

Self-Surrender: How to Live a Carefree Life

(Revised)



Irene and Sant Kirpal Singh
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They are the chosen ones who have surrendered.
(Rumi)

Dedicated to
Beloved Master Kirpal Singh

Sant Kirpal Singh

SURRENDER to the feet of the Master means to merge one's individual will in the will of the Master, and to completely place oneself at his mercy. It is the surest and easiest way to escape from all cares and anxieties. It comes only when a disciple has complete faith and confidence in the competency of the Master.

This type of self-surrender is like that of a completely helpless patient who, trusting in the skill of a competent surgeon, places his life in his hands and quietly submits himself to his knife and lancet.

Or it may be compared to the trust given by the hopelessly lost traveler in the wilderness to the forest ranger who finds him and leads him out.

In exactly the same way, the work of the Master does not consist in merely teaching the theory of the Science of the Beyond, but it includes the practical demonstration of results of spiritual experiments, and help and guidance through all the disciples' difficulties. A true friend does not only give theoretical lessons in how to escape from mind and matter; he helps in effecting the escape itself.

Suppose, for instance, that a person has to go abroad. He will begin by making inquiries as to the various means of transportation available, land, sea or air, as he may choose. After he makes his choice he enters the plane, ship or train, and relying on the skill of the operator, takes his seat comfortably without the least anxiety. Should the ship flounder, or the plane be caught in a storm, it is the duty of the captain or pilot to take every possible care to save the conveyance along with the passengers for whom he is responsible.

In exactly the same way, an aspirant for spirituality has, after careful investigation, to decide first about the spiritual worthiness of a Master, and then to submit himself wholly and solely to his authority and direction without any mental reservations whatever; for he alone knows the turns and twists of the spiritual path and is in a position to act as an unerring guide.

The term *surrender* therefore means that a disciple should have full confidence in the skill and competence of the Master, and scrupulously follow and act on his instructions whatever they may be, whether in conformity with his own reason or not - for his reason being limited may be faulty or fall far short of the depth or prove uncertain.

It is not for him to question the propriety of the Master's commandments. He must learn, like a soldier, to obey his command without knowing the why and wherefore of things; for the Master knows what is best and most suitable in each case.

One must therefore obey the Master literally, and straightway engage himself in the spiritual practice and discipline as it may be laid down for him. This is the only way to spiritual success; there is no other.

When a disciple entrusts his all to the Master, he becomes carefree and the Master has of necessity to take over the entire responsibility; just as a mother does for her child who does not know what is good for him.

As the disciple develops in his spiritual practice, he fits himself to receive more grace from the Master. Under his kind and benign influence, the disciple begins to thrive from day to day, and all his wishes are fulfilled without the least trouble on his part.

Self-surrender is not an easy task. To accomplish it, one has to recede back to the position of an innocent child. It means an entire involution, a complete metamorphosis, supplanting one's own individuality.

It is the path of self-abnegation, which not everyone can take. On the other hand, the path of spiritual discipline is comparatively easy. Self-effort can be tried by anyone in order to achieve spiritual advancement.

It is, no doubt, a long and tortuous path, as compared with the way of self-surrender, but one can, with confidence in the Master, tread it firmly step by step. If, however a person is fortunate enough to take to self-surrender, he can have all the blessings of the Master quickly; for he goes directly into his lap and has nothing to do by himself for himself.

He is then the Master's Elect, his beloved son, the son of God Himself. But very rarely even a really blessed soul may be able to acquire this attitude.

When a disciple surrenders to the Satguru, the Lord takes him under His own protection and grants unto him the blessings of eternal happiness. All doubts and fears now disappear and he comes to his own real Self.

(from Godman)



That afternoon the Master answered questions in the Conference Hall. Someone asked about the difference between self-surrender and self-discipline. The Master said that self-surrender is very difficult, and that it is reached by leading an ethical and pure life of self-discipline.

He gave an example of Hazrat Ibrahim, who purchased a slave. When he asked the slave, "where will you sit?" he replied, "where would you like me to sit?" When he asked him, "what will you eat?" he said "what would you like me to eat?" He said, "What will you

wear?" "What would you like me to wear?" Finally the slave added, "You see, I am your slave: I have no choice of my own." Hearing this, Hazrat Ibrahim wept and said, "O God, he is greater than me; I have not become Your slave as yet."

This is an example of self-surrender, which is very difficult. But one can achieve proficiency in self-discipline by taking care in our living from day to day, and this will eventually result in self-surrender. (1972 World Tour - Berlin)



What is this love of which all mystics, Eastern and Western, have spoken so insistently? ... The love of which the mystics speak is a love that must be completely purified of the self. If one has not attained complete purification in this respect, one's love is still not perfect and not truly acceptable in the eyes of the Lord. And so the love of mystics is one in which one completely and unreservedly surrenders one's self to one's love. The seeker who, having found a true Master, has developed such absolute love for Him, steadily purifies himself of all imperfections and makes himself a fit recipient of Divine Grace. You may well ask why there is this insistent stress on complete self-surrender on the mystic path. The answer is simple: without this absolute surrender of the last vestiges of ego and selfhood and without such complete absorption in the object of one's love, one cannot attain that unwavering concentration of all one's faculties which is the prerequisite of all inner progress. Absolute love and self-surrender are only other aspects of complete and flawless concentration. The moment the "self" enters into the picture and the question of "I-ness" arises, the single-pointedness of concentration is dissipated and inner advancement is made impossible. Besides, the goal of the spiritual aspirant lies far beyond the limits of individuality. His goal is union with the Absolute and such union must necessarily be a denial of the limits that separate us from each other. He who cannot rise above the ego, the faculty which creates these very limits, cannot hope to attain to that station which is the denial of all individuality and a realization of the oneness of all life.

Hence it is that all mystics of all traditions have been untiring in their stress of the need for absolute self-surrender. It was this cross of sacrifice of the self, the ego, of which Jesus spoke when he exhorted his disciples to bear their cross daily. For in every little act, word or thought, the ego is seeking to dominate us and if the seeker is to triumph over it, he must be prepared to crucify it every moment. To achieve this degree of self-surrender, one must not look up to the Deity in its Abstract form but in Its human form as the Master. For how else is one to know God's Will directly, in order to surrender one's self to it? What one may take as an intuition inspired by the Divine may be really one's own self speaking in disguise, and surrender to such seeming intentions may be really surrender to the self, the ego. However, if one has found a true Master, who is attuned to the Lord and is His mouthpiece, and obeys him in all things completely and absolutely, he will surely destroy the hydra-headed serpent of the ego and reach his heavenly home

one day. There will be moments in the course of such love when one, judging from one's own limited understanding, doubts the validity of the Master's instructions, but such moments are only tests to make our self-surrender more complete and more secure, and he who passes through these tests successfully, will one day radiate with the glory of God.

Such love and self-surrender to the Will of the Lord embodied in the Master, has been the keystone of the teachings of all mystics and especially so of Sant Mat. Your main task as disciples, as initiates, is to cultivate these qualities to the very utmost and leave the rest to the Master. There will, of course, be moments of doubt and of questioning, but if you can pass through them with your love and your faith unscathed, you will find the spiritual road within steadily unfolding itself before you and all things being added unto you. The path is certainly not easy, but for one who has made such love the cornerstone of his life, nothing could be easier or more certain. Jesus never promised the peace and comfort with which the world is familiar. It was the cross he offered. We have to suffer; to reshape ourselves, to destroy the old and forge the new.

Let me therefore, command you as a Father, exhort you as a Friend, to turn to the reformation and conquest of the self if you seek to progress on the inner path. Try to help others and do the best for them, but be not concerned with the fruits of what you do. That is something that you must leave to the Master. Make your love for Him so complete that, beholding His Hand in everything, you rise above all feelings of enmity, rivalry and resentment. See Him present in all and remember that He is always with you, ready to assist whenever you turn your thoughts to Him. And above all do not forget that He is to be won not by words but by deeds: "If you love me follow my commandments." If you can do this; if you can conquer the self and surrender it at the Feet of the Master; if you can learn to see Him working through all things; if you can accept the fact of your own limited vision; if you can undertake a ceaseless and zealous watch over your thoughts and deeds, weeding out all evils and imperfections -then you shall not only win salvation yourselves but enable others to do likewise. Your example shall shine like a torch in the darkness, and men, even those who may first oppose you, will turn to you for guidance and help. You will find a new sense of peace surging through you, a peace that does not depend on the absence of outer disturbances, but is an inner state of mind that stands unshaken even in the most tempestuous situations. And this same quality shall enter not only your individual lives, but the larger life of the great spiritual movement of which you are a part. Instead of being disrupted and divided, it shall proceed single and purposeful toward its goal. (The Psychology of Mysticism)



The essential advantage in the field of spirituality is to be found not without but within. It lies not in the absence of outer opposition but in one's inner capacity for complete self-surrender and love; and outward obstacles may in fact act as tests and stimuli for the development of this capacity. This ability to conquer the ego and to submit oneself to the Higher Will is as rare in the East as in the West, and wherever it can be found, there you shall observe the true grandmark of spirituality. It is this capacity that you must cultivate and develop if you really wish to make substantial progress in the spiritual field. I repeat that the path is not easy. You must crucify your ego and lay your selfhood at the altar of love for your Master.



A loving faith in, and a complete surrender to the Will of God or to that of His elect, the God-man, constitute the basic principles for the life of the seeker after Truth.



This kind of disinterested isolation or separation from one's surroundings and above all from his lower self, the body, the mind, and the mental world, comes only when one dissolves his ego or the individual will into the will of God or the Will of his Guru, the God-man, for then he acts like a mere pantomime in a dumb show which dances and plays at the will of the wirepuller behind the screen. This is called complete self-surrender which silently craves for "Not my will but Thy Will, O Lord." Such an attitude easily helps a person become Neh-karma. While apparently doing one thing or another, he is now not doing anything on his own but is carrying out the Will of his Father – God or his Divine Preceptor, for he verily sees within Him the Divine Plan as it is, and he is just drifting along the Great Current of Life and finds himself a conscious instrument in the invisible hands directing all his movements. Self-surrender then, means surrendering one's everything to God or his Elect, the Preceptor (God-in-man), including one's body, riches and his very self (the thinking mind).



The quality of self-surrender, with whatever degree of faith, does bear its own fruit, and quickly, according to the level at which it is practiced. By gradual experience one learns of its full value as he advances on the Path until he reaches a stage when he altogether loses his own ego in the Divine Will and thus himself becomes Neh-karma, the crown and glory of all human existence. A loving faith in the inherent goodness of God, and complete self-surrender to the Divine Will, lead one on the high-road to spirituality without any great continuing effort on the part of the aspirant. These two things constitute the secret "sesame" and the magic key that flings wide open the portals of the Kingdom of God that lies within the temple of the human body, which we all are.
(The Teachings of Kirpal Singh; book five, The New Life in God)

Baba Sawan Singh

For those who have accepted the gem of Naam initiation from the Satguru, it is their duty to become aware of and correct undue attraction for worldly distractions. Developing love for the Master and studying his discourses constitute the disciple's true work. As he rises above worldly temptations and surrenders everything at the feet of the Guru, he becomes free from sin and weaknesses.

Spiritual wealth, therefore, can be accumulated in two ways: by toiling hard at meditation and by complete surrender to the Satguru. The first is the easier way for it is not so hard to gain salvation by limiting one's intake of food and staying awake at night to do one's true work. The second method is harder, though more efficacious. If the disciple can only surrender completely to the Master's will, he has accomplished his course of meditation. This means that he has shed his ego, lost his separate individuality, and become one with the Lord of Truth. This is the absorption that pulls the soul into the Beyond. (SatSandesh, Jan. 87, p. 33)



Surrender To a Master

(Julian Johnson)

First let us say that the word surrender is not a suitable term for what is meant in this connection, but it is about the best term we have. It would be better to say that one fully trusts the Master. That is equivalent to saying that a person trusts his higher interests in the hands of an expert.

What is really meant by complete surrender to a Master is this: out of perfect confidence and great love, the disciple gladly follows where the Master leads. That is the sum of it all. No need of quibbling over something that has no value and no meaning. Let it pass. Use common sense. By perfect surrender to a Master, in this sense, one gains everything, ending in the most perfect liberty. This is well expressed by one great Sufi, who said: "Give us all you have and we will give you all we possess!"

By surrendering all to the Master, you gain everything. (Path of the Masters, p.208, 210)



Surrender

Dona Kelley

Surrender is a voluntary giving up of one's will to the Father, and in recognizing in every action and thought, the guidance of the Father within, regardless of the ultimate result. If you feel that you cannot give up your free will - the right to make your own decisions - then, you still have a residue of Ego, which is part of the personality. The Masters lay great stress upon the need for self-surrender. There are times when we must crucify the Ego. This is the cross offered us by Jesus - also the cross spoken of by the Masters - the cross which every initiate must face, sooner or later. Surrender is not easy, nor can it be achieved through a miracle. It is a slow, painstaking, labor of Love. Everyone must make some effort in this direction, even though it is rarely achieved in one life. Yet, as you strive toward it, Master will meet you more than halfway. This is the direct road to Illumination. (Lotus Leaves, p. 90)



Total Surrender to God

Sant Rajinder Singh

Question: My question is about self-surrender to the Master. In the book Spiritual Awakening by Sant Darshan Singh Ji Maharaj, he says that only a lucky few follow the path of self-surrender, that it is a difficult path, but if we are able to surrender, our life's journey becomes smooth and spontaneous. He then goes on to say that there is no way out, that sooner or later we all must come to that stage, and that it is just a question of whether we take a long time or come to it straight away. So in reading this, my question is: What steps should a disciple take to attain self-surrender to a Master? I think it is easy to say, "I surrender to my Master," but what actions should a disciple take to truly attain that goal?

Sant Rajinder Singh Ji: Before we take steps in that direction, I think it is important to understand why it is important to surrender to the will of God. As we live in the human body, since our mind is also living with us, we have tremendous ego in ourselves. Ego always brings duality with it, because wherever there is ego, there is always the feeling of me being better than someone else. Whenever that happens, then there is always a separation.

The purpose of life is to have our soul reunited with God. The purpose is that our soul should merge with God. To be able to do that, we need to be away from duality. We need to realize that there is no difference between our soul and God, that they are one and the same. But if we always think that we are different, then we will never be able to merge back in God.

God is an ocean of all love. God is an ocean of all consciousness. God is an ocean of all truth. God is an ocean of all light, all purity. For us to merge into God, we need to also be in that state. One saint has said beautifully, and I will translate it into English. The river Ganges is supposed to be very holy. This saint says that for a drop to merge into the Ganges, it needs to be as pure as the Ganges, because dirt cannot go and merge there. So, for us to merge in God, we also need to be in that state of purity, in that state of love, and in that state of truthfulness. To attain that state, we need to get out of the wiles of what is called “mind, matter, and illusion.” When we have full faith in God and when we live our life according to the principle of “sweet is Thy will,” then only can true surrender start to come into our being.

We are all human beings. Being human beings, we are always thinking, “How can we do this to get that? What should we do to be here, and what things do we need to put into place to get to a certain goal?” As we try to do actions but the results are not what we expect, then we are in turmoil. The best way of living would be to put in the best effort that we can in all circumstances, and then put ourselves in that state that we do not worry about the results.

As an example, let us say that you are a table tennis player. You definitely want to win all the matches that you play. Your goal is to win every match that you play. So to get to that goal, you practice for many, many hours. You exercise, you eat right, and you do whatever it takes to get to that goal. Now if you are doing these things, and let us say you lose a match, then you should not get disheartened, because there are other guys who are playing who are maybe doing the same things. His or her goal might be the same - to win every match, too. If you put in your best effort and you definitely hope to win, but if sometimes - let us say, once in a while - you do not win, then you need to leave it to God’s will.

Maybe by losing, there is some humility that we gain. Maybe by losing, you are making the other person elated. There might be many things that come into play of which you might not be fully aware. Maybe someone’s parents have to be happy to see their son win. At the human level we are not aware of all of these circumstances. If we lose heart and say, “Oh, I am not going to work that hard because I cannot win,” that is not proper. I think that the key to get to a state of surrender to God’s will is not that we do not do anything and say, “Okay, God will take care of everything.” Because that will be sitting back, being lazy, and saying, “Oh, God is there. God will take care of everything. Why should I do anything?”

If we think we are surrendering to God, and if we truly want to surrender to God, then our efforts should be the best efforts in all kinds of circumstances, whether we are studying, whether we are working, whether it is dealing with relationships with our families, whether it is helping someone on the street. In each and every situation we should try to do the best that we can. But after doing the best, we should not worry about the results. As human beings our job is to do the best and leave the results in God’s hands. When we

leave the results in God's hands, then nothing of this world bothers us anymore. It is only then that we start to live according to the principle of "Sweet is Thy will." When we truly, truly live under that principle, it is then that we are totally surrendered to the will of God. (Sat Sandesh, July/August 2009)



Are you ready to cut off your head and place your foot on it? If so, come; Love awaits you! Love is not grown in a garden, nor sold in the marketplace; whether you are a king or a servant, the price is your head, and nothing less. Yes, the cost of the Elixir of Love is your head! Do you hesitate? O miser, it is cheap at that price! (Al-Ghazzali)



Love: The Way of Self-Surrender

George Arnsby Jones

The mystic adepts have symbolized the surrender of a disciple's ego by stating that he must sacrifice his head (ego) at the altar of the Beloved, if he is to succeed on the Path of Love. Hafiz has told us: "The least condition that love demands is the surrender of one's head. If you are unable to do this, you should not even speak of love." Kabir stated that love is not an easy thing for the average person to attain, for "only he can enter the abode of love, who is prepared to leave his head on the ground and then step on it. If one can do this, he is ready to tread the pathway of love; for then alone he will be able to taste the elixir of love." To cut off the head and step on it means, in the terminology of the mystic adepts, to crush the personal ego to powder in complete surrender to the Supreme Lord.



Self-surrender, then, is not an act of giving up one's individual autonomy, and thus becoming a mindless automation. On the contrary, it is a state of spiritual attainment which produces a pure spiritual consciousness in which all material desires are burned up by the inner progress beyond the attractions of the world.



When surrender to the Beloved has been achieved the disciple needs no prayer or other spiritual striving, for his loving devotion is complete prayer in itself.
(Sat Sandesh, January 1975)

Surrender

Kabir

Well have you done if unto Him your mind's surrendered. Thus you've removed the burden from your head. But punishment you'll suffer, to be sure, if ever you should say, "I gave it." Note well, the Lord alone gets you to do devotion.

When you've surrendered both the mind and body, there's nothing more that you can then surrender. How very sad it makes me feel to think there's nothing more I now can give my Master.

Only the Perfect Master makes the secret known, that he who surrenders both his mind and body, and then his inner-consciousness as well, becomes entirely fearless. 'Tis truly only rarely this is done, declares Kabir. Another secret of great import I reveal: When you surrender all your inner consciousness, all outer forms will vanish from your sight, and you'll see nothing but the Master everywhere!

The servant is his Master's dog. Love is the leash that binds them both together, and faithfully the dog will follow wherever the Master leads him.

When the Master tells him to remove himself, he does so questionless at once; if the Master calls him, he runs to Him gladly with all his swiftest speed. He is happy in all circumstances, and enjoys whatever food is given him, whatever lot is meted out to him.

The mystic path is the path of Love supreme; but following it is no cheap or easy task. Cut off your head and place it before the Master, if you truly seek admission to the House of Love. Cut off your head and place it on the ground, and trample on it long and mercilessly. Only if you can do this, says Kabir, venture ahead upon the Homeward Journey.

Love is not grown in green plantations; nor can it in the marketplace be bought. Whether you are a sovereign ruler or a subject, remember this, that only he who gives his head can buy it.

Do you want to drink the cup of Love? Then surrender your head to the Master as a freely-given offering. The greedy are not capable of doing this. How then, pray, can they purchase the True Love? I will take you into my confidence: Love can be purchased directly across the counter, but the price is your very head. Still it is quite cheap. Waste not a single moment in the buying of it.

Meher Baba

The Sadguru can raise the aspirant from the ordinary intellectual level of consciousness to the level of consciousness where there is inspiration and intuition, and then onwards to the level of insight and illumination which culminates in his merging into the Infinite. This rising of the aspirant corresponds to his progress from the mundane sphere to the subtle sphere, from the subtle sphere to the mental sphere and finally from the mental sphere to the state of freedom. The last step implies complete wiping out of all sanskaras—natural or non-natural—positive or negative. The erasing of all sanskaras (impressions of previous experiences in the mind), which is implied in the final release of consciousness from all illusion and bondage, can never be achieved except through the grace of a Sadguru.

But such active intervention by the Sadguru presupposes unrestrained relationship between the aspirant and the Sadguru, which can be established only when the aspirant succeeds in complete self-surrender to the Sadguru. Self-surrender implies obedience to all the orders of the Master. When all your desires and actions are guided by him and are the result of your obeying his orders, he becomes directly responsible for them. Thus, when self-surrender is thorough, the responsibility for your release from sanskaras is devolved upon the Master, and under this new condition the Master annihilates all your sanskaras in no time.

Obedience to the Master as implied in full self-surrender is of two kinds: (1) intellectual and (2) literal. Of these two types of obedience, intellectual obedience comes first and is a preliminary to literal obedience which is more fruitful. When you are intellectually convinced about the greatness and perfection of the Master, you have love and respect for him but are unable to follow his orders literally. Reason being the basis of your conviction, you find it difficult to divorce it from your understanding of the Master and his orders. As the two are inextricably intertwined with each other, your reasoned faith holds you within the limits of intelligible obedience. This phase of the pupil is left undisturbed by the Master, and all the pills of obedience offered by him are intellectualized in order to suit his taste and caliber.

Through intellectual obedience to the Master you can annihilate all your sanskaras, provided you are sincere in your logical interpretation of his orders and in their execution, but the result comes much quicker if your obedience is literal. Literal obedience is the effect of the rock-like faith and deep love which the Master inspires in the pupil through his human appeal. The overflowing radiance of the Master's halo and the effulgence of his purity and compassion are mainly responsible for creating in the pupil an unswerving faith which prepares him to follow the Master's orders implicitly, irrespective of their satisfying his critical spirit. Such literal obedience is not even bound by the requirement that the real significance of the orders should be within the intellectual comprehension of the pupil, and it is the best type of obedience for which you can aspire.

Through such implicit and unquestioning obedience, all the crooked knots of your desires and sanskaras are set straight. It is also through such obedience that a deep link is created between the Master and the pupil, with the result that there is an unhindered and perennial flow of spiritual wisdom and power into the pupil. At this stage the pupil becomes the spiritual son of the Master, and in due time he is freed from all individualistic and sanskaric ties. Then he himself becomes a Master.
(Discourses, vol. 1, pgs.88-90)



Thy Will Be Done

Roshi Charlotte Joko Beck

A problem with some religious practices is the premature attempt of individuals to practice a life of “Thy Will be done” before there is any comprehension of what is entailed. Before I can understand Thy Will, I must begin to see the illusion of my will: I must know as thoroughly as possible that my life consists of “I want” and “I want” and “I want.” What do I want? Just about anything, sometimes trivial, sometimes “spiritual,” and (most usually) for you to be the way I think you should be.

Difficulties in life arise because what I want will always clash sooner or later with what you want. Pain and suffering inevitably follow...it is obvious that where no I want exists there is joy; the joy of doing what needs to be done with no thought of I want.

How do we understand “Thy Will be done”? Two practice stages are required (and we vacillate between them). The first is to acknowledge honestly that I don’t want to do Thy Will - in fact, forget it, I have no interest in doing it. I want to do what I want nearly all the time: I want to get what I want; I want nothing to be unpleasant for me; I want success, pleasure, health, and nothing else. This sense of I want pervades every cell of our bodies; it is impossible for us to conceive of life without it.

Still, as we patiently sit (meditate) over the years with as much awareness as we can muster, a second stage is building: knowledge builds in our cells of who we truly are and, at the same time, our conceptual beliefs (my will) slowly weaken...a slow shift at the cellular level teaches us year after year...we begin to see who is the Master. Thy will and my will are more and more one and the same.

All of our lives bring problems - or are we given opportunities? Only when we have learned how to practice and can choose not to escape our opportunities but to sit through our anger, resistance, grief and disappointment can we see the other side. And the other side is always: not my will but Thine be done – the life we truly want. What is necessary? A lifetime of practice. (Everyday Zen)

Ramakrishna

The resigned mental state of such a person surrendered to God is like that of the proverbial bird on the mast of a ship that was unaware when the ship set sail and entered the ocean from the mouth of Ganga. When it realized that it was too far away from the shore, it tried to fly back to the shore. But even after flying in all the four directions, it could not find the shore. Ultimately it settled down tired on the mast of the ship in total surrender and free from worry. Swami Turiyananda has endorsed this by saying that true self-surrender comes only after extreme self-effort.



What is the state of mind of that blessed soul who surrenders completely to God? He is like a defeated king standing in front of his victor. He is absolutely helpless and totally at the mercy of his conqueror. The same is the state of the mind of a devotee surrendered to God, except that he does not have any fear or apprehension which the vanquished king might have.



Mira, too, expresses the same attitude: Whatever His pleasure, day and night I am His. The clothes He gives me, I wear. The food He offers, I eat. Where He wants me to be, I stay. If He wants to sell me, I want to be sold.



Saint Francis de Sales gives the illustration of a statue placed in a niche to explain the state of total self-surrender. If one were to ask the statue whether it is satisfied with its state, the statue would say, 'Yes, because my master has placed me here.' 'Suppose your master were to keep you at some other place, would you mind?' 'No, for I have no wish of my own.' 'Do you see your master?' 'No, but He sees me!'



Swami Shivananda has endorsed such an attitude in one of his speeches delivered at the First Convention of the Ramakrishna Mission: Be like an arrow that darts from the bow. Be like the hammer that falls on the anvil. Be like the sword that pierces its object. The arrow does not murmur if it misses the target. The hammer does not fret if it falls on a wrong place. And the sword does not lament if it is broken in the hands of its wielder. Yet there is joy in being made, used and broken, and an equal joy in being finally set aside.



Self-surrender, self-surrender, self-surrender - there is no other way. In this kali yuga human beings are short-lived and depend on food. They have to do many things in this short span of life. People have very little energy, strength, renunciation, forbearance, or courage. Their minds are weak and they naturally run after enjoyments. In spite of all these handicaps, one will have to realize God. Otherwise this precious life will pass in vain without one's accomplishing anything. Surrender to God and wait for his grace - that is the easiest way in this age. (Swami Brahmananda)



Meaning of Self-surrender

Self-surrender is a surrender of those factors which stand in the way of our attaining superconsciousness, which as long as we cling to them, will not allow us to move forward and ascend upward. So, in the most general sense of the term, it is a surrender of those metaphysical factors that stand in the way of our attaining the object of Yoga, the ultimate goal of Yoga. Patanjali says that that which holds us bound to Samsara is our present wrong consciousness which has come about due to our involvement in cosmic nature, in phenomenal nature. This present wrong state of consciousness is one where we are identified with passing non-eternal aspects of our personality such as body, mind, name, form, our opinions, our desires, our cravings, our self-importance, our egoistical ideas and our egoistical wishes regarding things. These create problems for us. We want things in a particular way, in such and such a way only. Not in any other way. And if anyone is helpful in fulfilling our desires for things to be in such and such a way, he is our friend. We are well inclined towards him. If someone comes in the way of our having things in the manner we want, if someone comes in the way and upsets our apple cart, then he is to us our enemy. We have ill will towards him. We have negative feelings towards that person, a negative relationship. So, like and dislike, attraction and repulsion, arise out of our clinging to certain personal desires, to certain personal wishes.

“Not mine, O Lord, Thy Will be done, not mine”—this is the other end of the pole. It is at the North Pole and the common human consciousness is at the South Pole.

Unconsciously, the human individual is always engaged in trying to make things just as he wants them and in no other way. And if some obstacles crop up in the way, he will try to remove those obstacles and somehow or the other see that things are as he wants them to be. And, in this clinging to one's selfish desires lies the seeds of all like and dislike, all quarrel, all disharmony, all discord, all conflict, all clash, all hatred, all vengefulness, all desire to retaliate, all sorrow. By clinging to our own desires, we lose our peace of mind. This is Samsara, this is life. This is why no human being is always happy, no human being is at peace with himself. Man is always in a state of agitation, because by the very nature of things, all things do not go the way he wants them to. The world has a will of its

own. It also wants things in its own way. And there is always a variance between the way in which we want things for ourselves and the way in which the world is prepared to give things to us, and this perpetual tension is life. And, therefore, the human individual is not satisfied, not content, not at peace. He is not happy. Our worshipful Master gave the dictum: “Adapt, adjust, accommodate”. He gave it within the framework of the social milieu: he gave it within the framework of human affairs, of human relationships. But, within the framework of our interior life, of our spiritual life, where we are related to God, it is not merely a question of adapting, adjusting and accommodating with God. It is bowing to the Will of God. It is surrendering to the Will of God. It is a question of saying: “Thy Will be done, not mine”. It is a question of giving up “I” and “Mine” and saying to God, “Nothing belongs to me; all belongs to You” and then behaving and living like that, reacting like that. Surrender means to tell God: “You will be the one to lay down the rule, not I. You will be the one to pilot the ship, not I”. It means surrendering to the Lord the conduct of our life and to be content to make our life in the way He wants it to be made, surrendering our self-wishes regarding things and conditions and remaining happy in whatever condition He may keep us.

The Illustration of the Cat and the Kittens

Sri Ramakrishna explained this spiritual state of surrender by citing the analogy of the cat and the kittens. The cat lays little ones and then the life of the kittens is completely in the hands of the cat. Wherever she keeps the kittens, the latter are satisfied. And then, taking the kittens one by one by the scruff of the neck with her mouth, the cat shifts the location of the kittens. In this way, the cat shifts her kittens a number of times from one place to another; and wherever the mother cat places the kittens, the latter are satisfied. They say that the cat sometimes shifts the kittens seven or eight times within the course of a month or two. It has got some instinct. It does not want the little ones to be in the same place; maybe it thinks that some enemy will come to know of it and then the little ones will be in danger. So the cat keeps shifting her little ones from one place to another and all that shifting the kittens take up quietly. The little kitten just curls itself up and allows itself to be picked up by the scruff of the neck and taken wherever the mother cat deems fit. Sri Ramakrishna says that this is the nature and condition of the devotee who has surrendered himself to the Lord. Such a devotee does not want to have any say in any matter. He allows the Lord to do what He wants with his life. This is one aspect of the surrender of one’s self-will or individual will, the surrender of one’s personal desires.

Normally, we have a demanding nature, an insisting nature, an obstinate nature. And we say, “I want things only in this way”. Here it must be noticed that there is a difference between tenacity and obstinacy. Tenacity is a Sattvic virtue; obstinacy is a Tamasic vice. You will have to know where you are being obstinate and where you are being tenacious. And where you can truly and properly say, “Yes, this is only tenacity”, you can allow it to remain. But if you think it is obstinacy, then you must give it up, you must surrender it. This is one aspect of surrendering the ego principle to the Will of the Lord. (Yoga-age.com)

Quotations on Surrender

If one tries to live a Godly life, all God's favors automatically flow down to him. One who loves God need not ask for any favor. It is enough to dedicate our very life to Him and become His bound slaves. It is up to Him to treat us as He wishes. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

Everything that comes to you in the Divine dispensation is invariably right for your spiritual progress. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

Discipleship truly consists in unswerving devotion and resignation to the will and pleasure of the Master. It, however, does not consist in seeing the form of the Master, but in attuning to His Divine Will. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

The Guru may give happiness or misery, for he has to make a beautiful form from a rough piece of stone and therefore has to wind up all the karmas; but a true follower will never complain, no matter what hardships the Guru allows. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

It is not the inner experience which determine the spiritual progress, but the basic personal attitude of serene living of the child disciple, which proves his or her worth. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

Whatever befalls us is regulated by the direct orders of our Satguru and we should take it as such, as a blessing in disguise. (Baba Sawan Singh)

Take for granted that all that has happened, is happening or will happen, is with His will. (Baba Sawan Singh)

A real devotee makes no distinction in pain and delight; his business is devotion. (Baba Sawan Singh)

They are the chosen ones who have surrendered. (Rumi)

If we surrender to God we do not have to make any choices at all. (Papa Ramdas)

Surrender does not denote any change in the external mode of life, but a right attitude toward it. (Papa Ramdas)

One must realize that no physical or mental effort can take one to God. One must give up, mentally and physically, all idea of reaching God and one must finally throw oneself at God's feet and let Him do whatever He wishes with you. When there is complete physical and mental self-surrender, then God's grace takes you to the goal. (Saradamma)

There is a divine plan behind everything, and if we allow ourselves to be used by that Unseen Force, as good instruments, many things can happen in a mysterious, miraculous way. (Satchidananda)

Surrender and all will be well. Throw all responsibility on God. Do not bear the burden...If one surrenders to God, there will be no cause for anxiety. Nothing will affect you...God never forsakes one who has surrendered. (Ramana Maharshi)

Complete surrender does require that you have no desire of your own. You must be satisfied with whatever God gives you and that means having no desires of your own. (Ramana Maharshi)

There are two ways. One is looking into the source of 'I' and merging into that source. The other is feeling "I am helpless by myself, God alone is all-powerful and except by throwing myself completely on Him, there is no other means of safety for me." By this method one gradually develops the conviction that God alone exists and that the ego does not count. Both methods lead to the same goal. Complete surrender is another name for jnana or liberation. (Ramana Maharshi)

Surrender appears easy because people imagine that, once they say with their lips 'I surrender' and put their burdens on their Lord, they can be free and do what they like. But the fact is that you can have no likes or dislikes after your surrender; your will should become completely non-existent, the Lord's will taking its place. The death of the ego in this way brings about a state which is not different from jnana. So by whatever path you may go, you must come to jnana or oneness. (Ramana Maharshi)

Leave it to God. Surrender unreservedly. One of two things must be done. Either surrender because you admit your inability and require a higher power to help you, or investigate the cause of misery by going to the source and merging into the Self. Either way you will be free from misery. God never forsakes one who has surrendered. (Ramana Maharshi)

Live in the world like a dead leaf. As a dead leaf is carried by the wind into a house or on the roadside and has no choice of its own, so let the wind of the Divine Will blow you wherever it chooses. (Ramakrishna)

God has put you in the world. What can you do about it? Resign everything to Him. Surrender yourself at His feet. Then there will be no more confusion. Then you will realize that it is God who does everything. All depends on the will of Rama. (Ramakrishna)

Do not seek to have events happen as you want them to, but instead want them to happen as they do happen, and your life will go well. (Epictetus)

I am always content with what happens; for I know that what God chooses is better than what I choose. (Epictetus)

The aim of surrendering to God's will is to liberate our individual will from that which enslaves it: desires, attachments, cravings, and longings. (Yogananda)

Have a happy state of mind, a state that is untouched by the events of life. (Yogananda)

The superior man lives quietly and calmly, waiting for the will of Heaven, while the average man does what is full of risk, looking out for turns of luck. (Confucius)

Praise and blame, gain and loss, pleasure and sorrow come and go like the wind. To be happy, rest like a great tree in the midst of them all. (Buddha)

There is no way of making a person true unless he gives up his own will. In fact, apart from complete surrender of the will, there is no traffic with God. (Meister Eckhart)

Surrender is the most difficult thing in the world while you are doing it; and the easiest when it is done. (Bhai Sahib)

The only real surrender is that in which the poise is undisturbed by any adverse circumstance, and the individual, amidst every kind of hardship, is resigned with perfect calm to the will of God. (Meher Baba)

Be resigned to every situation and think honestly and sincerely: "Baba has placed me in this situation." (Meher Baba)

He that will not surrender himself to God's grace has to suffer worries without end, while the devotee that cultivates the attitude of surrender is free from cares, and therefore happy, even now. (Lakshmana Sarma)

When water surrenders to the flow of the river it reaches the ocean, so also must we surrender in order to reach our Source. (Anonymous)

Spiritual maturity lies in the readiness to let go of everything. The giving up is the first step. But the real giving up is in realizing that there is nothing to give up, for nothing is your own. (Nisargadatta)

There is a way that we can live happily in this miserable world. That way is to give our minds to God. (Jnanasambandhar)

When surrender is complete, everything is God. Everything that happens is then His action. In that state there is peace, harmony and an absence of thoughts. (Annamalai Swami)

Surrendering yourself to God is giving up what you can't keep in order to realize what you can't lose. (Shantidasa)

When you surrender to God and agree to be guided from within – life becomes an adventure into the unknown. (Anonymous)

Energy arises from surrender to God. Energy comes from the heart expanding. A small, closed heart – no energy. (Sathya Sai Baba)

There is a world of difference between submitting to a Divine Will from sullenness and submitting to it knowing that God is Supreme Wisdom; and that someday we will know all that happened, happened for the best. (Bishop Fulton J. Sheen)

When the opportunity for self-surrender arises, seize it. You will discover the secret in what you had hitherto tried to avoid; indeed, you will find even more. (Thomas a' Kempis)

Man is too often afraid to surrender. He thinks he will lose something; but one never loses when he gives himself absolutely to God. (Turiyananda)

Change, even change for the better, is often approached with apprehension. In giving up something people think, "Will I be left with - nothing?" It takes courage to renounce the known for the unknown. It is not easy even to renounce a familiar pain for an unknown, and therefore uncertain, happiness. (Yogananda)

In the quest for Divine Bliss, there lingers subconsciously in the mind a certain apprehension: the fear of bereavement, of losing one's old associations and familiar sense enjoyments; most of all, of losing one's own self-identity. (Yogananda)

All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter another. (Anatole France)

By the surrender of self all difficulties are overcome, and there is no error in the universe but the fire of inward sacrifice will burn it up like chaff; no problem, however great, but will disappear like a shadow under the searching light of self-abnegation. (James Allen)

Surrender refreshes and regenerates. Failure to surrender strains and wearies. Behind every genuine surrender lives a faith fulfilled; behind every failure to surrender lies confidence betrayed. (Piero Ferrucci)

The great thing is to surrender all your interests and pleasures and comfort and fame to God. He who unreservedly accepts whatever God may give him in this world - humiliation, trouble and trial from within or from without – has made a great step towards self-victory. (Francois Fenelon)

If you want to be given everything, give up everything. (Lao-tzu)

The Master gives himself up to whatever the moment brings. (Lao-tzu)

Stay at the center and let all things take their course. (Lao-tzu)

Do nothing by self-will but rather conform to heaven's will, and everything will be done for you. (Lao-tzu)

Stories of Surrender

Once Guru Arjan sent one of His disciples to stay with another disciple in Gujarat, an Indian state near Bombay. (My Master also sent people to me sometimes, saying, "Go brother, stay near him for eight or ten days.") So Guru Arjan gave this disciple a letter of introduction in which was written, "Keep the bearer of this letter with you for a few days." At the time he arrived and presented the letter, his host was busy preparing a funeral bier; so he asked him, "What is this for?" The host replied, "Oh, it will be useful." After a few days a marriage was arranged for the host's son, and after the ceremony at the bride's house they were returning home when the son collapsed and died. When they brought the body into the house, the father went to his workroom and brought out the bier he had made. In amazement, the visiting disciple said, "When you knew that your son was going to die, why did you allow him to marry?" The host replied, "It is the give and take of the karmas." The disciple considered carefully and realized that when the man had been making the bier, he had shown no sorrow; and when his son was married, he had shown no rejoicing. Who then was he? He was a Gurumukh, the mouthpiece of the Guru. Guru is the mouthpiece of God, and he who respects the Guru's every word will assuredly gain salvation. But a Guru like this is found only through great destiny. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

The Will of the Lord

There was once a fake sadhu, who did not believe in Naam or Gurus. On one occasion he was given the opportunity to stay with Guru Nanak Dev.

One day he asked Guru Nanak if he knew of a holy man with whom he could spend some time. Guru Nanak told him that although there were many holy men, he should go to Bhai Lalo, the carpenter.

When the sadhu came into his humble house, Bhai Lalo stood up in reverence, offered him a charpoy to sit on, and silently went about his work. The sadhu expected Lalo's attention and, disappointed, he rose to leave.

"Wait for a couple of hours," requested Lalo, "I have an urgent piece of work to do. I shall be at your service as soon as I'm through with it." The sadhu started to think Lalo was a worldly man, wrapped up in his worldly affairs. How could he be a holy man?

Bhai Lalo was making a bier on which to carry a dead body and was also collecting material for a cremation.

"Why are you doing all this?" asked the sadhu.

"My son went to bring his bride from her parents' house," Bhai Lalo replied. "On the way he fell under the wheel of a cart and he died. I have made this for him."

"If you knew what was ordained to happen, why did you not go with him to keep him safe?" asked the increasingly skeptical sadhu.

"Whatever the Satguru wills, only that happens," replied Bhai Lalo.

(Baba Sawan Singh; Tales of the Mystic East)

To Live in God's Will

There was a learned man who, for eight years, desired that God would show him a man who would teach him the truth. Once when he felt a great longing, a voice from God came to him and said, "Go to the church, and there you will find a man who will show you the way to blessedness." The man went to the church and found a poor man whose feet were torn and covered with dust and dirt, and all his clothes were hardly worth three cents. The man greeted the poor man saying – "God give you good day!"

He answered: "I have never had a bad day."

"God give you good luck."

"I have never had bad luck."

"May you be happy."

"I have never been unhappy."

"Why do you answer me the way you do? Please explain this to me, for I cannot understand it."

The poor man answered willingly. "You wished me good day, I never had a bad day; for if I am hungry I praise God; if it freezes, hails, snows, if the weather is fair or foul, still I praise God; am I wretched and despised? I praise God, and so I have never had a bad day. You wished that God would send me luck. But I never had bad luck for I know how to live with God, and I know that what He does is best; and what God gives me, whether it is good or bad, I take it cheerfully from God as the best that can be, and so I have never had bad luck. You wished that God would make me happy. I am never unhappy; for my only desire is to live in God's will, and I have so entirely surrendered my will to God, that what God wills, I will."

We're Out of Cheese

One evening Mulla Nasruddin said to his wife, "Please bring us some cheese to eat, for cheese enhances the appetite and makes the eyes bright." We are out of cheese," the wife said. "That is good," Mulla replied, "for cheese is injurious to the teeth and gums." "Which of your statements is then true?" she asked. Mulla answered, "If there is cheese in the house, the first one; if not, the second."

Is That So?

The Zen Master Hakuin was praised by neighbors as one living a pure life.

A beautiful Japanese girl whose parents owned a food store lived near him. Suddenly without any warning, her parents discovered she was with child.

This made her parents angry. She would not confess who the man was, but after much harassment at last named Hakuin.

In great anger the parents went to the Master. "Is that so?" was all he would say.

After the child was born it was brought to Hakuin. By this time he had lost his reputation, which did not trouble him, but he took very good care of the child. He obtained milk from his neighbors and everything else the little one needed.

A year later the girl-mother could stand it no longer. She told her parents the truth – that the real father of the child was a young man who worked in the fish market.

The mother and father of the girl at once went to Hakuin to ask his forgiveness, to apologize at length, and to get the child back again.

Hakuin was willing. In yielding the child, all he said was: "Is that so?"

Without Batting an Eye

During a time of civil war in Korea, a certain general led his troops through province after province, overrunning whatever stood in his path.

The people of one town, knowing that he was coming and having heard tales of his cruelty, all fled into the mountains.

The general arrived in the empty town with his troops and sent them out to search the town.

Some of the soldiers came back and reported that only one person remained, a Zen priest.

The general strode over to the temple, walked in, pulled out his sword, and said, "Don't you know who I am? I am the one who can run through you without batting an eye."

The Zen master looked back and calmly responded, "And I, sir, am one who can be run through without batting an eye." The general, hearing this, bowed and left.

Maybe

Once upon a time there was a Chinese farmer whose horse ran away, and all the neighbors came around to offer their sympathy that evening, saying, "So sorry to hear your horse has run away. That's too bad".

And the farmer said, "Maybe".

The next day the horse came back bringing seven wild horses with it and everybody came around that evening and said, "Oh, isn't that lucky! What a wonderful turn of events, you now have eight horses!"

And the farmer said, "Maybe".

The next day the farmer's son tried to break one of these horses to ride, but was thrown off and broke his leg. And all the neighbors came around and said, "Oh, dear, that's too bad."

And the farmer said, "Maybe".

The following day the conscription officers came around to draft people into the army and they rejected his son because he had a broken leg.

All the people came around again and said, "Isn't that just great!"

And the farmer said, "Maybe".

Cow Karma

In Kashmire long ago lived a monk named Mirathi, an exemplary upholder of the Buddhist precepts. Through the power of meditative concentration he had developed miraculous powers. His numerous disciples made firsthand reports of their teacher flying in the air, reading their minds, describing past lives, and accurately foretelling future events.

The great monk Mirathi was a vegetarian. Moreover, in strict adherence to Buddhist tradition, he did not eat after midday. One day he happened to be in his forest abode, dyeing his old ocher monk's robe in a large pot set over an outdoor fire pit, when a band of angry men came upon him looking for a baby cow that had recently been lost. Opening the pot and finding it full of motley bits and pieces of blood-colored hue, they shouted accusations at the silent monk, accusing him of stealing and slaughtering their cow. Then they led him away.

A kangaroo court that was convened in the nearby village immediately sentenced the silent monk to be placed in chains in a dungeon-like hole in the ground, where he remained for several days. He said nothing to disprove the claims made against him and made no attempt to secure his release. His disciples beseeched him to rectify the matter, but Mirathi himself said nothing.

After several days, the villagers found the missing cow. Realizing their mistake, they petitioned the local chief to free the monk, but the chieftain was distracted by other important affairs and neglected the case for months and months. Meanwhile, Mirathi lingered in his earthen pit.

Finally, several of the foremost disciples of the imprisoned monk sought a personal audience with the local king. He was astonished at their tale, fearing that a grave injustice had been done and that immense bad karma would ensure for the entire kingdom as well as for the irresponsible villagers. Therefore, he quickly ordered the monk freed and had him brought forth in order to make amends. It was not every day that a distinguished cleric was condemned under false charges to spend six months in a filthy hole!

When the dignified old monk appeared before the king, the king begged his forgiveness and asked what could be done to right the terrible wrong that had befallen Mirathi through his oversight, promising to punish the parties directly responsible for Mirathi's unjust incarceration. Mirathi replied, "Esteemed king, please punish no one. It was my turn to suffer, and I endured it willingly. No one suffers anything except at the hands of the karma that his or her own actions have inescapably produced."

The king was astonished. "Why, venerable sir, what have you done?"

Mirathi explained that in a remote past life he had been a thief who had stolen a baby cow from some villagers. While escaping from hot pursuit, he had abandoned his stolen cow near a liberated sage who was meditating in the forest, and it came about that the enlightened monk was punished for the crime by being chained for six days in a hole. Mirathi continued, with downcast eyes, "O gracious and just king, as a result of that negative karmic action, I have endured lifetime after lifetime of misery in the lower realms of existence. Now, at last, my karma has been fully exhausted, and my sin expiated. Therefore I have only gratitude and respect for you and your subjects."

Bowing low, Mirathi went quietly back to the forest to pursue his spiritual practices in peace.

How Ram Das Obeyed the Satguru

When the third Sikh Guru, Guru Amar Das, was preparing to appoint his successor there were many of his disciples who believed that they might be the fortunate ones that he would choose. But, as has often happened in such cases in India, the Satguru decided to put all of the hopeful applicants through a test. Addressing them, the Guru said:

"Will each of you, please, get earth and build a small mud platform? This will be a simple thing for all of you to do."

The disciples hurried away to get baskets filled with earth, and when they returned each one built a small platform, as their Guru had ordered. When all of the platforms were completed, Guru Amar Das said:

"I am sorry, but these platforms aren't quite as good as I expected them to be. Will you please tear them down, and build them over again?"

The disciples did this, and the Satguru then told them:

"I believe that this place is not suitable for these platforms. Will you please, therefore, tear down your platforms again and rebuild them on that piece of land over yonder?"

The disciples did as they had been told; but when their platforms were completed and the Satguru came to inspect them, he said:

"Really, I don't like this piece of land either. So will you please gather up all the earth and build your platforms over there?"

At this time, Guru Amar Das was 105 years old, so many of the disciples began to think that he had become childish in his old age and was no longer in full possession of his senses. The result was that most of the disciples abandoned the work, and only a few remained. But each time these few rebuilt their platforms, Guru Amar Das continued to reject them for one reason or another.

After some time, there was only one disciple left, a middle-aged man named Ram Das. The others, standing and watching him obey the Satguru's orders, taunted and jeered at him, telling him how foolish he was to try to please the Guru, since there seemed no doubt whatever that he was not in his right mind.

Ram Das stopped his work for a moment and told them:

"Brothers, the whole world is blind. But if there is one man who can see, it is the Satguru. Then, too, the whole world is mad. It is only the Satguru who is sane."

His fellow disciples then told him that both he and the Satguru were undoubtedly out of their minds. Ram Das answered them by saying:

"Brothers, you may say whatever you like about myself. But do not, I beg you, utter a single disrespectful word about my Satguru. Even if I should have to make platforms for the rest of my life in obedience to the Satguru's wishes, by his grace I would continue to do so."

In the end, Ram Das patiently and cheerfully made and remade his platform seventy times. Then Gugu Amar Das said to him:

"You may stop building now, Ram Das. I am very pleased with you. For you alone have given me implicit obedience and complete surrender to my will and wishes."

Turning to the others, he told them:

"There was not one of you who obeyed one of the first rules of being a true disciple – to give the Satguru your full love and devotion, have utter faith in him and obey his wishes with a cheerful heart."

The result of this test was that Guru Amar Das appointed Ram Das to be his successor. It is a rare disciple indeed who completely surrenders himself to the Satguru.

Be Content with Your Time

Master Yu fell sick one day, and a friend paid a call to cheer him. The friend found the master lying on his cot in an awkward position. "It is simply amazing," master Yu said after the greetings had been observed. "The Creator has made me crooked. My back is hunched and my vital organs are on top of me. My chin is hidden in my navel, and my shoulders are higher than my head, and my pigtail points to the sky. There must be some dislocation of the great balancing forces of nature, the yin and the yang."

Yet, master Yu was smiling as he spoke, and his eyes were calm with his unconcern.

"Do you resent what is happening?" his friend asked.

"Why, no," master Yu said. "Why should I resent it? I received life because my time had come. I will lose it when my time passes on. Be content with your time, dwell in your time, and neither sorrow nor joy will touch you. In ancient times, this was called 'freedom from bondage'. There are those who cannot free themselves because they are bound by things of the world. But there is no point to that. Nothing can win out against the Creator. That's the way it has always been. So what is there to resent?"

Self-Help and Self-Surrender

A father was once passing through a field with his two little sons. He was carrying one of them in his arms while the other was walking along with him holding his hand. They saw a kite flying and the latter boy, giving up his hold on his father's hand, began to clap his hands with joy, crying, "Behold, papa, there is a kite!" But immediately he stumbled down and got hurt. The boy who was carried by the father also clapped his hands with joy, but did not fall, as his father was holding him. The first boy represents self-help in spiritual matters, and the second self-surrender.

Dust Ball

A dervish was sweeping the courtyard. Abu Sa'id saw him and said, "Be like the dust ball that rolls before the broom and not like the rock left behind." One must be like the dust, which has no will of its own but goes wherever the broom (the spiritual master) commands not like the rock, which asserts its own will and resists the direction of the guide.

When the Shoe Fits

Ch'ui the draftsman could draw more perfect circles freehand than with a compass. His fingers brought forth spontaneous forms from nowhere. His mind was meanwhile free and without concern with what he was doing. No application was needed. His mind was perfectly simple and knew no obstacle. So, when the shoe fits the foot is forgotten. When the belt fits the belly is forgotten. When the heart is right "for" and "against" are forgotten. No drives, no compulsions, no needs, no attractions: then your affairs are under control. You are a free man.

The Best Season

Two young monks were discussing their favorite seasons when Master Wu-men happened to walk by. "Master Wu-men, what is your favorite season?" asked one monk. Wu-men replied, "Ten thousand flowers in spring, the moon in autumn, a cool breeze in summer, snow in winter. If your mind isn't clouded by unnecessary things, this is the best season of your life".

The Prayer that Imposes

A rabbi fell on hard times; he could hardly keep himself and his family alive. So his wife said to him, "Ask God to come to our aid." "Heaven forbid!" cried the rabbi. "While I must do God's will, what right have I to ask God to do my will?"

Drawing Water and Carrying Wood

Master Pang lived a simple life with his wife, son, and daughter, earning his living by making and selling bamboo utensils. Renowned for the depth of his spiritual insight, Pang refused to engage in philosophical speculation or debate. In response to a taunt by a scriptural scholar, Pang responded: "Let go of longing and aversion and everything will be perfectly clear. Because you select and reject, you can't perceive things as they are. My daily affairs are quite ordinary; but I'm in total harmony with them. I don't hold on to anything, don't reject anything; nowhere an obstacle or conflict. Who cares about wealth and honor? Even the poorest thing shines. My miraculous power and spiritual activity: drawing water and carrying wood. Immersed in the wonder of Tao, I can deal with whatever life brings me, and when death comes, I am ready."

It Is Not Well to Oppose One's Beloved

On one occasion a Sufi said to Rabia when she was ill, "If you would utter a prayer, God would relieve your suffering." She turned her face to him and said, "O Sufyan, do you not know who it is that wills this suffering for me? Is it not God who wills it?"

"Yes", he replied.

"When you know this, why do you ask for what is contrary to His will? It is not well to oppose one's beloved," replied Rabia.

The Duty of Resignation

During her last illness, the great saint Rabia was visited by three of her friends, and they endeavored to discuss the duty of resignation. The first friend said, "He is not sincere in his claim to be a true servant of God who is not patient under the chastisement of his Lord." "I smell egotism in this speech," remarked Rabia.

"He is not sincere in his claim to be a true servant of God who is not thankful for the chastisement of his Lord," improved the second friend. "Something better than this is needed," remarked Rabia.

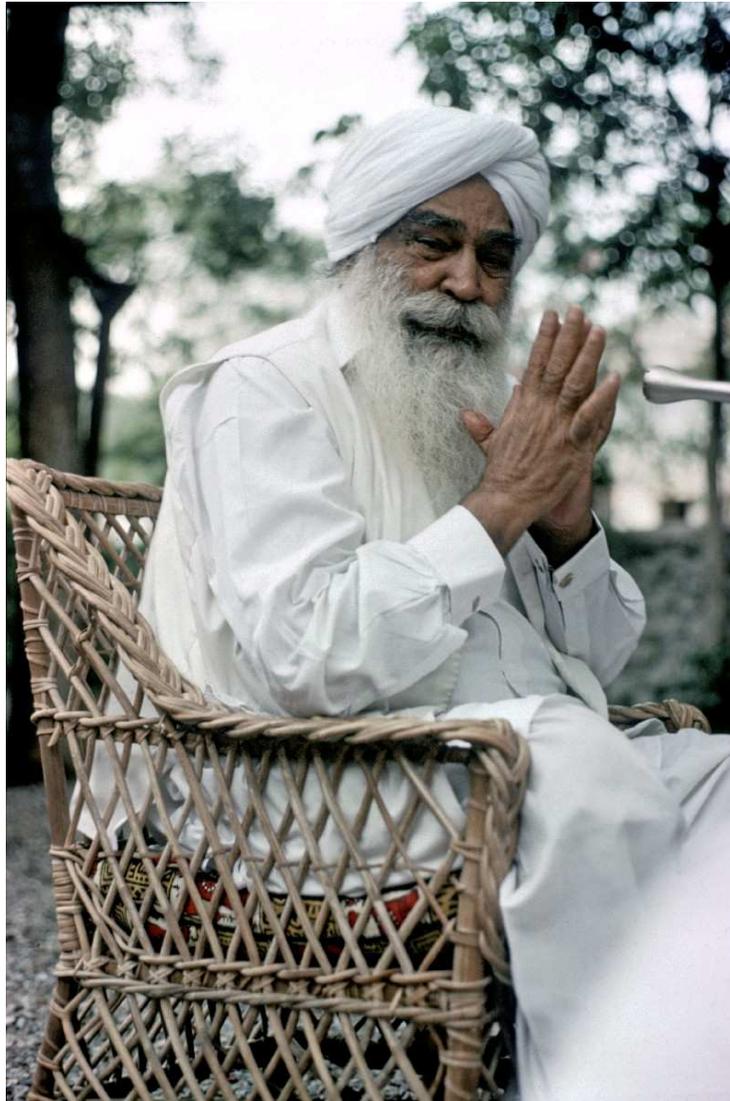
Then the third friend tried, "He is not sincere in his claim to be a true servant of God who does not delight in the chastisement of his Lord." "Even this is not good enough," observed Rabia.

They then said, "Please tell us what is the test of resignation to the will of the Lord." "He is not sincere in his claim who does not entirely forget the chastisement in his contemplation on his Lord," explained Rabia.

Master Kirpal Singh's Last Evening Darshan Talk

Disciple: Master why don't you heal yourself? You are all-powerful.

Master: Why don't you heal yourself? If anybody whom you love gives you something, would you refuse it? Tell me. What does he hope to do. He would gladly accept it.





May your soul be happy;
journey joyfully.
(Rumi)

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