



Self

Individual and Universal

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INTRODUCTION

The discoveries of science have made the modern world too small. Many centuries ago the civilizations of the East and the West were unknown to each other. But today, the ways of communication are very advanced and people living in one corner of the world can know what is going on in the other. Whatever good or bad is happening in one part of a country is well known by the people of almost all the countries on this planet. There are human welfare societies formed in all countries. Whenever there is a natural calamity or a manmade disaster in a country, all kinds of help is made available to those that suffer. This is a clear indication that a new age has already begun. People have started realising the necessity to live peacefully and maintain global brotherhood irrespective of their religion, culture and nationality.

People that have managed to attain certain luxuries in life, feel as though they have attained heaven on earth. Some of them even do not like to feel the necessity to analyze what is good or bad, they see only their personal gains and comforts. There are certain people whose life is luxurious but they are careful to do good deeds and they abstain from doing bad deeds. There exists another class of people who believe that scriptures talk about God so positively and firmly can not be meaningless. How God can be a living and potential element, I would like to throw a bit of light in this small book.

Before we get into the thick of things, however I would like to add a few words of gratitude for the people who were a part of this book in numerous ways... These people gave unending support right from the point that the idea of the book was conceived. First and foremost, I am really grateful to my spiritual Guru, His Holiness Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji. It is with his blessings and inspiration that I could write this book. He is the one who revealed God to me and gave me the vision to understand what religion actually wants to teach the mankind.

I wish to thank my wife Mrs. Santosh Verma. who always persuaded and inspired me that I must compile my thoughts into a book. Although I had the ideas within me, their compilation and then giving them the shape of a book was done by my children, Mrs. Ranjna Verma, Mr. Pawan Verma, Mrs. Sonia Verma and Mr. Rajeev Verma.

And finally, my heartfelt appreciation to Mrs. Sonia Verma (my daughter-in-law, and daughter of Mr. Surjit Arneja, Gen. Secretary, Sant Nirankari Mission, Canada), for sub-editing this book.

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FOREWORD

As God-knowledge (Brahm-Gyan) dawns in the life of a person with the benign grace of Satguru (the True Master), he begins to understand Self also. As the Head of the Sant Nirankari Mission Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj puts it, the knowledge of God (Parmatma) is essential for the knowledge of Self (Atma). The author of this book, Rev. Surinder Pal Verma Ji from Toronto in Canada, a distinguished Missionary of the Mission has described Atma as the Individual Self and Parmatma as the Universal Self. Hence the title **"Self - Individual and Universal"**.

Rev. Verma Ji first seeks to explain the difference between the physical self (the body) and the spiritual self (the soul) and their significance vis-a.-vis each other. While he gradually proceeds towards the Universal Self (God) he explains the constituents of the human body and discusses their origin, evolution, functions and co-relationship at length.

At the same time the learned author does not lose sight of the universally acknowledged truth that this knowledge of God and Self can be attained only from the Messenger of God of the time whom he describes as 'Incarnation' and 'Lord Master'. Then Rev. Verma Ji takes up the spirituality-related subjects like Love, Faith, Devotion, Meditation, Salvation and so on. An important feature of the book is that both religion and science have been kept in view throughout. Consequently the Creator as well as the Creation (the universe) get explained in a very lucid way.

Rev. Verma Ji has very rightly stated that Wisdom is a divine trait. So, when we are able to say something wise, it is all due to the grace of God or Satguru. He is, therefore, all the time conscious of this act of grace and grateful to His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj.

I congratulate Rev. Surinder Pal Verma Ji on behalf of the Publications Department of the Sant Nirankari Mandal on this very successful attempt and giving to our esteemed readers a valuable piece of writing on a very delicate subject of fundamental significance in the realm of spirituality. It is hoped that the readers interested in the literature of this Mission directly or indirectly, particularly our Preachers . will find it very useful, simply because the book seeks to discuss 'spirituality' without referring to any kind of ritualism or dogmatism usually attached to religion. Here ' religion' means science of spiritualism and 'meditation' an all the time concentration on the Formless One - Nirankar (God).

The book may be received with all the more love by our esteemed readers in USA and Canada, because the learned author has taken special care of their needs while using the English language. However, it does not mean that others may find it less interesting.

I must also express my grateful thanks to all the Hon'ble Members of the Screening Committee for Books and Manuscripts who discussed every chapter of the book with the

author and helped the Department to publish it in its present form. I pray to His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj to bless Rev. Verma Ji and other members of his family who inspired and helped him to compile the manuscript, so that they serve the Mission and its literature with greater and greater ability, devotion and dedication in future also. May Baba Ji bless the Members of Screening Committee also.

Kirpa Sagar
Member Incharge Publications

Delhi,
February 19,2005

Love

Love is a boundless force that binds not only humans but also all the other species, as well. Love is expressed through the eyes, face, speech and action. Eyes are not only for vision; rather they emit a type of energy. They express the feelings of the heart to convey whatever feeling it feels, such as, love, hatred, anger, confusion, pain, pleasure, happiness and so on. Similarly, our facial expressions are also meant to indicate our feelings of love, anger, hatred, contentment and so on. For example, a smile on the face with the widening of the lips signifies a feeling of joy, or even love and happiness. Another mode of expression is through our speech. Through the kind and sweet words that we speak, we can express the feelings of love or adoration. Sometimes however, we may not say it to each other, or express it through our eyes, we may do something that is for the betterment of another. That action then is also an expression of how we feel for that person, be it love or, if we do something to hurt another we may be expressing, hate.

Love is a gift from God given to all creatures of the universe. Time and again prophets have taught the lesson of love to all the human beings, at different periods of time, in different countries and through different languages. What God really wants is to unite human society and keep it bound with the chain of love. Lord Jesus Christ said, "Love thy neighbor". If everyone were to love his or her neighbor, love would spread everywhere, and human life can become a true paradise.

Human psychology is the same everywhere, irrespective of country, faith or religion. People share many psychological traits such as that of fear, pain, uncertainty, confusion, quarreling nature and ambition. Humans have become mechanical by repeating the same types of acts and making life a daily routine. Certain types of belief create a pattern for people. Is being a patron of a certain ideology, love? Can we call pleasure, love? We are attached to our family, friends, and relatives. Is this attachment, love? What is the cause of attachment? We are attached to particular people, to ideologies, to wealth or many other things in life. Do we try to attach ourselves to somebody to overcome loneliness? Why is somebody attached to his wife? Why does somebody love his wife? One gets repeated pleasure in attaching himself to his wife, such as the pleasure of possession, and the fulfillment of desires and expectations. Can we call this love? Can someone say he truly loves his wife all the time? What happens if his desires and expectations are not met with? Will he still love his wife? Or will he get a divorce? Does this not seem like a love based on selfishness? Can a man think beyond his personal desires and expectations, or his personal pleasure of possession? Can a man still love his wife, when his desires and expectations are not fulfilled? If one can, then we can say he genuinely loves his wife, and this type of love is exceptional.

Loving those that we have a relation with is partial love not whole love. Seeing as your wife, your children and your parents are yours, you consider them as your own, you are attached to them, and so you love them. Attachments to some things and non-attachment to others is considered partial love. Can there be love when there is attachment? If we have to give a reason or an explanation for our love, it is not whole love.

I remember an incident from the time when I lived in India. I was attending a large religious gathering in Delhi in 1997, Annual Nirankari Sant Smagam, and I noticed a ten-year-old girl crying. I asked her why was she sad and she replied, "I have lost my mom". I was with a friend, Mr. Mohinder Singh Jolly. We asked the girl her name and address and we reached at

her temporary residence. Her parents were not there but we left her with a lady that she knew. The girl's face expressed happiness and satisfaction, the same impression that Mr. Jolly and I had on our faces and in our minds. We did not have any relation or attachment with the child but we still felt a hidden love for her in our hearts. What kind of love is this? Do we call it partial love or whole love? Of course it is human duty also to help and love everyone, but everybody does not realize and perform his duty towards mankind.

Sometimes we do not like something or somebody and slowly feelings of hatred and anger creep in. At the same time we may like something or somebody, and feelings of love start to arise. This means that there is a difference in our thinking. Our thinking changes according to the relevant circumstances. That is why we like one thing and dislike the other. This kind of love, and thinking, is also partial love not whole love.

Parents may show more love towards one child who is residing with them but it does not mean they do not love their other children, who live elsewhere. Their love and affection is the same for all of their children. Parents do not differentiate or divide their love among their own children; their thinking and their love remains the same for all of their children. It is often observed that parents love their children equally but they tend to be more inclined towards the one who is less fortunate or less capable. It does not mean that their love is partial or not equal for all of their children. They love their able or fortunate children very much, and at the same time they feel for the child that is not in an equally good position. The difference does not lie in the love itself rather it is in the expression of it. If expression of love for all the children is above the ego of the parents and impartial then it has to be equal and whole. Therefore, the parents' love for their children is not partial rather it is whole.

We find dissimilarity in nature also. In a garden, we see different kinds of flowers with different colors, different fragrances and different beauty, yet they are all adorable. We find dissimilarity in all kinds of flowers but we praise them all, and love them all irrespective of their dissimilarity. We have to love all equally and hate no one, only then will there be whole love. Only then we can have the feelings of unity among diversity.

Lord Masters and prophets from all corners of the world have taught humanism and universal brotherhood. They teach us to love all and hate none. This is the kind of love that is complete, whole and without partiality.

BISR GAYEE SABH TAAT PARAYEE
JAB TE SADH SANGAT MOHE PAYEE
NA KO BAIRI NA HI BEGANA
SAGAL SANG HAM KO BAN AYEE

- Adi Granth: 1299

In the above quote, Guru Arjun Dev ji says, since when I have come into contact with saints, I feel no body is an enemy or stranger, rather I regard everybody as mine. Nirankari Baba Hardev Singhji says:

SANTSABHI KO EK DJUSHTI SE DEKHTE HAIN
AUR SABHI SE PYAR KARTE HAIN

In this Baba Ji highlights the point that saints view everybody equally and love everybody without discrimination.

PREM KI BHASHA SABHI SAMAJTE HAIN
PREM HI PRABHU BHAGTON KI PEHCHAAN HAI

Again Baba Ji says that, everybody understands the language of love. Furthermore he says that love is the true identity of God's followers.

These quotations indicate a vision, which is one and complete for all. This is the vision of God; attribute of God and anyone who attains it is great like God. This is the kind of love that exists in the hearts of great saints, sages and prophets, which is whole and never partial. This is the kind of love that God wants all human beings to accomplish and practice. This is the message of love that God delivers through His messengers.

The question we need to ask ourselves is whether we obey our spiritual teachers or prophets or do we simply praise their scriptures? If we were to obey our prophets, there would not be any war, any power show, any arms race or any terrorism. This is the human dilemma, which needs to be resolved. We praise our prophets, and study the holy scriptures deeply but we do not follow them practically. If at all, we prefer listening to what our ego tells our mind to do not like anything that suppresses our ego, and we do not follow everything we read or recite. In general, human beings follow the system and ways of partial love, the way of disparity, the way of loving one and hating another. However, in doing so we are not living by God's will, and this, the goal of whole love, we must all try to accomplish, in other words, that of whole love. Realizing the self and then living in it (the whole love) is essential to practise true and whole love.

* * *

SELF

Brahm Gyan Se Hi Aatm Gyan Sambhav Hai

(Self-realization is possible only through God-realization)

- Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji

In general, we identify the 'Self' or 'I' by the physical body. This is mankind's greatest ignorance. We may say that the mind is the main operator of the physical body. I remember an incident of 1999. Somebody rang up the bell and I opened the door and saw a missionary and his wife. I requested them to get in and be seated. After a bit of formality of offering them cold drink and snacks I asked them the purpose of their visit. They gave me a copy of Bible and began to explain their mission to me and the following discussion took place:

Missionary: We believe in universal brotherhood and we believe that God is one. Canada is home to a variety of people with different nationalities, different religious backgrounds and different races. Our mission invites all Canadians to our church; no matter what their religion or nationality is.

Myself: Your views are really remarkable and appreciable. I like your wisdom and ability to understand humanity from a religious point of view. May I know, what your mission stands for?

Missionary: Our mission's goal is universal brotherhood, to unite people from all races, religions and countries. We should all sit together in church and pray to a common God.

Myself: The ideology of your mission is really great and has become a necessity today; we are in a situation where people from different religions do not tolerate each other, and they become the cause of destruction. In the name of God and religion, some selfish, ignorant religious fundamentalists are exploiting people. Also today there is mass destruction in many countries, with ongoing terrorism. Everywhere we hear of disasters of men and material. I do not know when people will be free from these feelings of hatred for each other. Every prophet on this globe has clearly educated the men and women of his times that God is only one, and we are all his children. Then why do we not live peacefully amongst each other and with full cooperation? I do not think that the language of the Holy Scriptures is sufficient for the people of the modern developed scientific world. Something more is needed. May I ask you sir; do you give the knowledge of God in your church?

Missionary: As I have already told you Mr. Verma, we believe in one God and universal brotherhood. People from every faith sit together in our church and pray to the common God for a peaceful life for the entire humanity.

Myself: That is great, but what about the question: Who am 'I'? Generally speaking, people identify themselves as physical bodies that are made out of five elements. As per ancient Indian religious philosophy the physical body is comprised of the following five elements : (1) earth, (2) water, (3) fire, (4) air and (5) Akash.

All these elements are combined to make the body visible.

Five organs of senses :

- 1) EARS - For listening. To listen to sound we use the sense of hearing. Sound is a major property of Akash.
- 2) EYES - For seeing. To see the different forms of Nature or creation we use the sense of sight.
- 3) SKIN - For touching. To feel different sensations, for example to feel hot or cold, or to sense pain' or even a soft touch, we use our skin.
- 4) TONGUE - For tasting. To taste different flavours, we use our taste buds, which are located at the tip of our tongue. S) NOSE - For smelling. To sense different types of odors, good and bad, we use our nose.

These senses allure the mind and compel it to do different types of deeds through our five organs of action.

Organs of action :

1. Hands - For working, to help in eating, drinking, playing and doing any other type of work.
2. Feet - For walking, running and going anywhere, they also helpful for doing different types of work.
3. Mouth - For eating, drinking and chewing.
4. Anus - For excreting the waste of the food that we consume daily.
5. Sex Organs - For excreting waste (urine) and also to procreate.

The physical body is activated by a vital force known as Pran. Pran (described fully in the chapter 'Religion and Science') is present everywhere and after entering the body through the air (Vayu) it stays in five places and does five s of deeds:

1. **Udan Vayu (Air)** - It remains in throat and its purpose create vibrations and to speak.
2. **Pran Vayu** - It remains' in between the throat and the umbilical area, its purpose is to inhale and exhale.
3. **Apan Vayu** - It remains in between the umbilical area the anus. Its purpose is to excrete waste food and also air.
4. **Sman Vayu** - It remains in the umbilical area, its purpose maintain the balance between the Pran Vayu and Apan Vayu.
5. **Vyan Vayu** - It is present in the whole body and its purpose is to circulate blood in all parts of the body.

These twenty (20) constituents are all part of our physical body and are all, lifeless, until they are combined with the mind (consciousness), at which point they become active and alive.

The detailed description about Pran is found in Brihdarnyak Upnishad (Page 818 and 819) and also in Prashan 2 stanza 3 and Prashan 1, stanza 4 of Prashan Upnishad. The same kind of description is also found in Vivek Churamani by Adi-guru Shankaracharya in Chapter, Pran Kosh (Pran treasure).

Mind - There are four properties of the mind, or the thinking force:

1. When different types of thoughts arise, whether good or bad, at that time we name the thinking force **Mind**.
2. When the thinking force becomes the deciding factor it rejects all plans and follows only one plan to act upon, and then it is named **Wisdom**.
3. When the idea of "I" arises out of the thinking force and it starts thinking that I am an

individual force and I have my own existence, then this force is named **Pride**. (It feels that it is a parallel force to God and an independent force).

4. The fourth name of the same thinking force or inner force is **Chitt**. This has the properties of memory, awareness and the ability to create desires (for example, when we see something that we like we want to have it).

The combination of these four characteristics of the thinking force is known as the Inner-force or the Inner Consciousness.

The combination of the five elements - fire, water, earth, earth, air, Akash and, the five organs to sense; and, the five organs to act and the five Prans and the four Inner forces, constitute the physical body. The physical body (now comprised of these 24 constituents) is fully conscious, thinking and working.

So where does the astral body fit into the picture? After physical bodies die, the living force, also called the soul, still survives. The astral body is also combination of the same 24 constituents similar to the physical body.

1. It has a similar type of body made out of Energy, which is the main cause to create all the five elements i.e. earth, water, fire, air and Akash, which is normally not visible.
2. It has all the five senses to sense or cognize, that is, to smell, to see, to listen, to taste and to touch.
3. It has all the five senses to act i.e. to work with hands, to move about with legs, it has a mouth but does not eat physical food, it has an anus and sex organs but does not excrete or reproduce.
4. It has the vital force Pran to act in five different places and to perform different kinds of acts.
5. It also has the combination of the inner force with all of properties, as well.

Therefore, through the combination of all these components the astral body remains alive even after death.

Once the soul realizes its reality that, in fact, it is the master soul (God) itself, then its attraction to materialistic comforts starts to decline. Subsequently, the soul/astral body retains its original form of the master soul, which is omnipresent, non-vanishing, motionless, formless and almighty, and finally the combination of the 24 constituents of the astral body breaks.

This should answer the question 'Who am I' and any doubt about the individual-self is clarified, but this still does not serve the purpose of our "universal brotherhood" mission. If individuality and duality remain, and differences of thoughts remain as well, then the hope of worldwide and unanimous cooperation diminishes.

Missionary: Wow, that was very insightful! We must take leave now. We really enjoyed the

discussion on spirituality today and thank you for your hospitality.

Myself: Alright, see you next time.

Generally people designate body or the soul (Geev) as individual self or individual 'I'. Without physical body the soul (Geev) also called as electromagnetic network is a living entity.

When these souls/astral bodies leave their physical bodies, their thought process is similar to the way it was as when they were living in physical bodies. This is because they are used to enjoying and receiving all sorts of comforts through these physical bodies. Souls have non matter bodies and human beings have material bodies but both of them have their individuality the individual type of life. We can identify both of them as individual 'Self'.

Madam Mary Curie, the scientist who discovered uranium, was trying to solve a question, but was unable to solve it completely. She had solved half of the question but was stuck there for a few days. Then one night she left her half-solved question on the table and went to sleep. In the morning, when she got up, she went to the table, looked at her scattered papers and found that the question was fully Solved. She was astonished at what she saw and questioned herself, "who solved the question?" Was it some angel that appeared in my room and helped me out or was it God who appeared in a human form and solved my question? Suddenly she looked at the handwriting of the solution and realized that it was her own handwriting. She started wondering, "When did she get up and solve the question?" She arrived the conclusion that she did not get up in the middle of the night. But then, she remembered that she had a dream, and faint memories of the dream reminded her that she wanted solve the question and she started to get some ideas on how to do it. Madam Curie could not solve the question rather she was fed up. The person who solved the question was not Madam Curie. It was the universal-self - the universal consciousness, which solved the question, through the physical body of Madam Curie, in the state of her dream. She did not recall when she had woken up, gone to the table where her scattered papers lay with the half solved question, sat on the chair, and then solved the second half of the question.

A similar instance occurred with the great scientist, Archimedes. He was very worried because he could not solve a query that the king had put to him and the king kept pressuring him for the answer. The king had a very precious and quite heavy golden ornament. He had given it to Archimedes to clear his doubt about its purity, in other words, whether some other metal was mixed in it, and this had to be done without breaking the ornament. Archimedes had become very anxious because he was unable to figure out the answer to what the king was asking of him, in other words to find out how much of some other metal was mixed in the golden ornament without taking it apart. At the same time his prestige was in question. If he could not come up with an answer, he would be embarrassed. Then one day, Archimedes was lying in his bathtub taking a bath and was in a totally relaxed condition. Suddenly, an incident took place, an idea struck to him. He sprang out of the tub and ran onto the road not realizing that he was still naked. While running, he shouting, "Ureka, Ureka, I got it, I got it!" and he running towards the king's palace. Before he reachedpalace some people caught him and asked him, "Are you Umd"? Will you go to the king like this? Don't you know you are naked? Archimedes replied, "No I did not know about ... lily naked state," and he felt ashamed.

The man who ran onto the road naked was not Archimedes. Archimedes could never

have gone outside naked. The question, also, was not solved by the awareness of Archimedes individually. The question was not solved by the individual "I", the individual-self of Archimedes. It was me Universal "I" the Universal-self who put the idea into Archimedes' mind and thus the question was solved. Archimedes was lying in his tub in a relaxed condition. Neither the tub, nor the water, nor his nakedness was responsible for solving his question. In fact, he realized his inability to solve the query and came out of his ego - his ~dividual-self - and he surrendered himself to the unknown thrce i.e. the universal self. It was at that point that the incident occurred where the idea flicked into his mind.

These are a few examples where the individual self fed up with his efforts and finally surrenders himself to universal self and gets the required help.

Like in the examples above, many scientists agree whatever they knew (discovered or resolved), they did not know themselves; they worked hard at experimenting and research, but were not necessarily always successful. In the end, whatever they knew happened suddenly or "with the grace of God". In the same way, it is said that the ~ were not written by anybody. Also, the great saints that wrote the Upanishads denied that they were the actual authors. It is true that whenever some individual-self (the saints or a prophet) wrote the Vedas, Upanishads, Koran, The Bible, and other Holy scriptures, it was always the universal-self (God) working through their bodies and making their hands write the truth about the creation and the creator. Whenever, any body surrenders his individual self to the universal self, he finally gets the help and his problem is solved and work is done.

Obviously the universal-self or the universal wisdom looks after every creature of the universe. This universal power provides help to the needy and guidance for the further development of those who truly surrender their wisdom to Him. God never leaves any deserving person un-rewarded.

There are three stages of the individual-self, namely, the aware state, the dream-like state, and the 'sushupti' state (disappearance of the physical body and world).

In the first stage (aware), we are physically awake and aware of what is happening around us, we know what the individual-self experiences by means of the physical bodies senses. The happiness and the misery we experience become memories of the mind and this shapes the individual – self's thought process and lifestyle. The individual "I" keeps himself involved and busy in the same lifestyle throughout his life.

The second stage of the individual-self is that of a "dream", where his physical body is at rest and one is not at all aware of its body. However, the astral body is awake and fActive. It recollects its memories and creates a dream. In a dream everything we see seems to be real and all of the creatures we see are created by imagination.

In 1999, my wife and I were visiting my younger son in Canada. My elder son, Pawan was in Amsterdam, Netherlands, and his wife, Ranjna and my granddaughter Suchi, were left alone at our home in India. My wife and I would miss Suchi and Ranjna very much, especially since they were alone back home. One morning my wife had got 'Up and gone to the washroom while I was still asleep. I had a dream and saw Suchi standing just behind my head.' I turned upside down and extended my arm to hug her. I called her; but she just gave me a smile. When I opened my eyes, I still Suchi smiling. All of a sudden, I remembered that I

was dreaming, but how could a dream be seen with my eyes open? Suddenly, my eyes closed, yet I still wanted to keep them open to continue seeing Suchi. I struggled to open my eyes and finally I succeeded. I still saw my granddaughter Suchi standing close to me, smiling. But when I tried to embrace her I saw her figure scatter into multiple directions, as if it were a figure made of sand. I saw myself lying on my bed alone and Suchi was not visible to me anymore. I lay in my bed for quite some time and the feelings of affection for Suchi that arose from my heart were beyond explanation. That was the most extraordinary dream of my life because it was so real.

My reason for sharing this dream is to explain that in a dream, the body remains in a state of rest at one place, though the location of the dream may be elsewhere, and the participants of the dream may be different people. How does this happen? Where do the participants of the dream come from? Do they know about the dream? Are all the people in the dream dreaming the same thing at the same time? Generally, the person who had the dream is the only one who knows about his dream and the other participants are not at all aware of it. However, there have been rare instances where the one we dream of is also aware of the dream. We can conclude that a dream, which seems to be real, is nothing but pure imagination and a creation of the mind. The creation of a dream is, merely the thinking of the mind. Whatever our mind imagines, it happens. In a dream the individual-self is unaware of his physical body.

There is general conception that, the "state of mind" at death determines the form of the next birth, if there is to be one. The bodies are a result of the actions from a previous birth but under the directions of God. Swami Vivekananda explains in Vedanta that the mind is like a whirlwind, which picks up soil, paper and sometimes heavy things, as well. It flies them to some heights and drops them at some other place. Then again, it picks up new material and drops them at some other place. Similarly, the mind assembles all the five elements, soil, water, fire, air and Akash and the five Prans and forms a new physical body. The mind knows that the only way it can enjoy the comforts it is used to, is through a physical body. Furthermore, a physical body is the only home it knows to reside in to live a comfortable life. After leading a full life it has to depart from the physical body. Once more, it tries to assemble the five elements and the five Prans to create a new physical body. Thus the process of death and birth goes on.

The third stage is Sushupti - profound sleep. The individual is totally unconscious, not even dreaming. There is no imagination. The mind is as asleep as the physical body. There is no movement or wandering of any form.

There is fourth stage also - Turiya. Here the knower "Of God feels that he is awake even in a dream-state. He knows that he is actually dreaming and not seeing reality. He also knows that his real life is a dream (temporary) as well. This is achieved when a man realizes the universal-self (God) and maintains a very deep oneness with it. This stage is attained, when the physical body and the astral body, that is, the individual-self or individual "I", disappear, and only the universal-self or universal consciousness or God remains. This is the universal consciousness that always exists and this is the only reality. Once this reality is known, understood and practiced, the cycle of death and birth ceases. In other words, "the state of mind" at death is now of "being one with God", and thus the individual self merges with the universal-self. To 'be one with God', we first have to know 'one', then believe in 'one' and then we become 'one'.

* * *

KNOW ONE, BELIEVE IN ONE, BE ONE

Know One: All scriptures claim that God is one and that God can be known. It is written in the Rig Veda, "Eko brahm, duitya-na-asti". This means there is only one existence (God) and that no second existence exists here. It also means that only God exists everywhere, with and without form.

There are thousands of books on religion, spiritualism and philosophy available around the world for any one to read through and to know 'what God is', theoretically. He also learns through the said religious literature the way by which God can be known.

Generally people say that God can be known through concentration and meditation. The great Saint Dattatreya (follower of a great Saint Anurshisht and Guru of another great saint Guru Vashisht), however says that, if only God is present everywhere, it never moves, it is always complete and similar everywhere, it is present inside and outside the body, then why should I have a momentary glance inside me meditation. Why do I not see such a great and omnipresent power outside, always? Dattatreya defines God as, "Atmvat Saravbhootani", which means the entire universe, is the master soul, God we can also say God only had manifested Himself as the entire universe. If God-realized saints believe that this is the essence of God, then why do people search him inside the body, only?

- Avdhoot Gita: 1/59

The following quotation reinforces this thought,

Everything here is Brahma (God),
From Him all things originate,
He sustains all things, and all things will dissolve into it.

- Yog Vashisht- sarag (44to 51) Adhyaya 33.

Prophets have always received the blessing of "God realization" from their spiritual teachers. Lord Rama once went to his teacher Lord Vashisht, and knocked at the door. Lord Master Vashisht asked, "Who is there?" Rama replied, "I have come to you my lord to know, Who am I?" Thereafter, Lord Master Vashisht blessed him with the knowledge of God. After being blessed with the realization of God, Rama declared, "I do not feel 1 am confined now and 1 do not feel any necessity for getting freedom or salvation." The whole world seems like a perfect bliss to me. I am happy, and 1 am real Rama only. The pure soul exists everywhere and every thing is God.

- Yog Vashisht -29:5

Similarly, during the Great War "Mahabharata" in India, when the armies of the Pandavas and the Kauravas stood opposite each other awaiting the order to attack, the great warrior, Arjuna (of the Pandava army), dropped his weapons and refused to participate in the war. Lord

Krishna drove his chariot to one side and tried to make him understand that being a General, it becomes his duty to fight when ordered by his King, Yudhishtar. However, Arjuna refused to do so. Finally, Lord Krishna said, "Arjuna, the soul (God) neither takes birth nor dies, with the death of the bodies the soul never dies. Arjuna, if a man knows that the soul (God) neither dies nor takes birth and remains forever, how can he kill anyone and how can he make others kill someone?

- Bhagwad Gita 2/20, 21

Lord Krishna also said "As a man removes his old clothes and replaces them with new clothes, similarly the spirit leaves old bodies and takes over new bodies in the of children. The soul (God) cannot be cut by any weapon, nor burnt by any fire, nor destroyed by water and neither can it be dried by air. The soul is omnipresent, immovable and always at rest. It makes all the movements in the creation but it itself does not move.

Arjuna then decided to fight the war, that is, after the realization of God. The question that arises is that, when two armies were ready to attack each other, was there any for Arjuna to meditate or to concentrate or to adopt any other method for realizing God? No, it was Lord Krishna who blessed Arjuna with the knowledge of God, the sight of Wisdom, the sight of understanding and realization.

It has been a tradition to realize God from the man who knows the secret of God. The knowledge of God has always been transferred from the teacher to the disciple. It is written in the "Ramayana",

JOJANESO DAYE JANAI,
TUMHE JANATTUMHI HO JAAJ

- Valmiki

This means that whosoever knows the secret of God can make others know as well. Furthermore, it says that whosoever knows You (God), becomes Yourself (God).

BHAI RE GUR BIN GYAN NA HOI
PUCHHO BRAHME NARADAI BED BEASAI KOI

- Adi Granth : 59

This means, "Go and ask the great Lord Masters like Brahma, Narad, Ved JYas and others, it is not at all possible to realize God without the teacher (the lord master)". Similarly it is written in the Holy Bible,

Ask and it shall be given to you:
Seek and ye shall find,
Knock tile door and it will be opened unto you..

- Mathew 7-7

If a person knocks on the door of the spiritual teacher, he will open it. Furthermore, if a person asks for the knowledge of God, it is revealed. In other words, it has been the tradition of all the lord masters that whosoever has asked to know the truth about God, the lord masters have always obliged. It is not necessary that a man or woman must be a very nice person and have only good qualities in him or her in order to be blessed with the knowledge

of God. If we go to a dry cleaner and give him clothes for washing or dry-cleaning he never asks us, "Are your clothes clean, have you washed them properly, or have you removed, all the stains and dirt?" If he were to ask such questions then we would obviously never give him the clothes for cleaning in the first place. Similarly, the true teacher never asks a man to possess all the good qualities first, and only then come to him for the knowledge of God.

The true teacher only judges whether there is substantial curiosity to know God in the person that seeks it and then instantly blesses the person with the divine knowledge. Furthermore, it is the duty of a true teacher to transform his disciple from an average and ordinary man to a true saint. The present day spiritual teacher, Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji, has said on many occasions, 'God is omni-present and can be known'. 'It is a knowable substance'.

PARMAATMA SARVATRA HAI AUR ISE JAANA JA SAKTA HAI
ASAL MEIN YAHI JANANE YOG VASTU HAI

Human beings have the knowledge and experience of the comforts of the creation only, whereas they are not aware of the creator at all. It is a well-known fact that both the creation and the creator are inseparable forces. If the creation cannot be separated from the Creator, then why are we aware of the creation only and why not of the Creator? If the shelter of living master is sought, surely the Creator also can be known.

THIS IS WHOLE AND THAT IS WHOLE, THE WHOLE HAS
COME OUT OF THE WHOLE
IF THE WHOLE IS TAKEN OUT OF THE WHOLE STILL THE
WHOLE REMAINS

- Rig Veda.

The creation is complete and the creator is also complete. Complete creation has come out of the complete creator. If the complete creation is taken out of the complete creator still the creator remains complete.

If we have a tumbler full of water and half is taken out then half is left behind. However, this is with reference to quantity. If we look at it from a quality perspective, whether we look at one drop of water or the whole ocean, the quality is the same. These characteristics are not befitting to the creation and the Creator. Neither the quantity of the creator becomes less by projection of the creation, nor is the quality of the Creator and the creation the same. This is because the Creator (God) does not vanish whereas the creation vanishes. The Creator is a non-visible force whereas the creation remains in both forms, visible and invisible. The visible (physical) and invisible (energy) creation vanishes, whereas the invisible Creator never vanishes.

The creation always remains in motion and the creator always remains at rest. The creation consists of many billions of galaxies revolving at very high velocities (speeds). Our galaxy has approximately 4600 million planets (because many planets die and rejuvenate). Basically, we can say that there are countless planets in space and all are revolving at varying speeds. We can describe all galaxies as infinite motion and the creator as the infinite rest. The meaning of the above quoted stanza from Rig Veda can be understood only after

knowing the One, the Creator from the living Master.

Believe in One: The belief in God without knowing Him is considered a blind belief and thus can never be firm. I remember a story of a time when I was in Russia on training for a particular type of aircraft. While I was there I met a person named Mr. Vikram Satija, who also became my best friend. We did our training together and were posted to Pune (India). We went to Pune with our families. One Sunday, I was going to town and Mr. Vikram Satija met me on the way. The following is the conversation that took place between Vikram and I.

Vikram: Where are you going?

Myself: To attend a religious congregation in town.

Vikram : Who knows you here? You've only been here fifteen days

Myself: Well, a few people know me, I attended a religious congregation with them.

Vikram : Oh okay, but where do you go?

Myself: I go to a street where only Muslims reside and the religious congregation is held in the house of a lady (Ms. Marium) who herself is a Muslim.

Vikram : What? with great astonishment. But you are a Hindu. Myself: Of course I am a Hindu, by birth, but God is one, and we can pray to Him anywhere by sitting with anyone whether he is a Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jewish or of any other religion and no matter what his caste, creed or home country is.

Vikram: That is really amazing.

Myself: O.K. then let us both.

Vikram : Not today, but I shall come with you next Sunday.

During the week, my family and I went to Mr. Vikram Satija's home. Over a cup of tea we had a discussion on spiritualism. The following Sunday, Mr. Vikram Satija accompanied me to the congregation and seemed satisfied after attending it. This was the conversation that took place between him and I (Surinder) after the congregation:-

Vikram: Your discourse was all mixed up. You quoted stanzas from the Koran and also poems of the Muslim saint, Bulle-Shah. How is it possible? It seems like you know a lot about Islamic philosophy?

Myself: The knower of God believes in one God. All of the true teachers (Prophets) preached about one God only, no matter what language. I have confirmed my faith in God by studying most of the spiritual books from all religions and all other teachers. I can honestly say that the God I know is the same that all the sacred books refer to.

Vikram: Good enough. Mr. S. P. Verma, I will continue to accompany you to the congregation but do not compel me to know God until I am ready and I, myself ask for the knowledge.

Myself: As you wish. A hungry man should only be fed when his hunger is at its peak.

Mr. Vikram Satija was blessed and received the knowledge of God just one and a half month later and was very happy and satisfied. He then studied the Koran, the Bible, the Upanishads, the Bhagwad Gita, and the Adi Granth and so on. Today, he is a very good preacher and has a firm faith in God.

God is one, mind is one, intelligence is one, and religion is one, too. Anyone who recognizes the 'one religion' is freed from the cycle of birth and death and achieves salvation. Whilst man is in possession of the human body he does not have any religion other than humanity. God does not have any religion; He is beyond all sorts of narrow-mindedness. One who knows such a great single existing force believes in Him firmly.

One day, I was traveling on Highway # 7 in Toronto (Canada) towards Georgetown. On the way, I saw a big board that read "Seeing is believing". I smiled and asked my son Rajeev. to look at the board; he also smiled and said "Of course, they are right because people will buy or select a house only after seeing the model house. They will not believe until they see a plan or a model. Once they have seen it they can believe it. In the grand scheme of things, buying a house is a small issue of life, yet people first want to see, then check the durability, then believe and then finally they purchase.

Is it possible for a person to have the feelings of love and affection for the one whom he has never met and seen? If both the persons meet each other, know and understand each other then the feelings of love and affection among them can be possible. It is at that point that we can say that they believe in each other, love each other and share all sorts of comforts with each other. This type of life can be a reality, a true faith and a true love.

What about God? Without knowing and without seeing, we have faith, and we want Him to provide us with worldly comforts, and fulfill all of our desires. How is this possible? Well, at any rate we know that salvation is not possible by blindly loving God. It is said, "God is love and love is God". This sounds great when it is read in books or even quoted to others, but practically speaking, to truly love everyone seems impossible. Great saint, Swami Ram Tirath used to say, "Do not confine yourself in the body of five feet and a few inches, look around you, you are the entire universe and the entire universe is your body". However, this can only be possible when we know God and believe that God is one and that the entire universe or creation is His body. Thus, belief becomes concrete only after knowing the all-pervading and almighty God.

Be One: On the basis of my knowledge and my personal experience, I have the confidence to say that if we receive blessings and know God from the knower, then our faith in God also becomes solid. It is then possible to become one with God as also his creation.

If a man is told that upon leaving his hut he will be able to live in a palace, he will not believe it. But if he gets the palace or bungalow first, then naturally, he would leave the hut or small house in a wink. Likewise, if a man is told that he will attain God realization only after abandoning all materialistic comforts, he will probably choose to remain attached to materialism. Yet, as soon as he becomes enlightened about the Creator of the materialistic comforts then his attraction increasingly shifts towards the Creator (God) and away from the

materialistic world.

Before blessing a follower with the gift of God knowledge, the Master makes him understand that the body, the mind and all materialistic possessions have been given to him by God and He can take them back whenever He wishes. Therefore, it is better that you surrender them to God as finally belonging to Him and make a promise to True Master. Once man has surrendered the body, the mind and all materialistic possessions, God takes charge and man only has to observe his life as it progresses. Although the enlightened person's way of life, that is, making both ends meet and dealing with others, remains the same, his way of thinking changes and he follows the advice of his teacher and leads a saintly life. He surrenders himself to the Master completely.

The enlightened one then speaks politely with everyone, and tries to serve people wherever and whenever it is possible and necessary. He believes in non-violence and is never jealous of anybody. By leading such a pious life, a saint remembers God and feels the unity not only among all humans but among all creatures as well. Such a saint is neither too happy when he receives blessings, nor is he unhappy or worried when he faces any troubles in his life. His state of mind remains balanced and stable. He always feels that he is in God and God is in him. By maintaining such sorts of feelings of unity a saint is always one with God.

A man does not have to become God, because God exists everywhere, inside, outside and all around the entire created universe and its creatures. Becoming is not the stability. The entire cosmic phenomena has been projected out of God and is in motion. Infinite motion can be defined as the many billions of galaxies. The planet earth is revolving around the sun at approximately 40 K.M. per second. Similarly, all the other planets in our solar system are revolving around the sun at varying speeds. So a God-realized person has only to change his way of thinking that he does not have a separate existence rather he is a part of the only one existence (God). There has to be an omnipotent force to control the billions of galaxies that are constantly revolving with their respective tremendous speeds (known as Infinite Motion). This tremendous force is known as the "Infinite Rest" (God). We know that the planet earth, on which we reside, is in constant motion. We, humans, are also constantly in motion. We go to work, perform all of the day's duties, remain busy until nightfall and then the next day the routine starts over again. It seems like the entire world is busy. Apart from humans we find that animals, birds, and insects also appear to be very busy. Therefore, all creatures and species are in motion, and the wandering mind needs rest. Once the mind comes to rest the spirit automatically attains its original form, which is the infinite rest.

The knowledge of God is a great weapon and the greatest protector as well. After knowing such a great power, man must continuously and always concentrate his mind in it and feel oneness with it. When a lost child suddenly meets his father, he will not just keep watching him from a distance, he will run to him and cling to him. He will forget the pain of being lost and try to be with his father always. In the same way, the spirit loses its identity or itself among the comforts of the materialistic world. However, once it recognizes its father, God the all-pervading, omnipresent, formless and cosmic consciousness, it (the spirit) must try its best not to divert its mind away from its beloved father (God).

I saw the movie "Cleopatra" in 1965. The famous Hollywood (U.S.A) actress, Elizabeth Taylor, played the role of the most beautiful and dynamic personality Queen Cleopatra .. Ms.

Taylor depicted the character so well that for a long time after the movie was released people would associate the actress with the character of Cleopatra as if she were really Cleopatra. However, if we were to meet her today, she would certainly introduce herself as Elizabeth Taylor because she is in fact, Elizabeth Taylor. That is her real life name and her real life appearance. Elizabeth Taylor has played many different roles in many different films with different names, though she may not remember all those names and roles. To the same effect, we play a role in our real life and we take it for granted that our form and our name are real. We are so involved in the pleasures and worries of the roles in our lives that we believe them to be the real ones. Yet those who truly understand religion realize that their bodies are perishable and not a reality. Bodies are made up of five elements: earth, water, air, fire, and Akash. After the death of any creature, the five elements of their dead bodies mix with their original forms. The spirits keep changing forms (physical bodies) in every birth. Once a spirit comes to know that it is not in its real form and that it is a created entity, under delusion, and that one day it has to make an end of its roles, it may then begin to think about the next step. The next step is to know the originality of the spirit (entity).

Once the spirit (entity) recognizes its original form pervading everywhere, only then does it realize real happiness, real comfort, real greatness, and real knowledge. It finally comes to rest, which is the infinite rest, and attains unity with the one consciousness, this is the concept of oneness.

* * *

CONCEPT OF ONENESS

The concept of dualism says that the result-oriented world certainly has a base. We cannot imagine a result-oriented world without a non-result oriented base. This means we find an existence beyond the body and mind. There is nothing stable in the universe, everything is constantly changing.

The concept of oneness believes that there certainly is a base in which the result-oriented world exists. The entire creation was initially in a state of rest, peaceful and invisible, when all the forces like Pran and Akash were in a balanced state and no force was in action. Whenever the balance of stability is disturbed all the different kinds of forces come into action. They feel their separate existence and an active universe is created. The entire universe is in a state of infinite motion and all the different forces are struggling very fast to come into the original form of balanced stability, that is, infinite rest. But it can only be possible when the Lord of the Universe (formless God) wants it to happen.

So long as the feeling of dualism exists, the world will remain result-oriented. In fact, the soul, the mind and the body are not three different things, they are one. The combination of all three things, the soul, mind and body is "one" (we can say one human). This "one" thing acts sometimes as a body, sometimes as a mind and sometimes it appears to be a soul (which is different than the body and mind). Though the "one" is a combination of the three, it does not function as all the three at the same time, that is to say, as a body, a mind and a soul.

Those who see the body cannot see the mind. Those who see the mind cannot see the soul. Those who see the soul, see the infinite rest and for them the infinite motion, the created

universe, disappears.

We know that the all-pervading power is only one, and it appears in different forms. You can call it a soul or any other energy, yet it is the only force in existence. Essentially, the soul is God. Take a wave as an analogy. A wave is never separate from the ocean but it appears to us separately and we call it a wave. The form of a wave and its name (given by us) make it a separate thing or a separate force, which outwardly sways everything to the beaches of the ocean'. The name and form of a wave make it different from the ocean; otherwise in essence there is no difference between the ocean and the waves. In fact, waves are a projection of the ocean. Different forces, like the attraction of the moon, especially on a full-moon night, disturb the stability of the ocean and waves are projected.

The knowledge of dualism is that each and everything is different from each other, everything exists separately or everything has its own existence. This is pure ignorance. ~The entire universe is the result of this feeling of dualism.

Once a wave merges into the ocean, does its form remain? Where is the existence Of the wave? Basically, the existence of a wave depends on ~e water of the ocean, whereas the existence of an ocean doe\ not depend upon the wave.

Similarly, the mind\has to understand that it is a projected force (a signal) out of the universal consciousness and it is a great ignorance. The mind or the soul (Jeev) does not have any separate existence parallel to the Universal Soul, the one consciousness. There is no doubt that the Soul (Self) appears to be a separate force but for how long? The state of being a mind or Soul (Self) has to come to an end when it recognizes its universal heritage. Of course the mind always has to stay in its original universal state of consciousness.

It has already been discussed in the chapter "Know one, believe in one and be one" as to how the wisdom of the supreme is to be received from the one who is already aware of it and then how to establish oneness with it The disturbed mind has to make its balance with its originality and get out of the infinite motion.

If we ask somebody, who are you? Certainly he or she will tell his/her name. For example: he says, "I am Duane". Then further conversation follows:

Myself: O.K, where do you live?

Duane: I live at #123 Some Street, Georgetown, Ontario. Myself: Is that house yours?

Duane: Yes it is mine.

Myself: Are you a house?

Duane: No, I am not a house, but I live in a house. The house is mine and it is my property. I am the owner of my house.

Myself: All right then, tell me do your eyes belong to you?

Duane: Yes, these eyes are mine.

Myself: Nose?

Duane: Yes, this nose is also mine.

Myself: Head?

Duane: Yes, this head is also mine.

Myself: How about this body, is it yours?

Duane: Yes, this body is very much mine.

Myself: O.K, then tell me, are you the owner of your body?

Duane: Yes, I am the owner of my body.

Myself: Are you not a body?

Duane: No, I am not a body, but this body is mine.

Myself: Who are you then?

Duane: I am Duane.

Myself: Who is Duane? Who are you?

Duane: I must be mind.

Myself: If you are mind then can you tell me something about your body? Rather the anatomy of your body? How does the body function?

Duane: No, I am not a medical doctor or student of science. I do not know about the functioning of my body.

Myself: It means that there must be something beyond your mind, which knows how the different systems of your body are functioning.

Duane: I have not studied anatomy, how can I know the functioning of the various systems of my body, and so my mind cannot comprehend it, and my intellect cannot understand it.

Myself: You mean to say that you are neither mind nor the intellect, but mind is yours and intellect is yours. Rather I should say it this way, that you are the owner or master of your mind, your intellect and your brain?

Duane: That is right.

Myself: What are you? Think and let me know. Who are you Mr. Duane?

Duane keeps on thinking but does not come up with any answer or reach any conclusion and finally says, "It is beyond my intellect to say, who I am?"

The individual 'I', is a delusion, which is confined under the network of the body and the mind. It is the universal 'I', the universal consciousness which is the master and controller of all bodies, the bodies of not only humans but also all other creatures. The entire universe is created and controlled by this huge force.

Who am I? Once this question is answered and understood from the knower (one who has the true knowledge) then we have to live with this knowledge in mind always. We have to live with the truth that we are not the masters of our body, mind and intellect. It is at that time that we become free of all fear and anxiety.

Even believers of dualism believe that everything belongs to God. God is the one and only owner of the whole creation. Only God can claim the right to use the word, "I" or "mine". However, due to ignorance man starts using the word "I" or "mine" for himself and for his body.

When a man achieves a stable state of mind and feels that everything is God, he loves not only all human beings but also all creatures and every thing else in the world. He does not expect any reward in lieu of his noble life. Then at this stage he may also use the word "I" or "mine", yet, there are a few people who claim to know the omnipresent, formless God.

Vedanta also believes that there is only one existence, one God. Not only is He watching the creation and creatures, He is the creation and every creature too. The house and everything in the house is God, and the one who is living in the house is God, as well. The Vedantis (those who follow the Vedanta) do not even feel there is a difference between male and female. Male and female are the creation of the human brain and an imagination. The knowers of one God feel the existence of one super consciousness, one soul beyond the existence of all creatures, all males and all females. If names and forms are removed, only one soul remains, and the whole universe becomes one, the only one existence.

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FAITH

Faith is a belief or a trust generally associated with people who have somekind of relationship with each other. Family members share a bond with each other and they have faith among themselves because of their blood relation. They live together and they have many similarities like their nature, habits and thoughts based on heredity and their home environment. Similarly, people have blood relations among their relatives with whom they do not reside. Because they are not as close a firm faith may not be developed between everyone because there are dissimilarities of nature, habits and views. Nevertheless, these relations cannot be ignored or disowned and faith also has to exist among them, to some extent. In the same way, there are beliefs shared among friends based on their similarities of nature, habits and views. Faith is a feeling of belief among the people whom we consider as our own, it can be among the same religion or country or organization, and so on. In religion, people have faith

amongst each other because their ways of worship, their customs and their ideologies are the same.

Faith has many but similar meanings, such as, belief, devotion, loyalty, commitment and dedication. There are mainly four categories of faith: inherited faith; environmental faith; blind faith; and, faith based on facts and intelligence. Let us look at each of these individually.

What is inherited faith? Whichever family a child takes birth in, his faith becomes firm in that family's religion.

For instance, if a child takes birth in a Christian family he learns what his parents teach him, he goes to church and learns how to perform all the rituals of Christianity. His faith becomes firm in Jesus Christ, the church and all the traditions of Christianity. He believes that Jesus Christ is the only prophet and Christianity is the only true religion in the world. Likewise, if a child is born in a Hindu family his faith becomes firm in Hinduism and in its prophets, such as, Lord Rama and Lord Krishna. He goes to temple and worships God in the form of idols of Lord Rama, Lord Krishna and so on. He performs all of the Hindu rituals, such as keeping fasts, taking baths in the holy rivers, and reading the holy scriptures. In essence, an inherited faith is that which a person follows because that is what a person is born into.

What is environmental faith? Whichever environment a man lives in, his faith is confirmed by that environment irrespective of his caste, creed, religion and country. There are many religious teachers and ~ man can join any sect and change his ideology. His faith will be firm in his religious teacher and in his ideology. If the environment does not allow for any time to practice any particular religion then there are people who do not bother about God, they only believe in working hard and enjoying all weekends.

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What is blind faith? Blind faith can be of any religion, superstition. This occurs when people do not try to confirm the facts and they just follow someone or something blindly.

What is faith that is based on facts and intelligence? There exists a class of humans who try to find out the facts about what they really want to follow. They are intellectuals who try to confirm before believing anything. These intellectuals will read the religious scriptures of all the religious teachers. They also try to find out what is common in all the sacred books. There are ~ descriptions available in the sacred scriptures pertaining to the following questions; 'What is God?' 'What is creation?' and 'What is the purpose of human life?' Of course there are differences in our scriptures about the traditional worship of God by different religious people but the fundamental theories about God, creation, heaven, hell and salvation are essentially the same.

God has been a mystery for humans from the beginning of time itself. However, to those who were blessed with the knowledge of God by the Lord Master (the Prophet) of that time, the mystery was unveiled. Though there are countless religious books available in the world people still follow their own ways and traditions to worship God. There are people who only believe in the prophets of their own religion and their sacred books and they never try

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to consult other religious books. The knowledge of God and the creation is of course a necessity of every human being irrespective of his caste, creed and religion. We must take the further step in finding out the truth without worrying about 'how to get it' and 'where to get it from'.

The most significant factor in the life of a saint who has realized God from a living spiritual teacher is to have full and firm faith in God and the True Master. Secondly, the meaning of 'spiritual' must be well understood, and the guidelines given by the True Master must be implemented in life. Faith in the True Master and God should never be lost nor diminished by any kind of circumstances. The knower of God never loses his faith in God no matter whether the surrounding circumstances are favorable or unfavorable. Faith must be concrete and constant, and for this, devotion and worship should be pure.

* * *

DEVOTION AND WORSHIP

We live in a result-oriented world, in which day-to-day actions play significant role. Newton's third law states, "To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction". Every action also has a chain effect, for example, leading a luxurious or comfortable life. To lead a good standard of life, we must earn money. To earn money we must have a good job or a business. To attain a good job or run a successful business, we must have the appropriate subject knowledge. And to attain knowledge we must study. Basically, all of these actions and results are intertwined and it starts from the single action of studying. Therefore, it is true that every action has a reaction.

There is also another angle from which we can discuss action. It is the theory of Karma. This theory states that good actions will result in good consequences, and bad actions will result in bad consequences. The saying, "As you sow so shall you reap", is in essence the theory of Karma. But I came across many people in the western world who neither like to go to church nor believe in God. At the same time they might have never faced any occasion to feel the necessity of help from God. They do not like to believe in God blindly and also they do not try to refer the scriptures to know the necessity of praying to God, the necessity of knowing God.

To a great extent our lives are completely based on our actions. Nevertheless, at the same time we find that sometimes even our best possible actions do not lead to our desired results. We then contemplate the thought that perhaps success is beyond the reach of our actions alone. Consequently we are forced to think that there is something beyond the individual self or the individual 'I'. Some times it is at that point that the idea of worship or devotion comes into the picture.

Generally, people tend to worship or pray to God when they are unhappy with their current situation. Or, they may not be satisfied with what is given to them by God. People face many kinds of problems. For example, somebody may be unhappy with his or her income, another may be worried about his or her family members that are facing different kinds of hardships, such as diseases or hostile relationships, and so on. People normally worship God to get rid

of their trials and tribulations. This worship or prayer is performed in different ways and forms, and is based on what they have learned from their parents or from the society.

There are also some people who believe that they must have a Guru or spiritual teacher in order to receive blessings or to get rid of their personal suffering. They believe that the Guru or the spiritual teacher is their link to worship God. These trials and tribulations seem insignificant, though, once one has attained God-knowledge, and this is the true purpose of the Sat-Guru (Guru of Truth) or the spiritual teacher. Once we are armed with this knowledge we obtain the real path of devotion and worship. Furthermore, the purpose of worship and prayer is no longer personal, it is now aimed towards global unity and happiness, and that is where we derive true contentment.

If we study religious scriptures and try to understand the message they convey for humanity, we come to know that the main purpose of Guru is to impart the knowledge of God and to refine human society to lead a holy and pious life.

Some people believe that God can be known by studying religious scriptures, or through meditation, or by leading a pious life or all of these together. However, God cannot be known by the mind and the five senses to sense. The mind cannot even imagine, what God is? This vast, omnipresent power is beyond the reach of the mind. In any way the consciousness in the mind and the power to reuse, i.e. to hear, to see, to smell, to taste and to touch is by the grace of God. To know God is even beyond the reach of the soul (Jeeva). Jeeva can not know God itself, it has to take the shelter of the Lord Master, living Satguru, then only it can know and understand God:

God cannot be expressed through lectures. It cannot be understood through the explanation of spiritual philosophies. Nobody has ever explained any way to know God other than through the "Indication" given by the spiritual teacher, the Lord Master.

- Ken Upanishad Part-I

Even "Pran" which makes all the senses and mind active, cannot activate the senses and mind to know God. God is the main force, which activates even Pmn. So the only way to know God is "Indication" by the spiritual teacher.

- Ken Upanishad Part-I

In a dialogue between a spiritual teacher and his disciple, the disciple says, "My Lord, I have known God from you through Indication. Though, I do not know God I can still say, I know God.

- Ken Upanishad Part-II

You might ask, "What does that mean?" To explain the above quotations let us use a simple example. An instructor can show and tell a layman that, 'this is an airplane' by pointing at it - in other words, by indication. An instructor can also transfer some knowledge to the layman but not everything can be explained. It is not possible for the instructor to explain everything like: What components are built-in to the Aircraft? What function each component has? What is theory of flight? _ How to fly an aircraft? What is navigation? And, so on. In the same way, a

man can know through 'indication' only limited knowledge about God, whereas God's vastness, His power, His force is unlimited and not easy for everyone to understand and conceive, in its entirety.

Any saint who has known God is never proud of his knowledge, instead he thinks that only God knows Himself and His creation. A saint with all sorts of limitations cannot know the unlimited, all pervading, almighty, formless God.

- Ken Upanishad Part-II

The main purpose of human life is to know God. This is the only span in which God can be known. If we lose this chance, then we have to go through the cycle of birth, and rebirth, in and out of the different species that exist for an unlimited period of time. The following is a translation of an excerpt of one of Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji's discourses:-

"In the biting cold, if it does not seem to be, possible to light a fire to warm up the body, then it is better to go to a place where a fire is already lit by someone else and warm up the body there. If someone thinks that he should still try to collect dry wood, get a matchbox or a lighter from somewhere and light a fire by himself, he may possibly die in the cold. It would be a wise decision to go and warm up the body where someone has already lit a 'fire, especially if he is inviting you to share his fire. Once the Lord Master, the Satguru, the incarnation is readily available, we must contact him and ask him to bless us with the knowledge of God. Let the Lord Master be from my religion, any caste, any country or let him speak any language, our sole duty to fulfill from him is to achieve the knowledge of the omnipresent, almighty, all pervading, formless God, which is the only one existing consciousness.

The only pre-condition is to surrender ourselves to God. We have with us three possessions, the body, the mind and wealth (or material possessions), which we must surrender to God as ultimately belonging to Him. The main reason for surrendering these is to shun the ego of all these possessions. God has given us these possessions and He has the right to take them back at any time. For example, if a man dies during an accident or due to an illness, none of these possessions would hold any value to him. Yet, the ego still persists. If these possessions are surrendered to God and a promise is made with the True Master or the spiritual teacher, we then get rid of the ego. In fact nothing is actually given to the spiritual teacher, it is a pledge that we make, and from that point, God Himself takes over the charge for and operates the rest of our lives. What then is our duty? It is only to make sure that our mind remains under the discipline of God.

Religious discipline has always been maintained by the prophets of different times at different places. The spiritual teacher guides us to remain in. spiritual discipline and to eliminate ego through three formulas, which have ever-existed and are relevant still today. These are, Satsang, Simran and Seva.

Satsang (gathering of truth-knowers): By attending congregation, regularly we learn spiritual truths and the ways to reform ourselves as well-behaved and civilized human beings. Furthermore, by going to satsang and listening to enlightened words we are reminding ourselves time and again to become detached from wickedness and attached to virtues.

Simran (Repeated remembrance of God): Humans are advised to continuously remember

God after seeing Hun and feeling Him with them, inside and around. Simran is a well-known method to keep us united with God. If tile feelings of unity with God are maintained, we can escape wicked behavior or actions in our daily life and only virtues will persist. Simran is the best possible means to attain a saintly stage in life also known as 'Sehaj Avastha'(The stage of Equipoise).

Some people (who do not yet have the knowledge of God) believe that by remembering God (Simran) continuously they can attain God knowledge. How far do they succeed? Nobody knows for sure, but one thing that is for sure is that this is not the means used by the Lord Masters or their disciples to know God. It is the process used to maintain oneness with God.

KABIR TU TU KARTA TU HUA
MUJH MEHN RAHA NA HU
JABAPPA PAR KA MITGAYA
JIT DEKHONTITTU

- Adi Granth : 1375

Translated:

By remembering you God, and addressing Tu (you) again and again

I have become you and I do not feel I am separate from you (God)

Because the feeling of others or mine has vanished from my mind

Wherever I look or to whomsoever I see, I see only you (God).

When we do simran, and concentrate on God, we feel we are one with God and the ego vanishes.

Seva (Service): Service is an act or a sort of duty that should be performed selflessly, i.e. without a desire for a reward. This kind of an act is done from the core of the heart. A particular duty (an obligation to do something), in contrast to service (Seva), IS generally not selfless; it is always executed with some motive or result in mind. Service done for Prophet or for saints (knower of God) is done to be blessed personally. Whereas service done for others, or for humanity is to bless them or to help them unite with the single existence, or the single consciousness (God). It is also to help them become relieved from sufferings and become happy. If service is performed according to the directions and guidance of the Lord Master of the time then it is truly great and matchless, and it is without selfish motives.

**The disciple renders selfless service and
does not expect any reward;
Avtar says, the True Master confers name and
fame upon such a disciple**

(Avtar Bani- 102)

To maintain unity among diversity it is necessary for a saintly person, to practice satsang, simran and seva regularly. A true devotee follows the Lord Master's teachings and

guidelines and maintains them throughout his or her life. A true worshiper prays for world peace and global unity. This is true devotion and true worship, and it is also a kind of true meditation.

People have not yet understood what makes
Devotion (Bhakti), to realize God is devotion;
Leaving aside all doubts and superstitions, to
Please the True Master is devotion;
God is colorless, shapeless, as mentioned in
the Holy Scriptures;
Avtar says, this is exactly as I have found
the all pervading God to be.

(Avtar Bani - 301)

In this stanza True Master Baba Avtar Singh Ji says that people, have not yet understood what is devotion, to realize God is devotion, to please True Master after leaving aside all the doubts and superstitions is devotion. He further says, to believe one, to behold one, to realize one is devotion. According to scriptures God is colorless and shapeless, I have found exactly the same God pervading everywhere.

* * * *

MEDITATION

Often people talk about meditation and ask whether it is necessary? The answer is yes. Meditation itself is very important. However, what is not important is how to meditate or which procedure to adopt to meditate. If we truly understand the underlying significance, the necessity and the importance of meditation, then the kinds of systems and methods used becomes a meaningless issue.

The word 'Meditation' means the practice of thinking deeply in silence. It is necessary to investigate who we are in reality? We look into a mirror and try to transform our appearance. However, are we a physical form? It is a well-known fact that whatever we assume, we are, and we become. Furthermore, we carry on considering ourselves the same throughout our life. We stand divided in different castes, religions and countries. We continue to quarrel amongst each other and prepare for wars in the name of religion and nationality.

If we want to know our real self, we have to free ourselves from all of the thoughts that occupy our brains. We are caught up with all sorts of rubbish like anger, brutality, vanity and arrogance and the list goes on. Ridding our mind of such useless thoughts is called meditation. Meditation means to make an end to all sorts of conflicts inside and outside. For the one who adopts such a type of meditation, there is no such thing as inner conflicts or outer conflicts, he becomes one with God and worriless.

Let us talk about concentration for meditation. Concentration means focusing our energy on something, and resisting ourselves and putting aside all interfering thoughts. If we are aware of our thoughts we are not in concentration. When we are in the mode of concentration there

is no contradiction, and no resistance about any thought.

Mind is the one to be meditated upon.

Mind is the one to be concentrated upon.

Mind is the one to be brought into peace and tranquility.

***Mind is the one to be negated after realizing the self,
the universal self, and the supreme consciousness.***

Concentration requires great self-control. The one who makes up his mind to achieve success and truly concentrates, he is successful in attaining his goal. For example, students will concentrate on their studies to achieve good grades, and scientists will concentrate on their research work to achieve desired solutions. Having a strong mind and character helps to develop true concentration. Physical and mental habits can also be controlled through the practice of concentration.

Meditation entails a bit of carefulness, attention, concentration and absolutely no registration of thoughts like anger, hate, insult, flattery, profit, loss, happiness, worry and selfishness. These all pollute the mind or the consciousness, which we own and register as 'I', the individual self. Our consciousness should be filled with information that is necessary to run and maintain our day-to-day life. It should be filled with the facts of life, like going to the office, performing our duties sincerely or doing business in a better way to make both ends meet, and so on. Unnecessary registration of thoughts in the mind causes disturbance in the state of meditation.

Similarly, a saintly person that concentrates his mind not to do any acts, which are full of conflicts, frustrations and regrets, is also successful in life. A specific pattern of life, or a particular nature, or typical habits and different types of choices carry little or no value in a saint's life. In the same way, a true saint tries his best not to register thoughts like anger, hate, insult, flattery, profit, loss, happiness, worry and selfishness in his mind. Clearing the mind of any unnecessary or, unwanted thoughts and concentrating it to achieve oneness with God is meditation.

Simran (Repeated remembrance of God) after knowing God is the best possible way to control and to concentrate our mind to achieve oneness with God and it is best possible way to meditate.

Action

The way we act or behave is based on our memories, our daily routine and our habits. Usually our actions will be inclined to please ourselves. Hence, a set pattern of daily life is formed. We have particular desires we want to fulfill and thus act accordingly.

We may be an employee or a business-owner, and our behavior will be different when we are at work as compared to when we are at home with our family. When at work, we work to earn a salary or to create profits and thus, act accordingly. We do not always have friendly feelings for our colleagues and subordinates, whereas at home we share affection with our family members. We do not mind spending money on our family, though we may not do the same for our colleagues. A true saint will treat everybody equally no matter what the position, the relation or the place.

Our actions are constantly conflicted and are divided based on our situation. Do we ever do an action that is without conflict, where there is no failure, no regrets, or no frustration? Do we ever do an action that is whole or complete, in other words that does not change from one place to another position?

Typically we are determined to act as we choose. (For the sake of discussion, awareness or being aware means to be aware of doing what is righteous.) Even if somebody disrupts our action and says, "be aware, your action is not righteous", we normally do not pay much attention to it. We continue to act as we wish, not caring whether what we are doing is right or wrong, because we are acting as per our own choice. Consequently, the question of awareness loses its importance, because there is a clash between the choice we made and awareness. Acting with awareness means that we act righteously always, in other words we are aware of what is the right thing to do and what is the wrong thing to do and we always do what is right (or righteous). When we are given the option, sometimes doing as we please, may seem to be more satisfactory, more comfortable and more rewarding, even though it may not always be the right thing to do. When a choice has to be made between what is right and what is wrong, and we choose the latter, there is not complete awareness. When there is complete awareness, the path of acting righteously is always chosen, and there is no conflict of thought - we do what is right, and we do not choose an act that will have a negative consequence over an act that will have a positive outcome. Therefore, action has to be complete and holistic so that the mind is not committed to any particular type of belief, dogma, desire or ideal. Only then will the mind think clearly, directly and objectively. This state of mind is known as acting in meditation.

A saint's whole life is meditation. This is because he or she must always carry out right actions, not caring about his or her personal objectives. Not to say that a saint does not fulfill his or her personal desires, will or goals. A saint does fulfill them, but by right actions only. Being aware of God while doing any action with a concentrated mind is meditation. The awareness of God is revealed by the prophet of the day the Sat-guru :

***This (Formless God) is your true abode; and
this is your splendid form.
None can know God without the grace of
the perfect True Master.
O, man, repose full faith in God and focus
your mind on Him;
Avtar says, after perceiving God from the True
Master you should keep on saying Tuhi, Tuhi
(Thou Formless One)***

(Avtar Bani - 189)

* * *

INCARNATION – SATGURU

A Guru means a teacher, who not only knows a subject but also has the ability to teach others the same knowledge that he has. This definition is applicable to any teacher of any subject; let it be mathematics, sciences, languages, arts, technologies and so on. Similarly, a Spiritual

Teacher not only knows and realizes his subject himself, he can also teach it to others. Religion in its true sense is a subject, which deals with the knowledge of God, the creator and the creation.

Sat-guru means the guru of satya (Truth), he is the teacher that reveals the truth about God. prophets, Satgurus or incarnations are all synonymous. We cannot see God except through Satguru and we cannot help worshipping him.

God understands human failings and becomes man, to do good to humanity. "Whenever virtue subsides and wickedness prevails I manifest myself to manifest virtue, to destroy evil, to save the good, I come from Yuga to Yuga". "Fools deride me who have assumed the human form, without knowing my real nature as the Lord of the universe." Lord Krishna declares this about incarnation in the Gita.

Shri Ramakrishna says, "When a huge tidal wave comes all the little brooks and ditches become full to brim without any effort or consciousness on their part; so when an incarnation comes a tidal wave of spirituality almost fills the air."

- Swami Vivekananda-II/V55-56

As it has been said in the Bible, "No man hath seen God at any time, but through the Son". And that is true. And where shall we see God but in the Son? It is true that you and I, and the poorest of us, the meanest ever, embody that God, ever reflect that God. The vibration of light (Spiritual) is everywhere, omnipresent, but we have to strike the light of the lamp before we can see the light. "The omnipresent God of the universe cannot be Seen until He is reflected by these giant lamps of Earth – the prophets, the incarnations, the embodiments of God."

- Swami Vivekananda-III/I39

The enlightened souls, the great ones that come to the earth from time to time have the power to reveal the divine vision to us. They are already free and liberated; they do not care for their own salvation - they want to save others. The spiritual growth of mankind depends on these liberated souls. They are like the first lit candles from which other candles are lit. It is true that this light exists in everyone, but it has not yet been revealed in most. What separates an average man's soul from these great souls is that the latter's light shines. Those who come in contact with them become enlightened as well. Metaphorically speaking, the original lit candle does not lose anything by lighting other candles; yet it communicates its light to the other candles. A million candles are lit from the first candle, which is the spiritual teacher, or the incarnation, and the candle that is lit from it, is the disciple.

We need to respect all prophets of the past, present and future, because they are all incarnations of the same God. We should acknowledge them with all gratitude, all of the past prophets, whose teachings and lives we have inherited, whatever might have been their race, religion or creed. Our salutations go to all of the God-like men and women, who worked to help humanity equally, that is, without judgment of nationality, caste, religion or color. Furthermore, as Swami Vivekananda says, "Our salutations to those who are coming in future, living Gods, to work unselfishly for our descendants."

The living spiritual teacher Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji often says in his discourses that all

the prophets of the past must be regarded with due respect.

There are people who carry on meditating throughout their life to gain the knowledge of God, but do not achieve any success. However, if someone comes into contact with an incarnation of God, or the prophet, and surrenders himself to Him, he is blessed with the knowledge of God.

Nothing is impossible for the- Lord Master, he is not bound in the same way an average and ordinary person is. The reason that the Lord Master re-incarnates into a human form is to manifest virtue and to destroy evil. Though it is said that miracles are a violation of God's way to work, the Lord Master comes forward to bless and help sufferers and to manifest virtue among humans. Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj in one of his discourses, said, "There is nothing bad in asking from God. Surely, a child has the right to demand from his father, whenever he is in need".

The life of a Lord Master, Prophet or incarnation is always full of miracles. It is not easy to write about how many people were blessed to get relief from miseries and how many were blessed to have a better future. The truth is that the Lord Master has always come to the rescue of his devotees visibly as well as invisibly. When we compare the Holy Scriptures of different religions we find that essential message of all spiritual masters is the same; however, there can be minor changes in spreading the message according to the times and the situation.

Islam is described in the Koran as a continuation of the great monotheistic tradition revealed in constant succession to such prophets as Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. According to one of the sayings of the prophet Muhammad, **"I have not brought you a new Religion. I have brought you the religion, in an unchanged, untampered with way."**

- Essential Sufism p.4.

When we designate the Lord Masters as Prophets (which means that who gives the message of God) or Sat-gurus, we are defining them as the people who convey the messages or prophecies of God to human beings. Prophets convey God's message to human beings, as it is.

Desh kal te samey mutabik,
Satgur jiven chalda ey,
Hukam Ehda Sir Mathe Dhar Ke,
Gursikh chalda Janda ey

- Avtar Bani-226

This means that the Lord Master guides human society according to the country, the time, the circumstances and the will of God. The followers of the Lord Master (present in human body) absorb and act upon his teachings, without questioning

My religion and mission is to unite the divided humanity.

My followers accept this as an article of faith and act on it.

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

Human beings stand divided today on the basis of religion, caste, creed, nationality, color and language. The mission to unite all humanity continues to exist and flourish through Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji, successor of Baba Gurbachan Singh Ji. He is working relentlessly to complete the mission of uniting the divided humanity. He teaches his followers to have firm faith that 'God is One', and that the true religion of mankind is humanity and that universal brotherhood is their goal

**Religion unites, never divides
We must live together in harmony**

- Baba Hardev Singh Ji

Further Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj says, that the religion always teaches to unite the mankind. Whenever the Satguru incarnate, appears among human beings, he gives the same message to know God and live together in harmony. He further guides the humanity to maintain brotherhood with the feelings in mind that we are all the children of one Supreme Father - God.

* * *

SALVATION AND CONFINEMENT

It is upon union with the Almighty God (Formless) that the soul becomes liberated. Such union is a state of freedom. For salvation, one must attune oneself with Nirankar (Formless God). If one wishes to experience daylight, then it is crucial for the sun to appear. Without the morning sun there cannot be a break of dawn. Similarly, for the Liberation of the soul one has to become enlightened. This is possible by way of attaining divine insight about formless God.

- Baba Hardev Singh Ji

According to spiritual philosophy, gaining the knowledge of God is a pre-requisite to achieving salvation; no one can ever get salvation without knowing God. The question that arises from this statement is, "Does a man get salvation just by knowing God alone?" The answer is "NO." The creation and the Creator are never separate from each other. In the same way, a man is never separate from God. The body is a lifeless creation and it is alive due to the consciousness present in it. The mind (representing individual consciousness) out of ignorance has separated itself. Due to ignorance the mind has attached itself to the creation part and has forgotten the Creator, which is the universal Consciousness. Therefore, the mind has to be synchronized with the supreme consciousness after being aware of it, in order to achieve salvation or freedom, or in other words, to be reunited with the universal consciousness which is possible only through the Lord Master.

The main reason for confinement of human beings is materialism, and materialistic comforts. Today, man has all sorts of comforts available to him, such as, better clothes to adorn and also to protect himself from extreme types of weather conditions, like cold winters and hot summers. There are many types of preservation systems in place, like refrigerators and freezers in homes, offices and other types of buildings to conserve food and to keep it fresh for human consumption. During the winter, homes, offices, cars, buses, trains and aircraft are all centrally heated and in the summer they are all cooled by air conditioning systems to desired temperatures. These and other kinds of luxuries in life attract and cause man to get himself confined, if he becomes obsessed with them.

There is another aspect to confinement, which is caused by the attachment created through various human relationships, such as the love between a husband and a wife, between a parent and a child and so on. These relations increase feelings of love and affection, and once again the obsession of them creates confinement.

The mind is always in motion and is constantly inclined-towards different types of attachments, love, hatred and desires. Desires never cease; in fact they continue to increase. Once a man fulfills his desire, he wishes to fulfill the same desire over and over again. Or once one desire is fulfilled, a new one comes into thought and its completion becomes the next goal. This is an ongoing type of attachment and it is seemingly very difficult to control, as well.

All of the above mentioned attachments are a confinement for the mind and cause it to remain attached to materialistic comforts. Before dying a man fears losing all of the comforts that he is so used to and that he has become so attached to, and hopes to get a similar type or better type of life again.

The knowledge of God is the wisdom that enables humans to realize that true happiness cannot be attained through materialistic comforts. God alone is above matter; rather He is the creator of material. The creator knows that only he exists everywhere and that there is no second existence. The creation is only a dream or an imagination, although it seems to be real. In any case, a mere imagination cannot be enjoyed practically. The enjoyment of an imagination can never provide a real satisfaction to the one who imagines it. Salvation means freedom, the phenomenon of freedom from desire. All of the different species of creatures on this earth are craving for freedom whether it is a bird, an insect, an animal or a human. Man is a superior creation and along with his quest to have freedom throughout his life he also wants to become immortal. Even though we all know that every living creature has to die one day, there are still a few human beings who aspire to escape the cycle of death and birth. It is this kind of thinking that inclined man to find the key to becoming immortal. According to Vedanta:-

In man there is the real self, which is, everlasting, unchanging, the same yesterday, today, tomorrow and forever; in man there is something, which knows no death, which knows no change. The practical non-belief in death is due to the existence of this real self-eternal, immortal self that asserts its existence in the practical non-belief in death.

This means that there is something in man, which does not die, which is the real self.

The physical eye is blind to many miracles of life. For example, a foetus is not visible in the mother's womb by the naked eye, and the fire that exists in wood is not visible by the naked eye either. Similarly, a soul is present in all bodies and is invisible. When something is burnt, the fire or the flame that comes out of it takes the shape of the burning material. Sometimes the flame is in the shape of a lamp and sometimes that of a wild jungle fire. The flame or fire is one. Similarly, the soul lives in various bodies, and takes on the shape of the entity in which it exists, but is one.

- Kath Upanishad 4/8, 5/9

The knowledge of God is only possible in human life, which is the first and foremost condition for salvation. Ignorance is the main cause of confinement. Those who are not aware of God, the super consciousness, remain limited to the attraction of the comforts of human life, and they can never think beyond it. There are some religious persons who guide humans to doing good deeds in order to enter into heaven. Heavenly life is full of comforts that are available effortlessly, contrary to our human life, where we have to put in the effort to gain luxuries or comforts. After enjoying heavenly life, souls have to come into human life again and thus the cycle of life, death, heavenly life and human life continues. There is no escape from this cycle. This is known as confinement; where a man always remains a slave and never become his own master.

Once a man gets the knowledge of God and follows a righteous path, he can then enjoy a saintly life; and he is also unaffected by material enjoyments. He never feels he is a slave of Nature. Nature does its job whereas such a saintly person is always happy within himself. The true saint who has realized God remains unaffected in both types of situations, troublesome and full of happiness. The balance of his mind remains undisturbed and he remains in peaceful state.

Our confinement is a result of our attachment and attraction to materialistic comforts. We enjoy the creation and we do not feel the enjoyment of the creator. Once we start enjoying the creator, the creation automatically seems tasteless and without any joy in it. Then the soul settles down in its master soul, or super-consciousness. This is the state of salvation. A man in confinement enjoys a materialistic life, which is a type of slavery and there is no hope of getting out of it. The knower of God, however, enjoys both types of life, the materialistic as well as the holy life. He always feels he is neither a body nor a mind. He is above all. In fact such a person celebrates his life, he is neither too happy with happiness nor too sad with troubles or discomforts.

Life is a combination of good and bad, happiness and sorrow, comforts and discomforts. If both types of life, materialistic and spiritual, exist, then why not live life as a knower of God? We, actually, need God-realization so that we remain involved and also remain uninvolved in our life, that is, detached attachment.

After knowing and seeing the omnipresent spirit, or the supreme soul, all sorts of doubts vanish. Whether we do good or bad deeds seem meaningless, rather they disappear in their own nature. Then whatever deed is done has to be fruitless, because it is not done with the mentality of selfishness or for the self-benefit by discomforting others. When our deeds become fruitless then we also become free from the cycle of birth and death and stabilize our

self in the master soul.

- Mundak Upanishad 2/5

God is a greatest scientist who has already created the Universe and life in a scientific and miraculous way. Scientists are still finding out how every thing has been created and also what is the meaning of life on this planet. Science is not separate from God. God has established the entire universe systematically and will also destroy it when He desires as per His own system. Science is the result of wisdom and the same wisdom when represented in the human body can realize its original form. Anybody who knows his originality is free and attains salvation.

After realizing the universal self through the holy teacher Vashisht, Lord Rama said, " My Lord, after achieving the greatest knowledge on earth now I feel and declare: My hands are not tied, I don't feel I am in some prison nor do, I feel I am the slave of anyone or any force. Now that I know, I feel my hands are not tied so I do not feel any necessity of un-tie them. Now, I don't have the feeling of being a prisoner, then why should I have any desire to be freed? Similarly, as I do not feel I am a slave of any other force, I do not need to follow any method for achieving any salvation nor do I need to get rid of any type of slavery."

- Yog Vashisht (60)

After the realization of God from the holy teacher Ashtavakar, King Janak said,

It is amazing that the existence of the universe in me, in fact does not exist in me. So neither I am bound nor I am free. Now my astonishment has vanished, my doubt of duality has vanished.

- Ashta Vakar Gita (2/18)

I am merely knowledge (of God). But due to ignorance, the existence of the world was purely my imagination. This physical body, heaven, hell, confinement freedom and fear are merely an imagination; I being a supreme consciousness have no connection with them.

- Ashta Vakar Gita (2/20)

Adi Guru Shankaracharya says that mind is the greatest ignorance. Mind is the only reason for human's binding (confinement) or freedom. When the mind becomes materialistic then it is bound (confined) when it becomes enlightened and non-materialistic then it is free.

- Vivek Chudamani (59)

AB TAU JAI CHADHE SINGHASAN
MILE HAI SARANG PANI
RAM KABIRA EK BHAYE HAI
KOI NA SAKE PEHECHANI

- Adi Granth : 969

In the above quotation, Saint Kabir says that now he has climbed and sat on the throne and attained oneness with God and his stage has become very high, he has attained unity with Ram (God) and nobody can identify them separately. This is the state of salvation of a living man (a Saint). The meaning of Ram is, present in all, in other words, omnipresent.

Neither you are born out of something different from you, nor are you made out something different out of you. You never vanish and you remain for ever. You never die with the death of body.

- Kath Upnishad (2/18)

Some people, and even some religions and sects, believe that God is sitting somewhere up above in heaven or in caves and deciding their fate down here on earth. God is an invisible force present everywhere. God is a supreme consciousness that exists in the purest form, yet the consciousness existing in our minds has impurities. Removing the impurities from our consciousness and attuning to the supreme pure consciousness is known as freeing ourselves from confinement and attaining salvation.

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RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Religion is a science in which the truth can be known and understood, it provides the path that needs to be followed to reach up to the ultimate destination. The truth is one, and the destination is one as well.

EKOBERAHM DUTIYA NAHN ASTI

- Rig Veda

This means, "Only one Brahm (God) exists everywhere, there is no second existence."

This brings into question the meaning of existing and non-existing. What exists and what does not exist? Existence can be defined as the subject of science and religion. Whereby, non-existence can be defined as the subject of religion. Although science describes what nothingness is, consciousness is described in religion only. The knowledge of God has been conveyed through religion by different Prophets at different times through their sacred books.

Ancient Indian religious philosophy believes that originally there was only void and that two invisible forces formed within it by the order of God. The first force was PRAN, an active force that played a huge role in the creation, and it is also present everywhere. The second force was Akash present everywhere like void and known as the first element. It is said that through the interaction of PRAN and Akash the creation started.

From AKASH, there was the formation of air. From air, there was the formation of fire. From fire, there was the formation of water and from water there was the formation of soil.

Rig Veda

PRAN as per ancient Indian religious philosophy has been identified as latent fire and can

also be described as heat, light, electricity, and as the electromagnetic field. In living creatures it is known as the life force, bioelectricity, energy and also the AURA (an electromagnetic field formed inside and around the body of living creatures).

It is said that because of the vibration in PRAN, there was a reaction in Akash and air was formed. Air has loose atoms that flow here and there, thus motion started. The motion of atoms causes friction and friction becomes the cause of fire. Fire creates the dampness (Water) in the air and water condenses all the particles and solidifies them to take the shape of liquids and solids.

The great saint Piplad said:-

Kabandhi, it is famous and written in the Vedas that, in the beginning when God desired to create the universe he created two forces i.e. "Raye" and "Pran". The main reason for this was that both of these forces with the help of each other would create a beautiful world. "Raye" is the name of the force, that is a combination of all five elements, and its main objective is to shape or to form. "Pran" is the name of the life force that is in all creatures (forms).

Prashan Upanishad 2/9

Latent fire, which is formless, is present everywhere in the universe, yet when it burns, it takes the shape of the object that is burning. God is by nature present in all creatures. Like fire, God also represents itself in all creatures but the representations differ according to different bodies and shapes. The universe is full of many types of miraculous powers.

Prashan Upanishad 2/9

This formless latent fire, that is present in the entire universe, is called "PRAN". The law of generator states that if any conductor is rotated in the magnetic field the E.M.F (electromotive force) is induced. The electromagnetic force (which is the conversion of mechanical energy into electrical energy) is the voltage that flows the electric current into the conductors or wires. It can be converted into light, fire and heat when connected with different appliances.

Rig Veda

Sometimes we can see static electricity in the clouds, and it becomes very hazardous if it hits the ground, for example in the form of lightning.

I remember an incident that occurred in the year 2000, in Chandigarh, India. A 9th grade student was visiting his relatives on the weekend and was playing cricket with his friends. Suddenly, it became cloudy but the children continued playing. When the said boy ran after the ball, unexpectedly static electricity fell on him and he died on the spot. All of the other boys playing cricket were safe. The next day, when I saw that particular place where the boy was struck, the ground was black and the grass was burnt.

The great saint Piplad says:-

Fire, known as "Vaishvanar", acts as the digesting force in all creatures to digest food, and is also a minute part of the Sun and can even be called the Sun. The divided Pran acting in

creatures acts in five different ways in different parts of the bodies. These are known as: Pran, Apan, Sam an, 'Yan and Udan and they are also a part of the sun or can even be called Sun.

Prashan Upanishad 1/7

All colorful formations with different kinds of forms and bodies on earth are born and enlightened by the main source, the Sun. The Sun is the main life force for all of the living creation on this earth. The Sun is the life force (Pran) in all creatures in the world, and there is no second life force. The Sun appears in the form of Pran to provide heat, light. and life and to change the seasons and to fulfill all of our necessities of life

Prashan Upanishad 1/8

It is clear that all five elements, i.e., Akash, air, water, fire and soil constitute the physical bodies whereas the Pran (fire - latent heat) keeps it working as a life force. God Himself acts as the consciousness in all creatures. But the ignorant consciousness of all creatures like dogs, cats, cows, horses, birds, reptiles, insects and human beings differ from each other. The consciousness of a man thinks and behaves like a man, the consciousness of a dog, cat, bird, reptile or insect thinks and behaves according to their requirements. These souls are called the individual self and they are formed out of ignorance. Once the ignorance is removed (possible in human birth only) the ego of the individual "I" vanishes and the universal "I" ever exists.

THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE HAS BEEN ENLIGHTENED BY THE
LIGHT (POWER) OF ONE INVISIBLE SUPREME SOUL

- Kath Upanishad-I 5

Invisible electricity flows in cables in the form of electrons (invisible) and we use it according to our requirements, for example light bulbs, tube lights, fans, refrigerators, air conditioners and heaters. Likewise one God works in all different bodies according to their requirements.

I remember a time when Swami Vivekanada (a great saint from India) visited America to convey spiritual knowledge to brothers and sisters of the western world. He met an Indian scientist sir Jagdish Chander Bose and shared his views. After their meeting Swami Vivekanada said, "Science is blind without religion and religion is lame without science." I agree that today's human society is what it is because of our religious teachers. At the same time we have to agree that scientists have given us a better quality of life. If religion and science unite, the total ignorance in the world can be removed and life can be peaceful. Now, let us proceed to see what information our great scientists have provided us with.

Hareld Fritsch states in his book, The Creation of Matter:

In the beginning there was nothing, neither time nor space, neither stars nor planets, neither rocks nor plants, neither animals nor human beings. Everything came out of the void. It all began with space, time and very hot plasma composed of quarks, electrons and other particles. The plasma cooled off rapidly and protons, neutrons, atomic particles, atoms, stars, galaxies and planets were formed. Finally, life sprung up in many solar systems of the universe - in one case on a planet of a most ordinary star

situated on a spiral arm of a galaxy at the rim of a large cluster of galaxies over the course of our billion years, plants and animals and eventually human beings, developed out of simplest organisms.

Originally human beings thought that they stood in the center of the universe, that the world was made for them alone. They invented Gods and divine schemes that they believed governed the world. The world of human beings was small and the firmament (Sky) enveloped the world like protective skin.

500 years ago, about 20 billion years after the birth of the universe after the "big bang", we human beings began systematic explorations of our environment and ourselves. Toward the end of millennium we began to see that the diversity of the world could indeed be explained. All matter in the universe, including ourselves is composed of two types of minute building blocks: Quarks and particles of the atomic shell electrons. We have come to understand that we are not the center of the universe, which we merely live inside a rather unremarkable galaxy. We still have not made contact with other inhabitants of the universe in the other solar systems, but we sense that we may not be alone. We have also learned that we are the product of a complex yet rationally comprehensible process of development, determined by both history and interplay of chance and necessity. We have come to realize that we must live without Gods, which we alone are responsible for. We have begun to sense that the universe does not hold the answer to questions about the meaning of life that it is up to us to find the answer.

The bold idea of modern times since Newton lay in the vision that we could learn to understand the cosmos through thought and active observation and exploration of nature. The past fifty years have seen a significant evolution of thought.

Modern physics examines the structure of matter at minute distances, which are more than a billion times as small as the diameter of an atom. Questions about the structure of the universe, about the origin of matter, about the beginning and the possible end of the world, today are not the questions of religion but the questions to which scientists with the help of particle accelerators and telescopes are hoping to find an answer. Modern biology, biochemistry and biophysics are concerned with the question of the origin of life and thus the ultimate problem of our origin.

In the same book, Niels Bohr, one of the founders of atomic theory, says,

We are at the same time spectators and actors in the great drama of Nature. Wholeness and detail- these are two extremes in the spectrum of possibilities that we in science are investigating. When you say that you can do without the detail and will accept only the whole, you are forgoing an important part of all the possible ways of looking at nature. Moreover, such a position cannot really be strictly maintained.

Further Mr. Harold Fritzsch says, again in the same book:

With nothing but your whole you could not exist here at all. If we were not to split up the world into individual details we would not survive in the long run. We would have to give up not only science but also all technology. Our modern civilization with all its merits and faults would collapse, and we would have to return to the forests of our

forebears. I don't think that you are one of those extremists who would really want that to happen. Science is a systematic method for the investigation of the connections between detachable phenomena. However, that does not mean that scientists split up the world into little pieces at every available opportunity.

I agree with the great scientist Mr. Hareld Fritzch that the investigations of science are to find out what is what, what is the universe, what is the world, what is life and why life came into existence. Also these investigations are necessary to further develop scientific systems and technologies to make life on earth progressively comfortable for human beings. Every individual is equally important and must be given an equal opportunity to exist peacefully.

Religion believes in wholeness, i.e. the existence of one power in the form of the whole diversity and at the same time it strongly believes in disciplined freedom, equal rights and peaceful ways of living especially for humans.

Religion teaches us to know the ultimate truth and keep the whole race united. If religion is misunderstood, it is split into pieces, peace is disturbed, and hatred among humans is spread all around. The teachings of all the Prophets on this globe are very similar; the only necessity is to know, understand and to follow them truly. Only then can we say that we have understood religion. "Religion unites never divides" is the saying of the present day spiritual teacher, Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj.

According to the Bible, the Old Testament, the first couple created by God was Adam and Eve, and then they created the entire human race on this planet. Similarly according to the Bhagwat Puran (ancient Hindu book), and Manu Samriti (ancient Hindu scripture), the first couple created by God was Manu and Shatrupa and then they created the entire human race on this planet. The names of these couples are actually of the same couple, as there is a similarity in the meanings of their names. Manu - means Manav or Manushaya, which means a Man. Adam means 'adami', which also means a Man. The only difference is that both of these couples appeared on this planet as first human beings at different times. Manu and Shatrupa were the first humans to appear in their time and they appeared in India, whereas Adam and Eve appeared as the first humans at a different time, and in another part of the world. Life has been created and destroyed completely, at different times. For example, the first 'couple, Manu & Shatrupa saved whoever they could on their "ship", and life started over after the world was destroyed, and in the same way, Noah saved whoever he could on his ship, when the world was destroyed, and then the world started over again. These are two proofs of a similar nature describing the same phenomena, but at different times.

Now, let us analyze the other question, "What agency created or manifested the universe, and what created the agency"? Or perhaps the universe or the agency that created it existed forever and did not need to be created? Well, as I have already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, that with the order of God the agencies named, "Akash and Pran" or say "Ether and Fire" appeared to build the universe and the universe was manifested, and is still expanding. In the same way life was created on our earth by the same agencies "Akash and Pran". The purpose of Akash, Air, Soil, Fire, and Water is to create forms and bodies, and the purpose of Pran (the latent fire, light, latent heat, electricity) is to make the bodies active.

The mind is the "thinking force" in all creatures, which is part of the supreme consciousness but under ignorance. We think we are parallel forces to the supreme consciousness and we are free to act, but it is not always possible to achieve the desired success. Once the ignorance of being an individual is removed, only then can we say that only one power is the creator of everything.

It is correct to say that God does not unnecessarily intervene in the creation, function and destruction of the universe because its initially created forces are active and following the universal laws.

However, at the same time whenever we pray to God for help, he does help us and we experience miracles. Of course, whenever Prophets or incarnations bless human beings, miracles are often seen. Prophets are in unity with God and their mental state is neither disturbed by the behaviors of their own bodies nor by the behaviors of bodies of other human beings.

Science has started believing that space, void, emptiness, nothingness, is everything and is the main cause for the universe and the life existing on this and other planets. The faith of religion also resembles science, but the word "God" irritates some scientists and also those that follow the beliefs of the said scientists. I would like to interject with a more complete thought that a human body is nothing but a corpse without the consciousness, and similarly the void, space, emptiness, or nothingness is nothing without the universal consciousness. Because, the space, void, nothingness, emptiness, is not only empty or nothing, it is fully conscious with all kind of characteristics of Pran and Akash.

Some of the people believe less in the spiritual world. However religion strongly believes, in the spiritual world. In the Bhagwad Gita and other Indian religious books two types of creation have been described, namely Para Prakriti and Aparakriti, also described as two types of energy, non-matter and matter. Matter is the energy that creates the material world and non-matter creates the non-material world. The living entities (souls), which are superior forms, are created by non-material energy, whereas inferior forms, which constitute the material world, are created by material energy. However, the source of both the material and non material energy is the living One.

The Bible (Old Testament) states that when the first human Adam was created God ordered all the angels to salute him. All of the angels saluted Adam who had a unique and beautiful body made up of flesh and blood, except for one angel, Ibliss. He refused to obey the order of God, saying, "Adam is made out of mud, whereas I am made out of fire, I am superior to him, so why should I salute to him?" In this example the meaning of fire is the omnipresent energy "Pran", the latent fire, also called the non-matter energy. This clearly indicates that souls are nothing but the electromagnetic network combined with the mind and senses. Souls are non-matter structures (Para Prakriti) and also superior forms of creation. Physical bodies consisting of flesh and blood are known as material structures (Aparakriti) in other words, the inferior creation.

Material bodies are often prone to all kinds of physical and mental diseases that are known to human beings. Souls, on the other hand, are prone to mental diseases only, like worries and attachment to the material world and its comforts. They long to acquire a physical body over and over again. And so, the cycle of birth and death continues forever. The greatest mental

disease of the non-matter bodies (souls) is the ignorance of who they are, where they have come from, and where will they go? What is their originality? They remain in such form (non-matter/soul) until their ignorance is removed.

I remember a time when I had taken a trip with my family to Dalhousie (a hill station in India). We visited a nearby lake where my son Rajeev wanted to do some horseback riding. The horse's owner explained to Rajeev all of the necessary instructions to ride and control the horse, such as, to keep the reins stretched, and to slightly tap the horse in a continuous motion to make the horse move, and so on. Rajeev took one round on horseback near the lake and then at one place the horse entered into a water outlet' and started to drink the water. Rajeev thought he would fall into the water so he tried his best to pull the horse away from the water, but it was in vain. The horse did not move until he had quenched his thirst, and then retracted at his own will. Essentially, horses are trained to follow particular rules and particular laws and under normal circumstances they do so. However, when it is a question of their own needs, then responding to those becomes their priority, and they may not follow the usual ~les and thus, they will not react appropriately to specific directions or instructions from the rider.

In essence, generally laws and the mind are two different things. Laws can never supersede the mind, and it is the mind that obeys or disobeys laws. Likewise, the universe follows a number of laws, as well, whereas sometimes it may not conform. Whether laws are adhered to or not depends on the mind, or the consciousness, of the universe. This Universal Consciousness guides not only this universe, but also the many countless creatures living on all of the planets. The individual consciousness in all living creatures exists because of the one universal consciousness.

Scientists claim that space; nothingness, emptiness, or void is the main cause for the creation and the function of the Universe. This is true, but without the wisdom (Universal consciousness) of space, it is not possible to create and control such a great network as the universe. The following are examples from different religious philosophies that all agree on this theory.

The Vedas and Upanishads (Indian scriptures) claim that God exists everywhere, inside and outside of the universal diversity.

In Buddhism we see the same beliefs, as well. There was once an educated person that came to Lord Buddha and asked, "Are you the one among the gods, because it looks as if you have descended from heaven?" Lord Buddha replied, "No, I am not." The person then asked, "Are you God?" Lord Buddha again replied, "No, I am not God." Now, a bit confused, the person said, "Well, now you will probably say that you are not man either, right?" Lord Buddha replied, "Please do not be angry, but it is true, I am not a man either." The person, now agitated, asked, "What are you then?" Lord Buddha looked at that person peacefully and replied, "As a matter of fact, I am the 'awareness' around my body."

We see another example of this ideology descending from Lord Jesus Christ. In 1945, a scroll dating back to the 1 century was discovered in Nag Hamadi. This scroll was totally written in Aramaic, which is the language that Jesus(and His disciples spoke. This scroll is described as, "The secret sayings of the Living Jesus", and is considered to be' Jesus' instructions to His disciples given at the "Last Supper", on how to continue His church after His death. This

scroll, the Gospel of St. Thomas, has been claimed by scholars around the world to be the closest record we have of the words of the historical Jesus. The first words of this Gospel when translated read,

***The kingdom of God is inside you and all around you
Not in buildings of wood and stone
Split a piece of wood and I am there
Lift a stone and you will find me***

These are the hidden sayings that the living Jesus spoke; whoever discovers the meaning of these sayings will not taste death.

- Stigmata, 1999

Ultimately, the awareness or consciousness in and around the body is the one that the incarnations, prophets, or spiritual teachers call God. Thus, God is the greatest scientist to have created and controlled such a huge limitless universe. God is also the one functioning in human scientists as the wisdom to discover the ways of the creation and its function, and also to research new ways to make human life more comfortable.

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