

# *A Great Saint - Baba Jaimal Singh:*

## *His Life and Teachings*

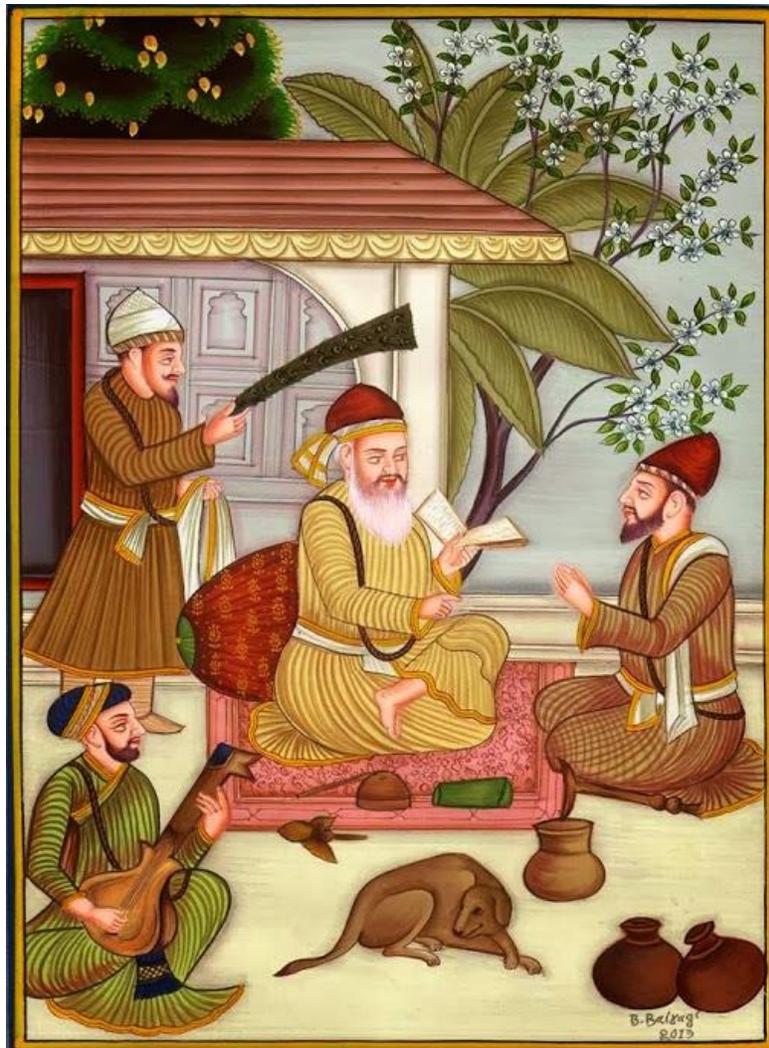
By Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj

(Excerpts)

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Selections from *Spiritual Letters*:

Correspondence from Baba Jaimal Singh to Baba Sawan Singh



Even after a hundred years of Bhajan one does not get so purified as by an intense longing for darshan, provided that the longing is real and true and the love for the Satguru is from the innermost heart.

(Baba Jaimal Singh; Sant Kirpal Singh's Grand-Guru)

1838-1903



## Rediscovering Lost Strands

Before proceeding with the life sketch of Baba Jaimal Singh Ji, it would be worth our while to have a peep into the background that made him what he was. It was indeed the power of Swami Ji that flowed through him in whatever he did and wherever he worked, for he was wholly lost to himself and given over to the divine within him.

In order to understand things in their proper perspective and to link up the history of our spiritual heritage, we will have to go back to Guru Gobind Singh (1666–1708), the last of the ten Gurus in the line of succession to Guru Nanak.

The Rani (Queen) of one Ratan Rao Peshwa, accompanied by Bhai Nand Lal, came to the feet of Guru Gobind Singh for refuge.

Guru Gobind Singh traveled widely, penetrating the Himalayas in the north and going to Deccan in the south. During his extensive travels, he met and lived with the ruling family of the Peshwas and initiated some of its members into the inner science. It is said that one Ratnagar Rao of the Peshwa family was initiated and authorized to carry on the work by Guru Gobind Singh.

Sham Rao Peshwa, the elder brother of Baji Rao Peshwa, the then ruling chief, who must have contacted Ratnagar Rao, showed a remarkable aptitude for the spiritual path and made rapid headway. In course of time, this young scion of the royal family settled in Hathras, a town thirty-three miles away from Agra in the Uttar Pradesh, and came to be known as Tulsi Sahib (1763–1843), the famous author of Ghat Ramayana, the science of the inner life-principle pervading alike in man and nature. The vita lampada of spirituality was passed on by Tulsi Sahib to Swami Shiv Dayal Singh Ji (1818–1878).

The link between Tulsi Sahib of Hathras and Swami Ji of Agra is likely to be overlooked, but there can be little doubt of it.

The Hathras Saint took a keen and lively interest in casting the life of Swami Ji in his own mold. He initiated the young child at a very early age and Swami Ji, on the last day of his life, told his disciples that he had been practicing the inner science from the age of six.

Before his passing away in 1843, Tulsi Sahib bequeathed his spiritual heritage to Swami Ji. For six months Tulsi Sahib lay in a state of samadhi lost in divine consciousness. It was only after Swami Ji had paid him a visit that Tulsi Sahib quitted his mortal frame.

Baba Garib Das, one of the earliest disciples of Tulsi Sahib, confirmed that the spiritual mantle had been entrusted by his Master to Munshi Ji (as Swami Ji was then known on account of his great learning in Persian).

Swami Ji was to spend fifteen years of his life in almost incessant abhyasa (spiritual practice), in a small closet.

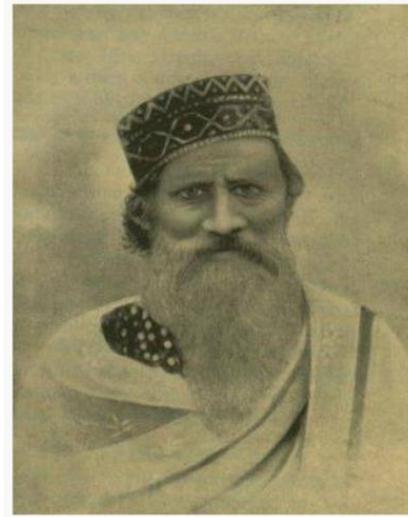
Among Swami Ji's trusted and devoted disciples was Rai Saligram Sahib Bahadur – popularly known in later times as Hazur Maharaj, after he came to occupy the spiritual headship.

While Hazur Maharaj, after the passing away of Swami Ji, continued his discourses at Pipal Mandi in the heart of Agra city, Partap Singh, the younger brother of Swami Ji, generally called Chacha Sahib (respected uncle), carried on the work in Radhasoami Garden, three miles away from Agra city.

Another disciple, Baba Jaimal Singh Ji, one of the earliest and most spiritually advanced disciples of Swami Ji, as directed by the Great Master himself, settled down at Beas in the Punjab to revitalize the work of spirituality and to repay in some measure the debt that the world owed to Guru Nanak.



Tulsi Sahib of Hathras



Swami Ji Maharaj (Seth Shiv Dayal Singh)

## The Early Years

It was in 1838 that Baba Jaimal Singh was born in the village of Ghuman in the Gurdaspur District of the Punjab, to a family of pious Sikh cultivators.

The history of a Saint is the history of a soul's pilgrimage. It is a story which to be spiritually complete covers innumerable years and countless lives. The final enlightenment may seem sudden, but its preparatory stages are long and arduous. Like Buddha and Jesus, Jaimal showed remarkable spiritual precocity from a very early age.

When visiting the shrine of Baba Namdev with his parents, unlike other children of his age, he would sit calm and attentive; and even as a child of three he could repeat many of the verses he heard at spiritual discourses. The villagers wondered at his prodigiousness. He was soon nicknamed Bal-Sadh or "child-saint,"...

At his sister's, Jaimal continued his old schedule of religious practices and goat-grazing. Many a month passed away in this uneventful manner. Then one day while following his herd he met a yogi who had just arrived at the village. Happy to find the company of the holy, he bowed in reverence, milked his goats and offered the yogi a drink of milk. The man in saffron was touched by the lad's piety and began to question him. Jaimal told him of the scriptures he had read and the intense desire for enlightenment they had sparked in him. The yogi was very pleased by the

account and offered to train him. He told him frankly that as regards the mystique of Naam he knew little, but whatever he himself practiced he would freely impart. So next morning as instructed, Jaimal proceeded, without having eaten anything, to his newly-discovered guide for initiation. The yogi was an adept in pranayama and instructed his young disciple into its secrets.

Having found a spiritual guide, Jaimal was once again lost to the world. His old holy indifference to family ties and worldly affairs returned, if anything with redoubled intensity. He would often sit for three hours at a stretch in meditation. The yogi, pleased by his devotion, stayed on in the village and Jaimal was more often than not, to be found in his company.

At Ghuman, Jaimal revived his association with Bhai Khem Das and continued to greet visiting sadhus as of yore. He was now in his fourteenth year and continued with unmitigated zeal the practice of the sadhans he had learned. But he soon began to hunger for more. The yogic practices he had mastered failed to satisfy him, and on reading the Granth Sahib he became convinced of a higher reality, to be attained by different means.

As he progressed on the path, he became progressively more detached from the world. He noted all the esoteric hints and references to the five-worded Word, the Panch Shabd, to be found in the Sikh scriptures, and kept pondering over them, asking every new yogi or sadhu he met if he could explain them to him; but all in vain.

At this stage of his search, he and his family suffered a sad bereavement. He was not yet fourteen when his father fell ill and died. The family was grief-stricken but Jaimal's spiritual discipline worked as a protective shield. Quoting from the scriptures, he comforted his mother and his two younger brothers and discouraged any weeping or wailing. If the soul was deathless and if all was according to the Lord's will, then why any mourning?

## The Great Search

Had Jaimal's interest in spirituality been only a seed cast on rock or sand or a sapling yet tender in its fiber, had it been no more than the mere curiosity or the spontaneous piety of a simple village lad, the passing away of his father would have rung the death-knell of his quest. As the eldest member of the family, the burden of domestic responsibilities fell on his shoulders; and **perhaps more souls are lost to heaven by the sense of duty to earth than by downright sin and evil**

(emphasis added).

But Jaimal's urge was a plant of tougher roots and stronger fiber. Undaunted and unmoved, he divided the outdoor duties among his brothers, kept up his old exacting routine, and in six months' time mastered the Yoga Vashishta and Vichar Sangreh, two standard works of Hindu theology.

...Like his contemporary Sri Ramakrishna (1836–1886), Jaimal Singh was destined to sit at the feet of many intermediary masters before meeting his True One. Like him, he was destined to learn many a sadhan and make rapid headway in each. And like him he was destined not to be bound, like other yogis, to any of them, but to press ever forwards toward a higher and still higher goal. His early mastery of the Granth Sahib stood him in good stead. It worked as an infallible touchstone with which to test every new attainment and to know that his real goal lay still further ahead.

Having practiced japa and pranayama, and having delved into the ecstasy of the Ghor Anhad, the quest for the secret of the five-worded Word became Jaimal's over-mastering passion. While at Amritsar, he did not fail to contact other yogis and sadhus, questioning them for the clues of that which he sought...

...The ways of Providence are mysterious. A seeker's way may be cluttered with countless obstacles which may almost seem to break his heart, yet at the very moment when the spirit is on the brink of collapse, it whispers a word of encouragement and flashes a ray of hope, saving him from the giant despair and putting him on the road to New Jerusalem.

And so the boy, now fifteen, met at Nankana Sahib, Bhai Jodha Singh of the Namdhari sect who directed him to Baba Balak Singh of Hazro, a village beyond Attock in what later came to be known as the north-western frontier province. With undeterred resolution, Jaimal set out on the long journey...

He was very happy to meet the venerable Baba Balak Singh who was impressed by the young visitor's keenness of mind and intensity of spiritual yearning. They passed some delightful days together reading, reciting and discussing the Granth Sahib. Balak Singh was a man of great wisdom and piety, but as far as spirituality was concerned he, like Gulab Das, was only conversant with japa through prana, and knew little of the Panch Shabdi Naam spoken of by Kabir and the great Sikh Gurus. However he gave his young friend hope and directed him to Chikker to a householder Sikh of great spiritual eminence.

Jaimal arrived from Hazro in the village of Chikker and began inquiring for the man he sought. He seemed to find no clue till he met an old retired Sikh who asked the young stranger if he could assist him in any way. Jaimal related from where he had come and the object of his quest, and asked to be guided to the local saint. The old gentleman, who was himself the man he sought, kindly replied that no such saint lived in that village as far as he knew, but offered to do for him whatever little lay in his power.

Jaimal's long and exacting search now at last began to yield some fruit. The householder mahatma at whose home he now found himself gave him the first definite clues of what he sought and put him on the first rung of the spiritual ladder. Shortly after his arrival the God-intoxicated boy received initiation. His earlier assumptions were confirmed and he now knew it for certain that the Path of Naam had little to do with other yogic practices. But after initiation he pointed out that the scriptures spoke of the five-worded Word and he had been imparted only two. On hearing this, his host and preceptor related to him the story of his own initiation:

“It was many years ago that I went to Peshawar. There I met a great Mahatma and wished to be initiated by him. He accepted me as a disciple and unlocked to me the mystery of the first two Shabdhas, bidding me to come back again as early as possible.



“I proceeded to my village and intended to return soon. But such are the traps of Maya that I was unable, due to some unexpected piece of business, to fulfil my wish. Two months went by in this way, and when I did at last reach Peshawar, my Master had passed away, taking with him the key to the remaining phases of the divine Naam.”<sup>1</sup>

1. In the past it was a common practice with mystics to initiate their disciples by degrees into the inner science. After the sadhak had mastered one stage, he was acquainted with the mysteries of the next and so on to the end. The method was not in itself objectionable, but it often led to results of the kind we have just noted. Jaimal Singh was to meet another case like that of the Chikker mahatma a few years later at Delhi after being initiated by Swami Ji at Agra, when he met a Muslim fakir who too had suffered by the early death of his pir. To avoid such mishaps, Masters of the Surat Shabd Yoga nowadays initiate their disciples directly into the mysteries of all the five inner planes that the soul has to traverse before it can merge with the Absolute.

Jaimal had no choice. He had to be content with what he got. He stayed on with the Sikh mahatma for some time, enjoying his hospitality and inspiring company, and sedulously cultivating the gift he had received. Then a day arrived when he bade his latest teacher a touching farewell and set forth for Peshawar to pursue his unfulfilled quest. He had the satisfaction of being put on the right road, but he was not the man to rest till he had attained his goal. At this ancient frontier city he once again, like a keen huntsman, began seeking the trail of some man of full God-realization. But Peshawar was not the place where his quest was to be crowned with success and his thirst satiated.

...At the age of sixteen years and nine months, Jaimal Singh once again set out on his spiritual explorations. Having well-nigh exhausted the Punjab and the northwest, with the words of the Peshawar Sikh still reverberating in his ears, he bent his footsteps eastward. The times were insecure and the British had not yet fully entrenched themselves in their new northern conquests. Night travel was, therefore, prohibited, and sentries were stationed at night on the chief highways to prevent any stray travelers. But Jaimal Singh was too eager to be thus restricted. He would spend the first half of the night resting and sleeping and in the second, while the sentries were drowsing and dozing, continue his journey as quickly as possible...

Jaimal Singh, not knowing where to go, directed his steps towards Hardwar on the banks of the sacred Ganges, a favorite haunt of the holy. Traveling by night and by day, he footed the distance with commendable speed and in twelve days reached the Ganges.

He explored the ghats of Hardwar, then a small town almost entirely populated by pandits and sadhus, hearing learned yogis, questioning them and discussing his problems with them. From the main town he traveled alongside the river, visiting all the sacred spots in the neighborhood. At Tappo Ban he heard of a very old sadhu of about a hundred and fifty years who dwelt not far away in the heart of a thick jungle and possessed great powers but seldom spoke to those who came to see him.

Undaunted by the yogi's reported silence, Jaimal Singh wended his way into the forest and at last found the hermit's dwelling. The sadhu was busy with his spiritual practices and paid no heed to those that came to see him in order to be blessed by his sight...

When the sadhu came back after his bath, he at last showed some signs of being aware of his visitor's presence. He asked him who he was and what he wanted. The youth told his name, the place from whence he came and added,

“Holy one! For many years I have been in search of true spiritual enlightenment. I heard of your fame and your great powers and have come as a supplicant to your door. I have watched with interest your strange practices and if indeed they grant full liberation from inner restlessness, then pray instruct me into their secrets.”

The sadhu made no reply. He sat silent and closed his eyes and opening them after a while, he answered: “My son, my discipline is difficult and bestows many powers. But as for inner spiritual freedom, I am afraid it has not secured me that.”

Jaimal Singh wished to question the yogi still further, but the latter became silent and receded from the world of outer consciousness into that of meditation... The yogi at last rose from his seat and spent the second night in the same manner as the first. When day broke, he went for his bath, and on returning beckoned Jaimal to his side.

“My son, I cannot tell you much,” he said. “But in my meditation I saw that the Guru you seek dwells with his wife in Agra. He is indeed a great soul and discourses from the Granth Sahib. He shall unlock to you the treasures of the Panch Shabd. Proceed there and I myself will follow as soon as I can to partake of his bounty.”

What a burden fell off Jaimal Singh’s back! How many nights had he spent tossing and praying, wondering if God would ever grant his wishes! The stranger at Peshawar had given him hope, but his words were vague, and nothing was certain. Now at last a definite clue had been given to him and success appeared within sight. The Lord was indeed kind and did not ignore his humble servant’s supplication. Refreshed in spirit and confident in mind, the youth, with a heart overflowing with inexpressible gratitude, bowed before the yogi now enwrapped in silence and humbly took his leave.

## The Consummation

... Try as he might, his explorations seemed to lead nowhere. He could find no clue to the man he sought. Were his hopes baseless? Was the promise given him at Peshawar and confirmed in the heart of a forest on the banks of the sacred Ganges only a hoax and a delusion? Perhaps there had been error? Perhaps he was not yet ripe for the gift? Many thoughts crowded Jaimal Singh’s mind as he sat contemplating on the banks of the Jamuna one morning after having bathed in its waters. While he sat this morning, two men approached him, discussing personal matters.

At first he took scant notice of them for many came daily for a dip in the sacred river. But then a word shot through his ears and he was all attention. Yes, they were talking of a Swami Ji, a great sage, who often discoursed upon the Sikh scriptures at his home to a small audience. Jaimal Singh was on his feet. He accosted the strangers, inquired of them about the great man of whom they spoke and begged to be conducted to his dwelling.

As soon as the two devotees had finished bathing, they set out with Jaimal Singh for Punni Gali where lived the Great Swami Ji. When the three reached their destination, the Master was speaking on the Jap Ji, expounding its profound meaning and unearthing the spiritual treasures hidden in its lyrical ecstasy. There were only a few listeners and Jaimal Singh slipped quietly into a corner. He heard the discourse with rapt attention, drinking in every word that fell from the lips of the Saint.

When the morning assembly was over, Swami Ji welcomed his new visitor and wished to be acquainted with the object of his visit.

“I am in search of the gift of Naam and a Saint who can bestow its blessing upon me,” replied Jaimal Singh. “I heard of your greatness and have hastened to your door.”

“I am afraid you will find no Saint here,” smiled the radiant Swami Ji. “I am only a mere servant of the Saints. Even the great Nanak regarded himself as no Saint; then how can a mere nothing like myself be of any consequence?” He then welcomed Jaimal once more, assuring him that he could stay there as long as he pleased, for all were free to share the bounty of the Sahib, the Lord above.



Swami Ji and Disciples (No known verifiable picture of Jaimal Singh exists)

*Creation and dissolution are caused by Shabd and the creation again comes into being by Shabd.*  
Guru Amar Das, Rag Magh M3

The afternoon talk centered around this hymn, and the Master took up at length the theme of Shabd or Naam, answering one after another Jaimal Singh's as yet unvoiced questions on the subject. He showed how the Word or Naam was the primal cause of creation as well as of its dissolution; how it was at once the agent of the Almighty Absolute and itself the Absolute. Without its power nothing was created, and only through contacting It could one reach back to one's heavenly home.

When all had departed and Jaimal Singh was left alone with Swami Ji, he drew closer and began to question the Saint on the way to salvation. He was convinced that the Agra sage was a true Saint, but the fact that he was not a Sikh and smoked the hookah caused him some uneasiness.

But as Swami Ji took up the subject of salvation and began revealing how Shabd was the only means of salvation, mukti, how its contact could be given only by a Puran Sant, a Perfect Master, how man without Shabd could never fully escape the meshes of Maya, and how its practice and mastery lay within the reach of all regardless of their differences of sect and custom, Jaimal's doubts were dissipated and he begged to be initiated. Swami Ji then began to instruct him into the theory and practice of Surat Shabd Yoga, and when the instructions were over, asking the youth of seventeen to sit down for meditation, he left the room.

As soon as Jaimal Singh sat down for meditation, he got lost in samadhi. The night came and passed away, the day broke, but he continued motionless, lost in the inner bliss he had discovered. Another day saw itself swallowed by the night, and the night saw itself replaced by another day, and yet the youth sat lost to the world around him.

When some forty-eight hours had thus gone by, Swami Ji asked some of the disciples if they knew where the visitor from the Punjab had disappeared. "We saw him two days ago at the Satsang," they said, "but we have not seen him since."

Swami Ji smiled and proceeded straight to the little room where he had left his latest disciple and which none had entered for two days. He placed his hand on Jaimal Singh's head, and when the latter's soul returned to the normal physical consciousness and he opened his eyes, he saw his Guru beaming at him. "Do you, my boy, still doubt if your Master be a true Sikh or not?" He asked with a twinkle in his eye.

The lad wished to fall at his feet but the long spell of samadhi had left his joints numb and still. Swami Ji suggested that he rub his legs, and when Jaimal could move, he conducted him outside. There he gave Jaimal a drink of milk with his own hands, and gazing at him fondly, he said: "You too shall do one day the work I carry on now. Our Path is not concerned with outer forms and rituals and each of us must live by the best traditions of the community in which the Lord has been pleased to place us."

...It was the year 1856, and a regiment of Indian sepoy, including several Sikhs, was about this time stationed at Agra. At the instance of Swami Ji, Jaimal Singh joined up as a recruit. He would attend his morning parade and duties over, would hasten to his Guru's door. There he would attend the Satsang, hear Swami Ji, sit for meditation and return to his quarters in the cantonment at night...

The light army duties left Jaimal Singh ample time for meditation. If he had no night duty, he would get up at 2 a.m., bathe, and sit down for meditation. During the day, as soon as the parade and other normal duties were over, he would engage himself in like manner or hasten to the home of Swami Ji...

Jaimal Singh was making speedy inner headway. He often told Swami Ji of his various spiritual experiences and his Guru was pleased with his progress. Once when he told him of his ready access to Daswan Dwar, the Tenth Gate, the third major stage of the mystic soul, but his inability to penetrate beyond it, Swami Ji exclaimed: "Ah! That is quite understandable. We have worked at this spiritual exploration together before, and in your last life you mastered up to the third stage. Hence your ease in progressing thus far and your subsequent difficulty." He however reassured his young disciple and encouraged him to keep up his effort.

When the latter one day reported still higher ascent, Swami Ji was mightily pleased and declared enthusiastically: "Continue in this fashion and you will soon be ready to help other souls to salvation. You have been born to help mankind, and between you and me is no real difference."

## The Soldier Saint

Whatever happened, wherever he went, Jaimal Singh let nothing interrupt the routine of his spiritual sadhans. Like a lover in the frenzy of love, he was forever centered in the joy of the inner life.

Even when his regiment was in action in the north-western frontier during the Anglo-Afghan War in 1879, he would leave his quarters at night, go into the wilderness, dig a pit and, with his rifle tucked under his knees, get lost in meditation. Enemy snipers would often spot him, but seeing his radiant figure make out that he was no ordinary soldier but some great fakir, and leave him untouched. At times when he arose from his sadhan, they would even bow before him in reverence.

The accounts of Baba Ji left by his army colleagues and others are of a piece with the rest of his life and character. Reading through them we learn of a man who, while lost in the divine mysteries, was yet not lost to the world.

A fellow-soldier who happened to be placed under him while he was a Havildar was surprised that in all the three years they were together, he did not once notice or hear of his being out of temper. He was always sweet-spoken and refrained from harshness and vulgarities. All his life he remained a strict vegetarian and an equally strict teetotaler. And to these we may add his rigid brahmacharya, chastity, for he remained a celibate all his years. Wedded to devotion to God, he never experienced the urge to marry, and stoutly resisted any attempt to cajole him into matrimony.

...Other qualities that marked Jaimal Singh out of the general run of men included an inexhaustible capacity for service, charity and generosity. Like Swami Ji, he often distributed clothes and other necessities to the needy and the wretched. He had no enemies and looked upon all as his friends. His love, however, was especially directed to the poor, and even more so to sadhus and devotees of the Lord. While others were idling or busy with sport, he sought out the company of such devotees, ministering to their needs or discussing spiritual problems. Neither in his army life nor even afterwards did he distinguish between creed and creed, but treated all – Muslims, Christians, Sikhs or Hindus – on an equal footing.

While ever ready to help materially or spiritually, he always avoided the limelight. Even as a child he had been known for his modesty; his shyness being sometimes made a subject of ridicule. If he met sadhus, he contented himself with listening to what they said and he rarely contradicted or criticized. If he met a genuine seeker, he was ready enough to discuss and explain, but he attributed whatever he knew not to any virtue in himself, but to the grace of his peerless Master.

His dress and appearance were as simple yet elegant as the man himself. Of medium height, some five feet and six inches, he was sturdily built. He had a knotty protrusion on his forehead above the right eye and a lotus mark, padam rheka, symbolic of true spirituality, on the sole of his right foot. He had fine features, wheatish complexion and a glowing face whose ruddy color was set off by a rich freely flowing beard which retained its lustrous blackness to the very end, except for a few straggling streaks of white.

When not in army uniform, he wore a white turban in Jat style, a white muslin kurta (loose shirt), and tight-fitting pajamas of the same color. While in his quarters informally among his fellows, he would usually wrap a khadi sheet about himself, tucking it on the left side, cover his hair – which when unloosed fell to his waist – with a towel, and move about in kharaon (wooden sandals) or jooti (Indian shoes). He was simple in his habits and frugal in his needs. Milk was his favorite item of food and he was particularly fond of goat's milk. He spent little upon himself and his earnings were mostly spent in charity or in sending allowances to his brother.

## The Torch Bearer

During His military career Baba Jaimal Singh, whenever he had any leave, spent part of it at Ghuman. Though detached from worldly ties, he was yet very fond of his mother. On one occasion he was to tell a devoted disciple that in their past three lives, he and his mother had enjoyed the same relationship. On such occasions when he came to his ancestral home, it was his wont not to waste time in needless gossip and idling, but to proceed to the banks of the Beas and sit hidden in the gullies that the wayward river had created by its freakish changes of course, and continue lost in spiritual devotion for days, subsisting only on a few dry chapatis that he brought from home and hung on a kihar tree. At other times when he was at home he would walk down to Dera Baba Namdev and carry on his meditations there or in a dugout in the courtyard of the family house.

This house and dugout were preserved long after Baba Ji's death, and his successor, Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj, would sometimes take his closest disciples to Ghuman and show them the spot where his great Guru used to sit for meditation. In particular he would point out the peg on the wall behind the dugout where Baba Ji would tie up his hair in order to ward off sleep during abhyasa.

Shortly before Baba Ji came to settle down on the banks of the Beas, Bibi Rukko, who was then living at Vairach and was fairly well advanced spiritually, told the villagers that her protector was coming to live there.

When Baba Jaimal Singh arrived, he found a small hut built out of straw and branches for him, a bare eight-feet by eight-feet, and he began living there. Soon after Khazana Mal arrived, and hearing that Baba Ji had come, came to see him. He had the hut plastered with mud and a cave dug out. It was the year 1891 and Baba Ji gave himself up with redoubled zeal to his spiritual sadhans. He would enter the cave and stay in it for days on end, sometimes as long as a fortnight without any thought for food, rapt in inner samadhi.

Though Baba Ji shunned the public gaze, yet musk cannot be hidden in the dark. He might have no care for earthly name and fame but name and fame fell to his share in spite of this. Fame of his spiritual greatness had already spread from Ghuman to the neighboring villages; and going for darshan to a holy man is an ancient institution in this land of the sages. Where there had been wilderness, people began appearing in ever growing numbers and regular satsangs began to take place. How could Baba Ji turn away those who had come to his door? In all simplicity and humility he taught them the spiritual message that he had received at the feet of Swami Ji.

The study of the progress of the mystic soul is beyond the reach of ordinary mortals, and those that have been on the inner journey can only speak in metaphor and parable, for how else can the language of common humanity be compelled to express experiences for which it was never fashioned?

The history then of a Master-Soul, as fired by a restless zeal, which moves from plane to plane, must remain an unwritten one; at best it can only give the husk of outer events and happenings to suggest the unusual nature of the spiritual experiences they enfold. And once such a soul has attained full enlightenment and become one with the Infinite, its history is no longer its own, but is the history of those that came under its spell and were liberated from worldly bondage.

To witness the last moments of a disciple of Baba Ji was to be convinced of his genuine greatness. Countless stories are told of the strange happenings marking the end of those initiated by the Beas Saint. We may quote the eye-witness account left by Chirag Din of his father's death as an outstanding example. We translate from his Urdu manuscript recording his family's contact with Baba Ji and some anecdotes he heard from the great Master about his own early life:

“Once Baba Ji had gone to Ghuman after collecting his pension. Our father, meanwhile, had passed away. We went to the great one and related to him the sad news. He consoled us and straightaway proceeded to the spot where the dead body lay. On reaching there, he said, ‘Oh Hussain Baksh, why have you been in such haste? I would have come and you could have had my darshan.’ As these words were uttered, our dead father opened his eyes and sat up. Our mother, frightened, inquired if anything was the matter. ‘Nothing,’ he said. ‘The Master has come and I am going.’ He then lay down and was gone.”

Baba Ji was not only chary [cautious] himself of revealing his spiritual riches, but strictly enjoined his disciples to exercise the same restraint. When they transgressed his instructions they never escaped chastisement. Thus, Chirag Din relates the story of a blind learned man of Dhariwal. He once attended a discourse of Baba Ji at the town of Kapurthala, and when it was over and they were talking to each other, the man remarked: “The wise have said that he who has read the Holy Book thrice attains heaven.”

“Heaven is very far, my dear fellow,” replied Baba Ji. “Those that have entered it alone can tell.”

The assurance of the sage's voice moved the man to request instruction. His wish was granted and he sedulously cultivated the lesson that had been given to him till it bore fruit. He then proceeded to Mian Sahib at Batala, his former teacher, and told him that all he had taught him was a hoax

and a lie. He would often visit the mosque and, intolerant of the pious sham practiced there, he would secretly break the earthen pots and burn the prayer mats. His fellows soon discovered the miscreant and complained to his Guru.

The blind man was called and Baba Ji rebuked him. "Sir," replied his disciple, "I cannot stand hypocrisy and besides I am in the right."

His Master, however, told him that in the future he must learn to contain himself and exercise restraint. But the advice went unheeded and the man soon began indulging his whim once again. A group of Muslims came to wait upon the sage and bitterly protested, complaining that he had taught his disciple to turn heathen.

At this Baba Ji answered, "Does the man still persist in his foolishness? Well, if he will not stop troubling you, do not be angry for you will soon be rid of him."

Sure enough, a few days later the man passed away.

Similar stories are told about other advanced disciples. A sadhu who came to live at Beas made rapid headway and his soul would soar at will to Daswan Dwar. He, however, could not restrain himself and would begin talking of the inner glories to whoever would pass his way.

Baba Ji was upset and told him that he must learn to discipline his tongue.

But the sadhu, confident of himself, continued unheeding. The inner curtain was rung down and for full sixteen years he was denied inner access until his very last days when Baba Ji's illustrious successor, Baba Sawan Singh, gave him his blessings.

Baba Nizam-ud-din in a like situation was to experience a similar check. His son, in a beautifully written Urdu account, narrates how his father, who was the sixteenth initiate of Baba Ji according to the records at Beas, made very speedy inner progress. In a few months he had gained great powers and had developed a remarkable clairvoyance. But instead of locking his gifts within himself as taught by his teacher, he began displaying his spiritual wares and would freely tell those around of future happenings or of what was taking place at distant towns. When Baba Ji was told of this, he turned to Bibi Rukko and said, "This man has ascended very rapidly indeed, but has not been able to digest what he has got."

From that day on, Nizam-ud-din, who had failed to shutter his lips, found that his inner eye had been curtained. His sorrow was great, but trusting the grace of his Master, he took to his spiritual practices with redoubled energy. His wife too got initiated and with the passage of time great blessings were bestowed upon them, and it was evident to those who came into contact with them that they were no ordinary mortals. But never again did Nizam-ud-din flaunt his spiritual powers.

Once four great pundits who dabbled in various yogic practices began wrangling and debating about the nature of the inner planes. They based themselves on their spiritual study and the controversy they waged was lively indeed. Hearing of a Jat Saint of great attainment, they came to Baba Ji's door. He heard what they had to say and then lucidly explained to them the nature of the spiritual regions, reconciling what had appeared to be contradictory viewpoints and resolving all their doubts to their satisfaction. The pundits went away, but one of them, a true seeker who had caught the Saint's bait, returned and begged for initiation. The boon was granted; he practiced his sadhans with regularity but to little avail.

"Ah Sir! Bless me with some inner vision," he begged.

"Do you think I do not wish you well?" came the reply. "I wish to the Lord that you reach Sat Lok this day, but you are not yet ripe and would not be able to bear the strain"

The prayer was repeated many a time but Baba Ji always gave the same answer. One day while he was going alone to collect his pension, the pundit met him at a lonely spot.

"Sir, this is wilderness and no one is by. Bless me now, at least give me a glimpse of the realms within - no more - that I may rest in certainty."

"You will not be able to stand it and the strain will be too much for you."

"What does it matter even if I lose my life if only I may see what is within?"

Baba Ji could refuse no longer. He asked the pundit to sit down in meditation and focused his gaze upon him. The pundit's soul was forcibly drawn up into the higher realms.

When Baba Ji, by his own will, brought it down to physical consciousness, the pundit fell sobbing at his feet.

"I thought my life was being wrenched out of me and a million lightnings fell upon my head. Oh, Sir, forgive me my foolishness. We mortals are indeed unworthy."

"What is there to forgive?" replied the sage. "It is you who must forgive yourself for it is not I who suffered. Now go and make the most of your time, for you have only three more years to live."

From that day onward the pundit concentrated on his meditations and three years later, as predicted, passed away.

Such tales are, however, legion, and whole volumes would not suffice to sing the glory and grace of a true Saint. So passing them by, we will concern ourselves with the most important single event in the annals of Baba Ji's divine ministry: the initiation of Sawan Singh Ji who was later to carry on Baba Ji's mission...

"...After several conferences with Baba Ji, I [Sawan Singh] was thoroughly convinced and received initiation from him on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of October in 1894..."



Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj

...the last days of the Jat-Guru, as he humorously styled himself, were drawing to a close. Six months before his death, he had told his disciples of the approaching end. On hearing of the passing away of Karam Singh of Attock, he had remarked: "I used to meet him at Delhi. A great soul indeed! But he will have to be born once again for full liberation, not having practiced Naam in this life. Well, well, my work is also drawing to a close and I, too, shall soon be gone."

The last days saw many pilgrims at Beas. The Sage who once had passed both night and day lost in meditation was now day and night in the service of his devotees. He would hardly rest for three or four hours, spending the rest of the day in meeting those who sought him out, attending to their problems and goading them to greater and even greater spiritual effort. The gates of divine grace were flung open and those that sat by him in his room during the days immediately preceding his departure would be inwardly buoyed up and wrapped in samadhi.

The last day finally arrived. All the close disciples stood by in anxious expectation. It was the 29<sup>th</sup> of December 1903, and a cold and piercing breeze blew over from the waters of the Beas. Baba Ji seemed to be waiting, and cast restless glances at the door. At last a police officer arrived and sought for initiation. "It is for you I have been waiting," replied the great Saint, and without further ado began explaining the theory and practice of the Surat Shabd Yoga. Soon after the instructions were over, he lay down and, closing his eyes, cast off this muddy vesture of decay.

Thus passed away one of the greatest of modern Saints, whose life was a lesson in humility and love. He had studied at no schools or universities, but had delved deep into the book of life. He had read as a child the scriptures of many a faith and had early practiced many sadhans or spiritual exercises.

By the age of eighteen, when other men have hardly attained mental maturity, he had already won the crown of life denied to the most rigorous of yogis and the most industrious of learned men. And yet the rest of his years were passed in the most perfect humility, his only ambition being to serve his Master and carry his message as best as he could.

In his last recorded words he is reported to have said: "All my life I have sought only to serve my Master and now whatever work he had to accomplish through this poor physical frame is over." His very last hour was spent in this service.

Baba Jaimal Singh Ji more than exemplified what he had once written to his future successor, "Saints are born not for themselves, but for the liberation of mankind."

He spoke from inner experience and not from books, and he initiated about three thousand souls; while the number of those who unconsciously benefited by his influence is beyond enumeration.



## Baba Jaimal Singh Maharaj Ji's Letters to Baba Sawan Singh Ji (A few sample excerpts)

Please have no anxiety about your reaching Sach Khand. This Shabd Dhun with its five-fold aspect, which has been given to you, will one day take you to Sach Khand. Hold onto it because it comes from Sach Khand. It comes only to take up the jivatma or the surat of those who have been initiated by a Sat Guru into the five Shabds. As the surat gets cleaned more and more, it will ascend higher and higher. Do not be in a hurry. (Letter 1)

You should please attend to your Bhajan and Simran every day, whenever you have leisure, and keep your thought in Simran all of the time, even while working, walking or sitting – all the time. And this from you is acceptable to Hazur [Swami Ji]. Listen to the Shabd Dhun and remember – whether the mind takes to it or not, or takes to it incompletely – all the time that you thus devote is credited to you. (2)

You will get whatever you want. Everything follows Bhajan. Where there is Bhajan everything else will come automatically. Let the current of Shabd Dhun dwell in your mind, then see the bliss you get. (2)

As you are busy with work, the mind should be fixed in Simran while the body attends to work. Listen to the Shabd Dhun every day, even though it be for ten minutes, but do it every day. And believe it firmly in your mind that one day the Sat Guru will take you to Sach Khand. Also read shabads from the bani, even though you read only one shabad. And whenever you attend to any work, think, “it is Sat Guru Himself who is doing everything. I am doing nothing. Whether it is worldly work or it is spiritual work, all is Sat Guru’s. I am nothing. Only Thou art.” Then it is all Sat Guru. (3)

Whatever business or work you have, know it to be Sat Guru’s. Take your own self out of it and look upon yourself as only His agent. Satguru is the real doer. You are only in name. (4)

Kal practiced a great deception by causing the souls to be entangled in the world and tied with such ropes as the various religions, holy books, Shastras, wranglings and disputes, the pride of caste, the Varnashram, idol worship, pilgrimages, reading of Shastras, putting one’s faith and trust in those who are past and gone, and such other karmas and disciplines, etc. The entire world is tied with the ropes of love for parents, wife, family, and other worldly relations. No one was shown the way to reach Sach Khand, our Home. Rather, they were put as far away from the Road as possible. Radha Swami Himself, taking pity and compassion on us, came down in the form of a Sant, gave the clue of all the spiritual regions and showed the way to reach Sach Khand via Shabd Dhun. Therefore, when the path which leads Home has been shown, one should tread it every day. In the Granth Sahib, also, this Shabd Dhun has been mentioned as omnipotent and omniscient.

You should never think of anything as your own because everything belongs to Akal Purush Anami Radha Swami. The body, life, sons, daughters, wife, parents, wealth, house, property, all belong to Him. All this should be given back to Him. Do not keep your “self” in anything. When you have rendered everything to God, then everything is He and you are also He. Render everything to Him. Then you attend to your worldly work, also to Bhajan and Simran, but always feel in your mind that “I” am not doing anything. “I” simply am not. Whatever pleasure or pain comes, accept it cheerfully. Always realize that “The Sat Guru is everything. “I” am nothing. “I” am not. Thou art. Thou alone art.” (5)

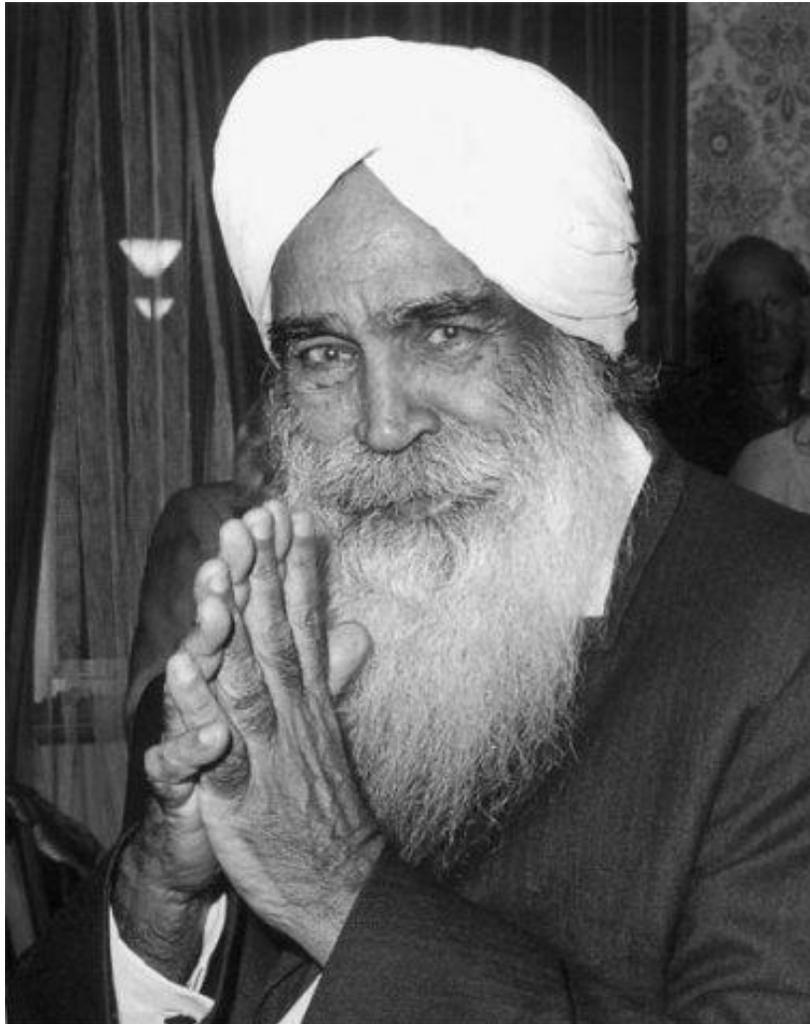
Please do not worry now. Hazur Din Dayal [Swami Ji] will forgive you by His Grace. All the karmas of the past lives have to be gone through now. The disciples of the Saints do not have to be born again. You should therefore bear this affliction with courage. Both pleasure and pain pass away in course of time. (7)

A Satsangi is made to finish off in days only, the painful karmas which would otherwise last for years. You should not, therefore, feel anxious or worried about anything. The body is like a garment which has to be changed frequently. (8)

Sat Guru, in His Shabd Form, is with you and is protecting you every moment. (8)

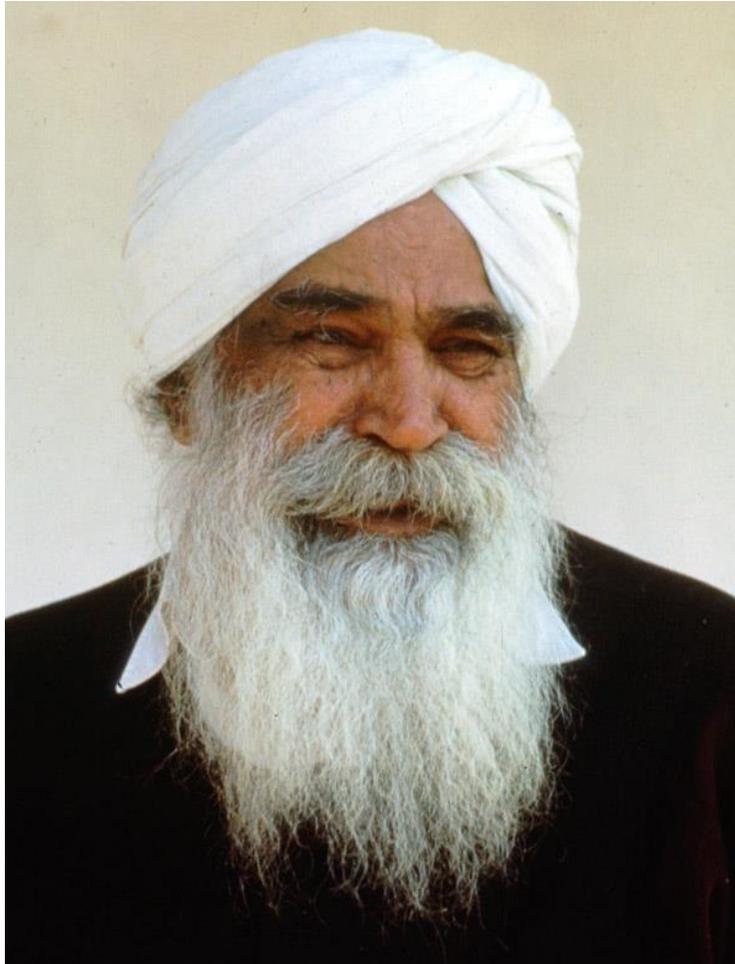
These moments of pain and illness should be welcomed because both, pleasure and pain, visit us with the Will of the Lord. When it happens with the Will of God, why should we resent it? God is with us and sees us. If it is to our ultimate benefit to suffer, He sends us suffering. If happiness is in our best interests, then He sends us happiness. Both are within the Will of the Lord. So please do not worry any more. This suffering also will pass away soon. (10)

There is no other practice comparable to the longing in one's mind for Sat Guru's Darshan. (12)



Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj  
(1894-1974)

Always keep the Master's image in your subtle mind. Then the mind, being purified, will get complete satisfaction from the Sound Current. The desires, the urges and the pleasures of the world, which are the source of all pain, will completely vanish from the mind. None of these things can remain where the image of the perfect Master is present. (17)



You say that you are writhing like a fish out of water for Darshan. Well, such was the Will. Even after a hundred years of Bhajan, one does not get so purified as by an intense longing for Darshan, provided that longing is real and true, and that the love for Sat Guru is from the innermost heart. That is why a disciple is given "bireh" (physical separation and longing during separation from his Guru). Bhajan does not purify so soon as does true love for the Master and a true longing for His Darshan. Rather, Sat Guru Himself is Sat Purush. (18)

In this yuga there is no other way of getting deliverance, of uniting with God and of being purified in a short time except through true love and faith in Sat Guru. Do not look upon Sat Guru as a human being. True longing for Darshan is the principle means of God-realization. When the mind accepts these things firmly and inwardly, only then is the dirt wiped off the mind. Then the jiva can realize the Shabd form of the Sat Guru. Therefore, take hold of the Shabd Dhun. Then the Dhun will itself take you home. (18)

You should listen every day to the Shabd Dhun, whether through love or through mere force of will. You will not get this time again. (33)

Bhajan and Simran should be attended to every day, even though it may be for a short time; but it should never be missed. It is only slowly that one develops love for Shabd Dhun. It cannot be done quickly. Satguru will take you across. (34)

You have written, “One day I will reach my goal, but when will that day be?” For that you read the “bani” in the Granth Sahib which says: “When you have a perfect Master and He gives you all the details of the journey according to the path of the Saints, then nothing is left.” At that very moment you have become entitled to go back to Sach Khand. As long as the worldly account is not settled – that is, if you still have to give to someone and to take from someone – the surat will not hold firmly onto the Shabd Dhun. Until this account is settled, the pot of karmas will not be broken and whatever receiving and giving remains to be settled, it will have to be settled in another birth. This pertains only to the past.

From the time that you have come to the feet of a perfect Sat Guru, from that time on, whatever happens will be with His permission. He will not again give you another birth because you understand within yourself that “I” simply do not exist. Whatever is – the body, the mind and the wealth – belongs to the Sat Guru. “I” am nothing. “I” am only an agent. Then whatever is done with the body or the mind or the wealth will not affect you. You are already in Sach Khand. The Sat Guru can take a disciple at once to the region to which He has initiated him – but only those people are taken who have settled their accounts with their relations and with the world. (35)

You have written that you have not done any charity and other good karmas. You have done all these things in the past. As the fruit of all these actions you got in touch with a perfect Sat Guru. Now no other karma or dharma or any other good action remains to be done by you. You have done everything. (36)

The Lord Himself has given you this Way to meet Him, so you should consider this your great good fortune and you should always hold onto the Sound Current. One day it will surely take you to Sach Khand. (39)

As the jiva is very weak, unclean and enveloped by maya, it is only by the Darshan of the Master’s (astral) form and by obeying His commands that he becomes clean. The real form of the Master is His Shabd Form, and it is by listening to It that the jiva becomes absolutely clean. When he has the full Darshan within of the Master’s Form, he will become very clean. Then the Master will see if all his worldly desires have left him and that he begs for the form of the Master only, and has no other desires whatsoever, and is happy in the Master’s Will, howsoever hard might be His orders, and he is genuinely happy and says it from his heart that it has happened very well. Whatever is the Master’s command, it is all Bhajan (to live according to the Master’s Will is all Bhajan). When the individual understands this, the Master will immediately take him to Sach Khand. There will be no delay. The individual has no power to go by himself. (42)

If you lovingly listen to the Shabd Dhun every day, all the faults of the mind will be removed. The desires of this world – which are responsible for birth and death – will also go out of the mind, and then mind will begin to love Sat Guru. At all times you should keep within the bounds of Sat Guru’s words. (56)

Jiva means the unliberated soul. All that you possess has been given to soul and mind for their use so that you may bargain with Kal by giving back all this and getting Nam from the Master, and with the help of the Sound Current that comes out of “That”, reach back to Sach Khand. (78)

And you are strictly enjoined to spend all your leisure from official work in Bhajan and Simran, and not to waste time in meeting people or talking to them. We should do at least that which is in our power. (79)

The greatest achievement of the jiva is to leave his own “self” and become separate so that the “I” is not. But this should properly come from within. Then whatever the jiva does, the Lord Himself is doing it for him. (89)

One who is intoxicated with his worldly status, his family, his wealth or its instruments, in the same way as one gets intoxicated with alcohol or narcotics, cannot do Bhajan. And when he says that he has no spare time for Bhajan, this is all a fraud of the mind. (89)

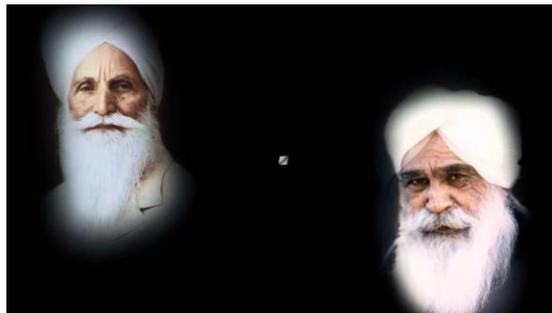
Attend to your Bhajan and Simran every day and listen with love and devotion to Shabd Dhun, and get purer and purer. As for the affairs of the world, the turn which they take depends upon past karmas. They come as they are and pass away – sometimes good, sometimes bad. Have no anxiety about them. If there is anything to be anxious about, it is Bhajan. (96)

Please continue to do your Bhajan and Simran every day, regularly, and note that you should not be sorry in pain or elated in pleasure. Both should be treated as His Will. Whatever Radha Swami Din Dayal does or will do, shall be for our benefit. (98)

Why feel concerned about your illness? It will go away when the karmas are finished. Do not feel worried, because the karmas, whether good or bad, are like a debt and will come to pass. A Satsangi will not be born again. Hence, he will have to pay off the karmas in this very body. Please do not feel worried. The Lord tests our patience and soundness. If He sends pain and disease, it is for our good. You should look upon pain as pleasure (because it is in pain that we turn to God, hence these moments are the best moments). And now your trouble is about to come to an end. (107)

You write that you feel very sad, you are tired and do not feel like doing anything. It is all right. One should be indifferent to the world. It does not matter. Put your attention in the Shabd Dhun and at all times fix your attention in the Simran. Then listen to the Shabd Dhun with love and devotion. Then the body fatigue will go away. (112)

You should do your Bhajan and Simran every day. Swami Ji is actually with you, and His Grace is reaching you. (119)



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