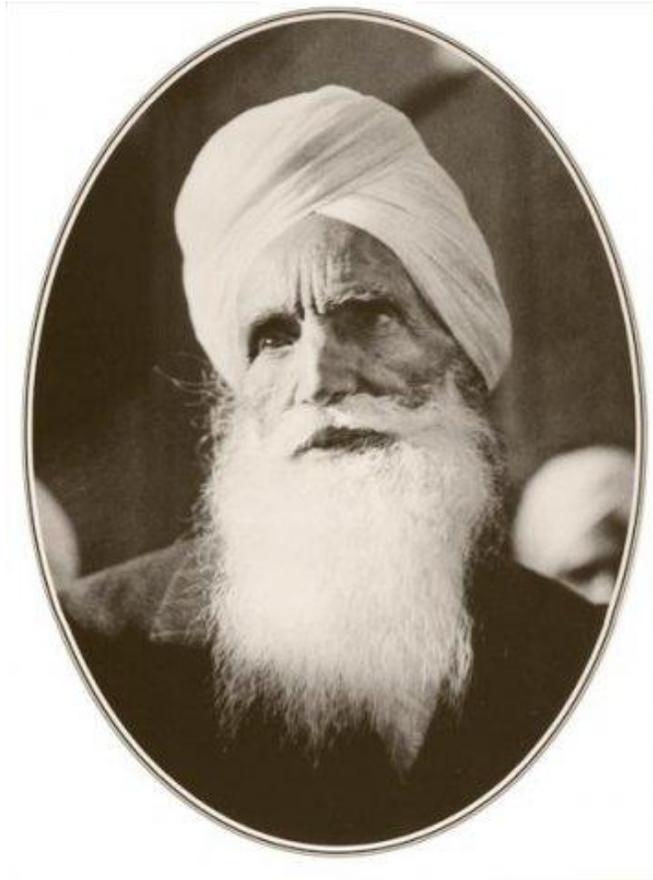


The Razor's Edge:

The Difficulty of God-Realization



Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji
(The Great Master)
1858 – 1948



Don't be amazed at those murdered in the dust at the
Friend's door. Be amazed at how anyone can survive
with soul intact!

(Tohfah of Syria)

If there is one point that all the great spiritual traditions agree upon it is that the soul's journey to its Source is a long and difficult road.

Hinduism

Arise, awake, and learn by approaching the exalted ones, for that path is sharp as a razor's edge, impassable, and hard to go by, say the wise.
(Katha Upanishad)

The sharp edge of a razor is difficult to pass over; thus the wise say the path to salvation is hard. (Adapted from the Katha Upanishad in the book The Razor's Edge by W. Somerset Maugham)

One person in many thousands may seek perfection, yet of these only a few reach the goal and come to realize me. (Krishna)

Through constant effort over many lifetimes, a person becomes purified of all selfish desires and attains the supreme goal of life. (Krishna)

Buddhism

The unsurpassed, profound, and wondrous Dharma is rarely met with, even in a hundred, thousand, million kalpas. (The Lotus Sutra)

Few cross the river of time and are able to reach nirvana. Most of them run up and down only on this side of the river. But those who know the law and follow the path of the law, they shall reach the other shore and go beyond the realm of death. They leave darkness behind and follow the Light. (Buddha)

This world is indeed in darkness, and how few can see the Light! Just as few birds can escape from a net, few souls can fly into the freedom of heaven. (Buddha)

It is hard to obtain human birth, harder to live like a human being, harder still to understand the dharma, but hardest of all to attain nirvana. (Buddha)

Those who seek the easy way do not seek the True Way. (Dogen)

Islam

Sufi literature tells us that 70,000 veils of light and darkness separate people from God. The Sufi's task is to find a way through those veils.

Christianity

You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it. (Jesus Christ)

The Journey is long, and the Way dry and barren, that must be traveled to attain the Fount of Water, the Land of Promise. (Cartusian monks)

Sant Mat

Very few men, in all God's creation, ever see Him and realize Him. Lord Krishna told that one in a thousand walks toward Him; and if a thousand such ones were found, then from them only one will take what is offered; and if a thousand of those were found, only one from them will realize it. In hundreds of thousands, there is none; in millions, there may be one. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

There are veils under veils--physical, then the astral, then the causal. And you are at the back of it. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

To control the mind is not the work of haste; it requires years of patient perseverance. (Baba Sawan Singh)

There is no task in the world so difficult as spiritual practice is in its beginning, but its end is the most joyful. (Baba Sawan Singh)

You know from experience that the path is not an easy one. It is death in life – a living death. (Baba Sawan Singh)

Why Is God-Realization So Difficult?

From the Letters of Baba Sawan Singh

1. Attachment to Mind and Matter

You must remember that you should not expect spiritual realization all at once. The Adepts call this path Sahaj Yoga, that is, a path on which you can walk slowly, and slowly only. The reason is that, from ages past, our soul has been kept aloof from the Father by the cruel deception of mind and matter. By association with the body and its senses for a long time, the mind's tendency is downward and it has altogether forgotten that its real home is upward. The mind has acquired so much control over the soul that it keeps the soul always entangled in the enjoyments of senses. This is the reason why a person cannot rise above the world all at once. It is a difficult task but you need not lose heart. Our Master is all-powerful and certainly one day he will release us from the bondage of mind and senses, through his infinite mercy, provided we turn not from his door, and practice bhajan and simran to the best of our ability, according to his orders. (The Dawn of Light, letter 2)

It is true, therefore, as you say, that in preliminary stages the progress is slow. To give up worldly pleasures, to control the senses, and bring the attention in one center by controlling the wild runs of the mind while still alive and kicking, is not an easy task. (Spiritual Gems, letter 115)

Mind is not a thing that can be switched off and on at will. It cannot be taken away from its routine course in spite of one's best effort in a day, a month, or a year. It is a lifelong struggle. Those who have undergone this struggle, or who are engaged in it, understand what it is to conquer the mind. It is son, daughter, wife, husband, friend, wealth and poverty, attachment, greed, lust, anger, pride, and whatnot. It is attached to the outside world with ropes, double ropes, triple ropes, and manifold ropes, and has been held by these chains so long that it does not feel the irksomeness of its bonds. It likes them instead....If it were an easy affair, Guru Nanak would not have sat on pebbles for twelve years. Christ would not have spent nineteen years in the Tibetan hills and Soami Ji himself would not have contemplated in a solitary, dark, back room for seventeen years. I need not write more. You know the struggle. (Spiritual Gems, letter 143)

2. Past Karma

Though your spiritual progress is not according to your expectation, yet there is not the least doubt that you are steadily, though slowly, advancing towards the goal on the right path. Your speed will become gradually quicker as the burden of karma becomes lighter. (The Dawn of Light, letter 22)

Your spiritual progress may be slow but it is sure and steady, and one day you will reach the goal. It is better to progress slowly. Different persons have different rates of progress. Those whose lives have been quite pure in previous births need simply a hint and their progress is quick. Others see the Light and hear the Sound soon after initiation, but the burden of karma subsequently comes in their way and hinders their further spiritual progress. Usually spiritual progress is slow up to the first stage because the traveler has to combat serious difficulties and troubles. The reason is that this is the stage where matter reigns supreme. But as soon as the first stage is reached, a devotee's progress becomes sure and quick. (The Dawn of Light, letter 27)

No definite time limit can be laid down which will apply to every soul. The revelation time depends on the lightness or heaviness of the past karmas. There are certain souls who do not get it even after twenty years, while there are others to whom it is granted to see the form of the Master within on the very first day of initiation. Rest assured that the revelation will come one day. Please do not let the spiritual exercises become mechanical, but keep up your zeal and interest. (The Dawn of Light, letter 35)

Just as a trace of acid spoils milk and it is not wise to put milk in an acid basin, so the Truth, the Sound Current, the Master, does not appear as long as there is a trace of low karmic dirt in the mind. The process of cleaning is going on, and after all, what is a ten or twelve years' period, or even one lifetime, in which the karmic account of all the previous innumerable lives has to be settled! (The Dawn of Light, letter 53)

The first stage is a bit difficult, for it is crossed with struggle. The journey beyond is pleasant. The karma and the struggle are interdependent. When the karmic debt becomes light, the progress will be rapid. (Spiritual Gems, letter 41)

Encouragement

Do not lose heart but fight courageously. The battle has just begun. Mind is not stronger than the sound current. The Master is with you. He is watching your every movement. He is prepared to fight your battles with you. Take him as your helper. Have faith in him. Fight the mind and you will succeed. (Spiritual Gems, letter 210)

Progress on the spiritual path depends upon purity of conduct and, secondly, upon persevering labor, to still the activity of the mind by means of repetition. Until the mind is made motionless, it cannot perceive the Light within. But there is no reason to despond. It takes time to overcome the habits of the mind. (Spiritual Gems, letter 90)

It takes time to remove the layers of karmic dirt deposited through innumerable births. Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gita says: "Freedom from karma is attained after a long succession of lives spent rightly on the path." The Saints put the maximum at four births, and the four births are only for those disciples who actively oppose the Saints. This much is certain, however, that once the Saints have placed the seed of the Word in the bosom-soil of a person, the seed sooner or later will germinate, will form a plant and bear fruit. It cannot perish. (The Dawn of Light, letter 69)

Please be not in a hurry. With patience and perseverance, complete the course of concentration. Going within takes time. The rise within is comparatively easier. This part of the course is tasteless. Taste comes with concentration. Slow but steady wins the race. That which is acquired after struggle is valued, and that which comes easily is often not valued. (Spiritual Gems, letter 147)

A person who has begun his journey on the right path will reach his destination one day, sooner or later. He is far better than one who journeys on the wrong path. (The Dawn of Light, letter 23)



Precaution: The Deception of Kal

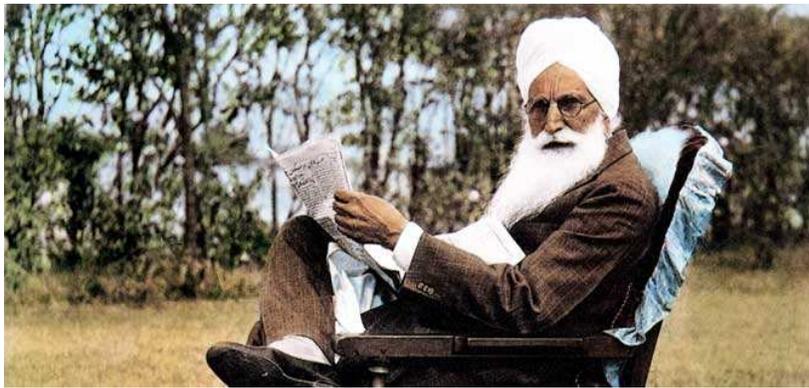
Not all spiritual paths lead to the harmonious Oneness. Indeed, most are detours and distractions, nothing more. (Lao-Tzu)

One important point I would like you to understand, and that is as regards your relation with other teachers. Please note it carefully. When Sant Satguru (a perfect Master), seeing the poor helpless souls in trouble, comes from Sach Khand (the region of Truth) to save them from misery and give them the secret of the Holy Sound – to take them back home – Kal (the negative power) also comes in the human form upon this earth and begins the work of destruction. He opens a similar school, whose teachings resemble somewhat those of Sant Mat, and thus ensnares and misleads poor ignorant beings, preventing them from returning to their Home.

(The Dawn of Light, letter 12)

A Positive Attitude

If God, when He created the world, had created no creatures in it; and if He had filled it full of millet from East to West and from earth to heaven; and if then He had created one bird and bidden it eat one grain of this millet every thousand years, and if, after that, He had created a man and kindled in his heart this mystic longing and had told him that he would never win to his goal until this bird left not a single millet-seed in the whole world, and that he would continue until then in this burning pain of love – I have been thinking, it would still be a thing soon ended! (Abu Sa'id Ibn Abi-L-Khayr)



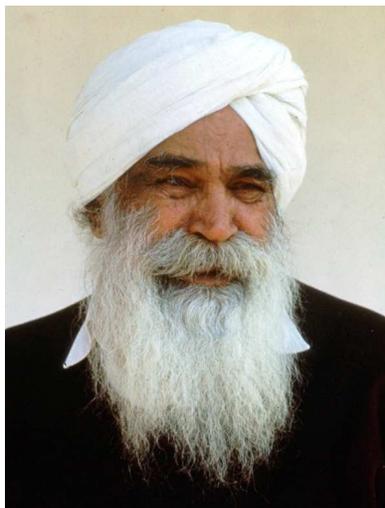
Question: Is the nature and extent of our spiritual growth or advancement beyond the tenth door determined by our past lives?

Answer: Yes - in a way it is determined. A man is in the making. One who has passed primary class will get admission to the next higher grade. One who has just been put on the way will take his or her own time. However, there is no hard and fast rule about it. The one who has been put on the way progresses more by regular devotion of time to meditations with full faith than one with a different background who is not regular in his meditations. (Sant Kirpal Singh, Spiritual Elixir, 62, 63)

The measure and speed of advance, however, depends on the individual's own make-up, the ground on which he stands, and the preparation that he may have made in past incarnations. As each one has a different background, each one has his own starting point. The seed is sown, but its unfoldment, growth and development depends on the nature of the soil in which it is planted. (The Teachings of Kirpal Singh, "The Holy Path", p. 34)

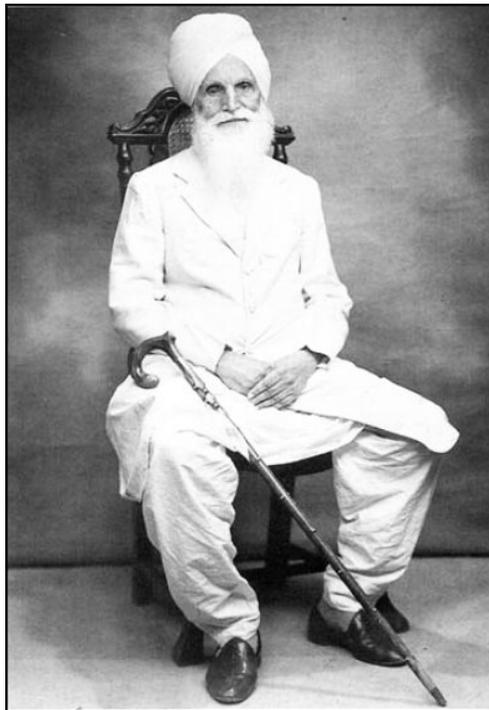
Spirituality is the highest goal in man's life and it is also the most difficult. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

To understand the teachings of the Master and strictly follow them from day to day, to confide in Him and to completely surrender one's self, body and soul, to His will is not an easy thing to do. (Sant Kirpal Singh)



Param Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

All I can do is engage with complete sincerity.
Then, whatever happens, there is no regret.
(The Dalai Lama)



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

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