very specific. The Perfect Living Masters are here to pick up their marked souls. They know where they are. They will appear before those souls by coincidences. By circumstances. And those souls, step by

step, gradually will recognize they are the masters for whom they have been waiting. You may come across several masters in your life. And a master will take you only as far as he's gone. He cannot take you more than that. But if your seeking is still there, you'll still move on and meet a Perfect Living Master. That means a Perfect Living Master is bound to come into your life if your seeking is not satisfied. So that's why they respond to the seekers. There was a friend of mine, class fellow, and he took me to several masters. And I would tell him, "This master has reached this level. This master has been doing the yoga of the six chakras. This master has done the *kundalini*." He said, "How do you know all that?" I said, "I have done it myself. So, I know what they are talking about, what they are going through." What the Great Master taught and what helped me till today is something that I've not found anywhere else. If I find something better, I will switch, as I said. But not only have others not taught what he taught they've not even described what he taught. Not even in physical description. So, that's why it's a rare event. There are not too many Perfect Living Masters. Masters galore.

There was an engineer in Burma. His name was Trilok Chand. And he was...we called him "engineer sahib" because he was a civil engineer, roads engineer. He was a great seeker, and he was trying to find the yogis and swamis and gurus anywhere where he could find the Truth. So, he heard that in Madras in India, the city of Madras, there was a swami who could take you to higher levels of awareness. He was a very stingy person, this engineer. Stingy, you understand? Stingy means when he held a one rupee note in his hand, he would say, "Shall I spend it or not spend it? Spend it, not spend it? Not spend it." Back in your pocket! By that process even in his job as an engineer he had accumulated thirty thousand rupees in his bank account. And he packed up his belonging and went to Madras and went and met that swami who said that he can take him to higher levels of consciousness and awareness. And he took him to be a Perfect Living Master. And so, he said, "Please, swami, initiate me. Give me this gift so I can reach the highest level of my True Home."

And the swami said, "Have you heard the story of Ashtavakra and King Janak?" I don't know how many of you have heard that story. When King Janak wanted enlightenment, Ashtavakra asked for three things. He said, "Give me your wealth, give me your body and give me your mind — and I'll give you enlightenment." So, he said, "My requirement is the same." The Swami said, "Give me your wealth, give me your body and give me your mind. I will give you enlightenment." Now in spite of the fact this man was so careful about spending one rupee, he was willing to give anything that the swami wanted. The swami said, "How much money do you have? Let's start with wealth first." He said, "I've got thirty thousand bucks." He said, "Transfer those thirty thousand bucks into my account. I want to build a temple." This man...look at the seeking he had. He transferred all his money into the swami's account who started building his temple. He said, "Now give me your body." He said, "What do I do?" And the swami said, "To do the meditation that I teach, it is connected with breath work. And you have to breathe

alternately from one nostril and the other nostril. Alternately. Once from one side, once from the other. That's how my meditation will work. And in order to do that, you are not allowed to use your hands to close the nose one way and like this, because then all the attention will go into the hands. It's an internal thing that you have to do. So, the only internal thing, how you can do it, is to use your tongue. You have to put your tongue backwards and from inside switch from one side to the other." And he said, "To do that the tongue must be cut from its tendons so it can go out."

So, the swami opened his mouth and showed his tongue like a snake that came out. He said, "See, I've got this surgery done and I now...I can twist my tongue back and I do the meditation. You'll have to undergo this. And because it's a body sacrifice (like you have given me your money), you are giving me your body. It will be a painful experience. I'll not just cut the tendons with a knife. I'll sandpaper it. And to make it more painful, I will not use sandpaper, I will use that nettle rash leaf, which is terrible, you know." I don't know if you have heard of that leaf which has got stings on it and stings so badly. And he said, "I'll do it slowly every day. It will take a month for your tongue to be separated and then you can push it back and meditate." That man, Trilok Chand, underwent the whole torture. For one month he screamed and he went through the torture. His tongue was separated and then even learned how to meditate. And he was able to see some lights and some colors and so on. But he was not satisfied. He said, "Master, I want something more. I want some real stuff." He said, "My child, whatever I could give you I have given you. You have to find somebody else for anything more." So, he left.

This man Trilok Chand eventually came to Great Master and was initiated and made great progress. We used to all admire him and respect him for his progress. One day he was sitting with the Great Master. (In a small company, in the evening, we used to sit.) I was there also. And he said to Great Master, "Master, had I known that you are the Perfect Master that I have to come to, I would not have given those thirty thousand bucks to that swami there." Great Master laughed and he said, "Trilok Chand, you don't know. The day you came to me, I transferred those thirty thousand to my account." Then Great Master explained that no step that you have taken in pursuance of your seeking ever goes waste. It doesn't matter what you have been doing so long as you as you have been pursuing your seeking of the Truth. You have gone one step to the other. All of it has been accumulated when you find the Perfect Master, and all of it counts. So, you have not wasted any time. People ask me my advice that there are so many masters — which master should we follow? And I say, "Follow any master that pulls you because he will take you in the right direction. Only keep in mind that the master says, "Go within." If a master says, "Go outside to a pilgrimage or something," I won't recommend that because I don't believe that the real Truth lies outside anywhere. It all lies inside. If somebody is willing to take you on a pilgrimage within yourself, accept that master. Doesn't matter who that

master is. He'll take you as far as he can. If your seeking is still there, a Perfect Living Master will find you.

Yes?

Q. What is the difference, the differentiation between Masters' marked souls and unmarked souls?

A. It is said, you must have heard that before, the saying is, "Many are called but few are chosen." Have you heard that? Many are called, few are chosen. In that statement the "chosen" represents the marked souls. The many are called means the many who happen to meet a Master or who the Master is able to see in his lifetime as a physical being, who come in contact with him but are not marked souls. The marked souls are guaranteed to be picked up by that Master. They have been given that assurance before they even were born into any physical or other forms. Even as spirits, as souls they got the assurance and they are the ones.

The story is told in the book called *Anurag Sagar* which means the "Ocean of Love." The story is told of creation in the form of an allegory, in the form of parables and stories that the souls, which were all blissfully dancing around the Creator, were part of the Creator in their True Home, and then they said, "Okay." One of the sons out of the sixteen sons, major heirs of the Creator sitting there, decided to have his own kingdom set up. Many souls said, "We'd like to go and have an adventure in this new kingdom that he's setting up. The fifth son, called Passion, is setting up some kingdom. We want to go there." And they said, "Yes." Lot of souls, millions of souls just rushed to go there. And some said, "What if we get trapped there?" So they turned back to the Creator and say, "Father, we are your children. We are going out on adventure. What if we get lost?" And the Father said, "If you get lost, don't worry. I'll come myself and bring you back." And the description there is those are the marked souls. And they were given an assurance right from the beginning of creation of this universe.

So when these...in this universe when a Perfect Living Master comes, he comes in the form of a human being like ourselves. And therefore, his role is limited. His message is for all humanity. The Truth he speaks about is for everybody in the world. But his task as a Master is to definitely pick up those marked souls. And when he picks up those marked souls, he initiates them and takes them back Home. And they do not come back into this cycle of re-birth again. It does not mean that they go away immediately. Many of them are also picked up and initiated but they are not the marked souls of that Master. They still find another Master, maybe another Perfect Living Master, maybe not in this life. In the next life. Maybe in the third life, depending upon the preparation they have made on the spiritual path. But once the final Master picks them up, after which they are never re-born, that was the marked soul. Now, that is a good story. You know all this Truth has to be told in the form of stories because there are no really words to describe situations beyond time and space. So we make these stories. But the truth of the

matter is, and I read that, which makes sense. He does not call the qualified; he qualifies the ones he called. He does not pick up marked souls, he picks up souls that get marked, and that they get marked from *ab initio*, from the day of Creation and not from that day. When a Perfect Living Master intervenes in our life, in anything, he does not intervene from that point. His intervention is to change the destiny from beginning. Completely beginning. And therefore the whole thing is as if it was always like that. It's a beautiful, beautiful way things happen.

We were talking of free will earlier, and I gave you an example of my own experience that somebody could tell me exactly what I'll be thinking in the next five minutes. So, I discovered that I really don't have free will. But if everything is written in advance, can a Master come and change it? A good question. If a Master has the power and he's the real Creator in human form, he should be able to change the script of any of the destinies. Any time. Does he change it? Well, there is a script written at the physical plane. We live a life in which we have plans for the physical world, in which we think we have free will. What is recorded as pre-determined is not recorded here. It is recorded in the astral stage. Only when you go in meditation to the astral stage you can see that what you thought you are deciding is already been decided. And you are just going through the motions of it. If a Master intervenes, he changes that astral script. When he changes the astral script, the physical things change as if from the beginning. But you go to the causal level, it also records that the Master will change it. Even that's pre-recorded! Then you say that at the causal level it's pre-recorded, then what about the intervention which changes the causal level? Then you go to the spiritual level, there of course the whole thing was made by the same Consciousness. And that is not past or present or future. That past, present and future are the same. And at that time, when there is no time, an intervention there is an intervention here at any, at any level. So, then you find that the Master changes right from that level. And that's a change that Master can say, "I always had that change made at the spiritual level." It's a very difficult thing to explain in physical language because we are talking of things beyond time and space. And we have to make stories.

Soamiji of Agra, Seth Shiv Dayal Singh from whom the Radha Soami movement started, he used to give discourses and in his discourses he used to describe. He made stories. He said, "In *Par Brahm* and *Sach Khand* (where there's no time and space), there are tall trees several miles high all laden with rubies and diamonds. You know his *satsangs* were attended by women a lot because they heard that if we meditate we'll go into trees that are laden with rubies and diamonds! He was just giving an example. It's an attractive place. So, we can't describe it. And even the yogis who went only to the second or third stage said, "*Neti. Neti.*" We can't describe it. The only description is, "It's not this. It's not this. It's not this." There's nothing that we can compare it with." So, when we are talking of those experiences, it's very difficult to give even a correct analogy. So, we make stories. We all make stories to describe these things. Even these levels of Consciousness, which I said to you were one of the bothersome things and I

questioned Great Master. He said there are no levels of Consciousness. There are layers of Consciousness. Not levels. But our mind likes levels. The mind likes classification.

As a student in college I won the students' election. I won the president's election. I became the president of the students' union. You know how I did it? Everybody spoke of their great plans. I said, "I have a ten-point program." I didn't even know what the ten points were. Then I began to think of ten points. I won! The mind loves classification. The mind loves this number game. And if you can point out it is one, two, three, four, five — there are five levels of Consciousness...eight levels...somebody said there are sixteen levels — of course this can be used to advantage.

The Great Master went to a town called Karachi, now in Pakistan. And it was his first visit and some of us accompanied him. I was fortunate in going to Karachi. There my aunt and uncle, my uncle who was my dad's elder brother, he was a meteorologist, a weatherman working there. And he invited Great Master to his house actually. And when he invited the Great Master...they used to, my uncle and aunt used to go to a swami who was very good in *ayurvedic* medicines. They used to go to him for medicines, ayurvedic medicines but he used to give discourses on the six *chakras* of various kinds of chakra meditation. So, they would listen to his discourses sometimes. Then, when the Great Master accepted their invitation to go to Karachi and stay in their house, they felt very happy. And they went and told that swami, "Swamiji, our Master from Punjab is coming here, and we would like you to have his *darshan*." Swamiji said, "Certainly. Bring him to me, I'll give my blessings to him."

Now they were surprised that the swami wanted to give blessings. We thought the swami will get the blessings! It was a little bit of a dilemma and a quandrum for them. What to do now? So, they decided that when the Great Master is there in their house that they will invite the swami also for lunch so both of them can meet there. So, the lunch was arranged and Great Master was staying in their house in the bedroom. The swami came and Great Master...they made the swami sit on the love seat which had only two seats. They wanted the Great Master to sit next to the swami. So swami with his saffron-colored robes and a saffron turban and a little muffler kind of thing (also saffron-colored cloth) around him which he used to hold with his hands and walk with you know a little pride. I tried to walk like that also. It's good, you know. You have something around your neck and walk with that. Beautiful swami. Bright eyes. And the swami came and sat down. Then they called Great Master, "That swamiji has come and lunch is ready. Would you like to come out?" He said, "Yes." He came. "Master, sit down." So, Great Master sat next to the Swami and my uncle introduced him.

He said, "Master this is the Swamiji, Swami Brahmanand Ji, that we have been talking to you about." And Great Master bowed like this. Swamiji raised his hands and said, "I bless you." We watched the scene. We said we saw the swami blessing the Great Master. And we were a little

taken aback that we didn't expect this to happen. But Great Master took it in stride and after a while he says, "Swamiji, it's a pity that so many swamis have been lost in the six chakras below the eyes and none of them are familiar with the eighteen chakras." Swamiji said, "I didn't understand. What eighteen chakras are you talking about?" He said, "Well, six chakras are of the *Pinda*, of the physical body. They arise from the bottom, the six *chakras* in these centers, and they go and end at the eye center. The six chakras of *Anda* and *Brahmanda* lie behind them, and they take you right to the center of the head. The six chakras of *Par Brahm* and *Sach Khanda* lie above that. Haven't you heard of these eighteen chakras?" And Swamiji said, "Sir, I must tell you I have never heard of it. Can you explain them a little further to me about these eighteen chakras?" And he said, "You know, we are here for a limited time. You'll have to come to the *dera* in Beas so I can explain to you." And they left after lunch. Swami was so struck by this theory of eighteen chakras, which he had never heard before, he told his disciples, "I am packing up. I am going to Punjab. That man with the white beard has caused big confusion in my mind about eighteen chakras and I know only six chakras, or seven at the most if I count the head chakra. What are these eighteen chakras about? I have to go there." He reached the *dera*. And he was practicing *ayurvedic* medicines.

At that time I was practicing some homeopathic medicines, so we use to sit together and compare notes sometimes. The day he arrived and Great Master was informed, "Swamiji, Swami Brahmanand has arrived," he said, "He should be put in the best suite in the guesthouse. And he will sit next to me in *satsang*. And he will be allowed to see me twenty-four hours, whenever he wants." Now these instructions had never been given for any other VIP. Several VIPs would come to Great Master but never such an honor. So, Swamiji came with his muffler and he tested whether it was right that he could go and see the Master any time. Midnight he walked up, "I've come to see the Master!" Oh, the doors were opened. Master was awakened, "Swamiji has arrived." "Come on, Swamiji. Most welcome." He said, "It works. The promise given to me is working." He stayed and enjoyed himself. And then Great Master said, "Swamiji, you sit next to me in discourse."

So, Swamiji sat next to him and Great Master discoursed, "All these swamis lost in the six chakras, how can they know the truth when they are confined to the *pinda*? They are lost because they don't have any idea." And this swami was looking at him like this, sitting on the stage. We were watching them. He's looking like that. After few days he says, "Master, I have a little problem." And Great Master said, "What is your problem Swamiji?" He said, "When I sit next to you I have to bend my head all the time to listen to you. I'm having a pain in the neck." "Ohhhh," Great Master said, "I've also noticed that. I think you should sit in front." So he gave him a chair to sit in front. So, the chair was right below because that was a high dais from where the Great Master was giving discourses. So, he would look up like this, and after a few days he complained again. He said, "Master, I have a little problem." "Swamiji, what is your

problem now?" He says, "When I sit in front I have to raise my head like this. So, I have a pain in the neck." Great Master said, "I also noticed that. Move his chair twenty paces behind." So, his chair went in the middle of the *satsang* now. And after few days he says, "Master, I have a problem." "What is your problem now?" "I sit on a chair. People behind me are sitting on the floor. It's not right." Great Master said, "I also noticed that. Put him on the floor."

After couple of weeks he was sitting with everybody. Had to stand in the line to go into the house, was no longer staying in that guesthouse. And he talked to me. He said, "This Master of yours is a great diplomat. I have never seen anyone like this." That Swamiji said, "Had he asked me that I'll have to sit on the ground and do like this, I would have gone away back home. He gave me all the honor. He won my heart. He's zapped me completely. And after zapping me, I have fallen in love with him. I can't go anywhere. A great diplomat! And now he has given me a little hut to practice ayurveda." And I was next to him doing my homeopathic and so we used to compare notes. But the swami was a very, very, very great seeker and he left everything in order to practice the meditation. So, this number about chakras Great Master used very effectively on the Swami. Though the truth is that how can you count numbers when there is no time and there is no space? But we tell stories. We all tell stories.

Thank you very much. We'll have a break for lunch.