

Bhandara — Dying While Living

Rice Lake, Wisconsin — April 1, 2015

Welcome, friends to the celebration of Bhandara of Great Master Hazur Maharaj Baba Sawan Singh, my master.

The celebration is done on 2nd of April each year because the Great Master passed away on 2nd of April 1948. People ask me, “Most of us celebrate birthdays of people. not the death days of people. How come we are giving so much importance to the day when he died?” There is a special reason for that. The reason is that we don’t really die. Our body dies. Our soul doesn’t die. Soul is immortal. There are other bodies within this body which also don’t die.

In fact, we are trapped in a physical body, and when we think that death has overtaken us, actually we have been released from a body and are born again in our true form, in the inner form, a form in which we have far more mobility and freedom than we ever have in this physical body. Therefore, we do not consider that death is the end of the self. It is only the end of one of the costumes we wear during our long sojourn, long journey and long stay in this physical universe. So that is why we do not consider that the day of death is in any case a day of actually finishing our life. A certain higher type of life begins on this day. That is one reason why we don’t consider this as a day of death.

The more important reason is that for disciples of such a great master like Hazur Maharaj Baba Sawan Singh, who had the privilege to be sitting at his feet—which I had the privilege to be sitting at his feet—for us it is a great day of rejoicing, because he becomes available to us even more than he was available to us when he was in his physical body. It is amazing that when a perfect living master is in his physical body we have hardly any chance to see him, especially if there are many of us trying to have a closer relationship with him. On the other hand, he has told us when he initiated us—which means when he accepted us as his permanent friends and permanent co-travelers to our true home—at that time he told us that he has manifested himself within us. We did not get a chance to see how he had manifested himself within us, because we could see him outside. But when he dies, he’s manifesting himself within us—we see him more clearly than we saw him before. So for us he did not die. In fact, he’s alive more for us now than he was on the 2nd of April 1948, and he has been there for his disciples ever since. He never died.

That is the beauty of getting initiated by a Perfect Living Master, that he never dies, and he also tells you that you never die, that our soul is immortal, and our relationship with the Perfect Living Master is not a physical relationship—it's a relationship of soul to soul. These Perfect Living Masters do not come into this world to establish anything physical for us. They do not come to have a physical relationship for the material world. They come only to take our soul back home. Since they come in human form, in a world with billions of human beings, they cannot take all those who have to go back home, so therefore they take a select group of people who constitute their destiny as human beings. These souls that a Perfect Living Master takes with him back to the true home, to Sach Khand, are marked souls for that particular master.

There have been masters all the time to take those who are marked to go back home. And who are those who are marked to go back home? Those who have been seeking to go back home. Whoever has been seeking will go back home. The secret is the seeking of our true home. If we are happy to stay on longer, in this material creation, they don't bother us. They say, "Go and have a good time. This is your time to keep on enjoying—or suffering—this physical world, having an experience of duality, experience of positive and negative, experience of ups and downs—keep on having it. But when you are tired of this, when you feel you have had enough of it and you feel it is not our place, when you begin to feel that, then you become a seeker. When you seek earnestly in your own heart, within yourself, a Perfect Living Master appears in your life by coincidence and says "Yes! I have arrived, and we are going to travel together and go back home."

Unlike other teachers, unlike other masters, Perfect Living Masters do not come to teach us anything. There are so many others who can teach us. Nor do they come to say to make us better people, because if we become better people, we get better karma in the next life. Therefore, they come not to make us better people or worse people or improve our lives or make society better or to do work for campaigning for somebody—they don't do any of these things. There are thousands of others who are doing that. They come with a simple mandate of picking up their marked souls.

That's their only purpose, that whoever is ready and in their list of marked souls at that time, at that place, they pick those souls and take them back home. They do not lay any conditions. They do not say that you have to be wise or you have to be doing so much meditation or you have to be this kind of person or you have to dress in a particular kind of way or eat a particular food—they do not look at that at all. They just say, "This is a soul that is ready to go back home, and it is now my duty, my mandate to take this soul back home." So, they come, enter our life, become our friends and

through friendship accept us through the process of initiation, and then they take us back home.

They know there are many others who can teach us, so we don't learn anything from them. We just go with them, because they take us with the power of their love. They don't take us with the power of their teaching. There are those who can teach even better than them. So therefore, their qualification is that they have unconditional love for us because they have come for us and pull us with their unconditional love. That is why, when they come into our life we have a difficult time finding out who they are. Because they come like ordinary people. They are sometimes more ordinary than ordinary people, because it is only an ordinary person that can be a friend of ours. An extraordinary person cannot be a friend of ours. He can be admired by us, can be entertained by us, can entertain us, can even be worshipped by us, but cannot be a friend. Their method of taking us back home is not by showing us extraordinary powers, not by showing extraordinary miracles, but by taking us home by the power of their love. They show a lot of private miracles. Those are so miraculous that you are stunned by those miracles that happen in daily life, and yet when you tell your friends you had a miracle they explain it away—that was just a coincidence, that was no miracle. That means they can confine your miracles to yourself. That's a great art to create a miracle for you and yet nobody believes it's a miracle. But that's the power with which they come here. They pretend to be teachers. They function like teachers for a while because we love to be taught. They know that our mind wants to be taught, our mind wants to learn, so they become teachers and begin to teach us, all the time knowing that this is just a temporary phase.

They know we have to struggle to get anything in life. They know our mind is trained to struggle to get anything in life. So, they make us struggle, "Do more meditation, two and a half hours, even more. You want to get something? Work hard." They put us through the same tracks which we need because of our minds. Our minds have been trained—we can get nothing without our effort. So, they say put in more effort. Then what happens? We put in effort and we discover effort is giving us nothing. Then we throw up our hands and say, "This is not a path of effort—this is a path of effortlessness. It is something else." Then our mind is such, then we try very hard to do meditation, do the things they told us...effortlessly. A man once wrote to me, "I have found out the secret. The spiritual path is not a path of effort at all." The more effort you put, the more ego you are developing. The ego grows when you say, "I have put in so many hours. I have done so much effort, I have done all this, and "I" becomes very strong. Therefore, that man wrote to me "I have discovered that it is not something that you put effort, because that only creates the big obstacle of ego further on your path." Therefore, at the end of his letter he wrote, "I am now going to try very hard for the

effortless meditation.” That is our mind. That is how the mind works. It can’t get out of this. That is why these Perfect Living Masters come and join us in our effort. They say, “Yes, go ahead, make your effort till you find out that the effort doesn’t count.”

They make you go into intellectual study. They make you study hard. They say study books, listen to discourses... Why? Because we think that is the only way we can get knowledge. So, they engage us in intellectual discussions. They answer our questions, they engage in a little bit of debate with us over various issues. All the mind’s questions which come up, they want to engage us in that, all the time knowing that none of this is going to take them to their true home. But when we are tired of this, we find the intellect cannot reach the point where we want to go. Then they come up with the true method by which they take us back home, which is the only true spiritual method— love and devotion. There is no spirituality without love and devotion. The rest is all mental games. We play mental games, they play mental games with us, but they know that eventually the only thing that will take us to our true home is love and devotion.

Why do we say love and devotion? Because devotion is a response to love. Whenever we feel loved by somebody, we automatically get devoted to that person. That is why we use this phrase, love and devotion, all the time. This is so important, that very often we forget that the whole path is based on love and devotion. The whole spiritual path is based on love and devotion.

People meditate mechanically for years, hoping that something will happen. Nothing happens, because it is not a mechanical exercise at all. Meditation without love and devotion is hollow. It does not yield anything, but if you have love and devotion when you meditate, you get something. And what is meditation after all? Meditation is to meditate upon something. We are all meditating all the time, but we are meditating on worldly things. We are meditating on outside relationships. We are meditating upon outside objects. We think about them all the time—that is meditation.

Here what they say is, “Meditate upon the truth, meditate upon the self, meditate upon love and devotion for the lord. Meditate and develop your love and devotion for the master.” These things require that we use meditation as a means of keeping quiet, making yourself still, spending time closing your eyes so that you don’t have to look outside and talk to God, talk to your master, talk to yourself, find out who is inside you. All religions without exception have said that the truth lies within you, not outside. They even explain that what is outside is merely a creation. It’s like a shadow. It has been made to look real because we wanted to experience reality. That is why the process of illusion has been used, not to create illusion, but to create reality. Therefore, we are experiencing reality outside. This was just for a very great experience. We wanted to

have a good experience, so we are having it. It's designed by us. We designed when we were all only one, when there was only one creator. And then we split ourselves into so many and became the many from the one in order to have an experience of created reality, and that's what we're having right now.

There are many other levels of consciousness where you can also experience different kinds of realities. We created reality, not illusions. We use the process of illusion to create reality. So that is why, at any one time, only one kind of experience is real for us. At this time, the physical experience is real for us, and that is how the physical master is real for us. That is why the physical activity we are doing is real for us, but when we go to a level different from this level of consciousness, whether it is higher or lower, this level of reality disappears. Another level of reality opens up.

Let us think of going to a lower level like dreaming. We go to sleep and have a dream. In the dream we have a different world, a different reality, following different laws of nature, following different laws of time and space. In a dream, you can skip from one place to another in an instant, and it looks absolutely normal. Nobody questions in a dream. In a dream you can jump 50 years, and it looks normal.

There are different ways in which we have an experience of time and space in a dream. The very laws of experience change, and yet they look absolutely normal. Normal to who? The same self that went to sleep. When we have a dream, it is not somebody else who is dreaming, it's the same self that was awake. The same self becomes the dream character and moves around without knowing that the person is sleeping, that he's sleeping outside, somewhere on a bed. When you wake up you discover that was just a dream, it was not real. While the dream lasted it was real. We created a reality by shutting off our experience of wakefulness. If we could also remember what we were like when we were awake and also had a dream, the dream would never become real. So, we are so keen to experience reality. All the time we are so keen to experience reality, and that is why we make the dream a reality. When we wake up we know that was not real.

The experience of waking up is one of the greatest experiences we've ever had in life, because that is one experience where you never ask anybody, "Give me proof." But if in the dream you were talking to some people and say, "I am going to wake up one day," they say, "You are awake." They tell you in the dream. Then you say, "We are not awake. We have to wake up." They say, "Give some proof. You can give no proof."

When you wake up, actually, even before you've opened your eyes, you're still lying in your bed with your eyes closed, you still know you're awake. You don't move your limbs, you don't pinch yourself. You don't take any proof.

Supposing you wake up in the morning and ten people come up to you and say, “You are still sleeping,” you will not believe them, because the evidence of wakefulness lies in itself, that you are awake. Nobody can then challenge that you’re not awake.

What is this experience that when you wake up you don’t need any proof? But for all other things we are constantly asking for proof, the intellect is constantly asking for proof. Where is the proof? People say you can wake up further—where is the proof? When you are in one state of consciousness, you cannot prove anything about the other state of consciousness, but when you wake up you don’t need any more proof. The proof itself is embedded in the waking up process.

What is the waking up process that enables you to be absolutely certain you are awake? You get up in the morning...what makes you absolutely certain you had a dream, you slept and now you are awake without asking for any proof, without pinching yourself to see if you’re awake? The proof lies in the fact your consciousness is able to recall the memory that you did go to sleep. You remember you went to sleep in that bed and therefore now you’re awake without even opening your eyes. You’re in the same bed. The whole feel comes back. The memory of your state before you went to dream, before you went to sleep, comes back. It’s the same awakening when you go to a different, higher level of consciousness. When you go to a higher level of consciousness you remember that you were there before you were even born here. You remember that’s a much longer life than you have here. This was a very short life. That’s the kind of experience you have. It carries its own proof.

Therefore, when we say let us go on a spiritual journey to our true home, it is not really a journey. It’s a series of awakenings. We awaken ourselves again and again. We awaken ourselves to find that there is another self in us, which has a much longer life. It was there and moved from body to body, that there were reincarnations taking place. We don’t debate these things when we are in a physical body. Is there life after death or not? Is there reincarnation or not? I believe it, I don’t believe it—that’s a silly argument. Wake up and see—if you were there or not. There is no proof of a pudding than eating it. That’s the best proof. There is no proof of what is after death except by dying and seeing if it is there or not.

Therefore, if somebody says, “I don’t believe there is any life after death.” “Okay, die and tell us.” They say, “Well, I won’t be there to tell you,” and I can tell you, “No, you *can* be there. Even try to pretend to be dead and find out. Even simulate death—and you will be able to find out.”

It is not difficult to simulate death. What happens? A great maharishi Maharishi Raman, in India, he discovered the truth only by pretending to be dead. He was alone, and he

had only one servant with him. The servant went away for some errand and suddenly Raman was very sick. He said, "My servant is not here, I might die. Who will take care of me?" Then suddenly a thought came to him, "What after all is death? What will happen to me when I die? Rigor Mortis? My body will become all stiff?" So he stiffened his body. "I'll stop breathing. I'll do this..." So, he pretended to be dead, and said, "If I am dead who is this speaking inside me? Who is asking, are you dead or not? How is that sound, that voice stronger now than it was earlier?" That led him to investigate that there is something that exists in us which never dies. And therefore, you can, by a simple process of effective meditation, actually create the experience of death while you are alive, and check it out, what happens. It is not that you have to be constantly debating these things without having any real information. Get real knowledge, and the method to do it is simple.

If you physically die, what happens? You don't die all at once. It sometimes it looks you are dying very quickly, but sometimes you die slowly. If you have seen someone dying slowly, you will notice that they don't die all at once. They die first in their hands and feet—they become numb. Then they have no knowledge—did they have them? They become unaware of their extremities, and then they become unaware of their arms and legs. They're still talking to us. They're telling us, "Put my arms on this side, put my leg here..." It's already there. They're becoming totally unaware. Then they become unaware of the bottom of their torso, feel they're floating in air. Then more of this life force is taken out and, when it goes up to the head, when they're brain dead, they are dead. That's when the death takes place. So, death is a withdrawal of life force from the body in stages.

What is it that creating us, that the life force is all over the body? If you examine carefully, if you are a student of consciousness and study what is making us aware that we have a body, you will find it is your attention that is going to the different parts of the body. Your attention is scattered all over the body giving you a feeling you have hands and feet. If the attention is not there, you are not aware of what you have. The attention is constantly scattered in the body, which makes you feel you have a body. And once you have a body and eyes are open, ears are open, then from the body you see a material world. It's a physical world, because you have a physical body. Your attention is operating through the physical body, and therefore the world around you becomes a physical world. When you withdraw your attention from the physical body, either by taking it to a higher place than where it is normally or lower place than it is normally, you change the scene. When you drop the attention to the throat level, throat energy center, you begin to dream. You've gone to sleep. You have withdrawn your attention from the body because you are not aware where the body is, and a dream sequence opens up, which opens a dream world. You don't see a physical world when

you are dreaming—you see a dream world. The dream world is similar to the physical world, sometimes not so similar, but it's not this world.

Similarly, when you take your attention above this wakeful state, you open up another experience of another body and that opens up another world. So, these worlds which we are experiencing outside are based upon what vehicle, what costume, what covering we are wearing ourselves.

So, the physical body...when we wear this, we can perform that function which death performs for us. By withdrawing the life force we can perform it by withdrawing our attention. If we withdraw our attention from the world outside, by closing our eyes, sitting in a quiet place and contemplating inside, not thinking about outside...which means, when we meditate upon ourselves, what happens? The longer you sit in meditation the more you forget where your hands and feet are. You sit longer...you forget where your legs and arms are. Keep longer, you forget where the body is, and yet you are there. You're very much there; you are more there than you are now. You'll notice in that form you have different laws of nature operating, a different world opens to you. This is a natural thing for our consciousness to experience. So, we can die while we are living, and this is the secret, the secret of discovering the truth, the secret of discovering: did we have past lives? are we going to have future lives? is there something in us that outlasts this physical body? It is not a matter of conjecture or speculation here; it's a matter of actual experience. Anybody can do it. Method is simple: withdraw your attention from the body. Where do you withdraw it? Where you feel you actually are as consciousness. Right now, in the physical body, we feel we are right behind the eyes. That is why, if we put all our attention on the point behind the eyes, we feel where we are operating from. If we are not the body, where do we operate this body from, if that is the point behind the eyes? If we concentrate our attention, meditate upon that point, meditate where we are inside, and gradually we'll be able to withdraw the attention completely from the body and discover we have another body, another life that was there before we were even born.

It's a matter of personal experience; it's not a matter of making any guesswork. So, this is possible for all of us to do. This is how you open up your door to actual reality to discovering who you are. But otherwise, just sitting here and reading books and debating about it and discussing it does not give us anything. It's only when you practice this that you can have the actual, definite, 100 percent proof beyond any doubt. Just like the experience of waking up from a dream carries 100 percent conviction that you are awake in the wakeful physical state, it's the same kind of conviction you get every time you wake up.

How many times can you wake up? Many times. It's not one time. We wake up from a dream, and we are awake in the physical world. We awake further to a world where we find we have all our sense perceptions intact. The body is not there—sense perceptions are there. Where are they located? How do we see with the inner body? You can take an example by looking at the reflection of the inner body, which is your imaginative body. Today you can imagine yourself moving around. Just an imagination. Supposing you imagine you have come and stood next to me here. You left your chair and stood and come next to me. Who's standing here then? Your imaginary self. Where did it come from? From the same consciousness which is inside you. Now supposing you were able to imagine you are standing here and concentrate on this place that your standing next to me. Concentrate to the point that you are only looking at yourself here and not there. This will become real for you, and that—where you're sitting—will become imaginary.

It's such a game of attention. We don't realize our attention is creating our experiences of reality. Therefore, what is real? Real is where we put our attention. We have put our attention on an external world and made it all real. We have put our attention on the physical body and made it real. It's the game of attention. So, when we withdraw attention, we can experience death while living.

There's a little story I used to like one day. It's the story of a parrot. I loved parrot stories when I was young. I am going to share this particularly story if you haven't heard it before. Many of you must have heard it. There was a businessman, an importer/exporter in India, who used to go to Africa for carrying Indian silks and so on and buying cashews and nuts from Africa. He used to carry one commodity from India and sold in Africa, brought other commodities from Africa, sold in India.

One day while he was traveling in Africa, he was passing through a forest, where there were a lot of parrots. They were beautiful parrots, so he liked one of the parrots. He bought a cage and he captured one of the parrots, put him in the cage and brought him back to India. He fed the parrot with all kinds of good food. The parrots liked green chillies, you know, they love it. They love churri—churri means we take flour and make something. It's common in India, and they feed to the parrots. The Parrots are very happy—they dance, they sing, you teach them how to talk. So, the parrots become very friendly with you, and this particular parrot was very happy. Every day he was fed very well. Every day he sang songs, and he danced in his cage. So, the next time the business man was going to Africa, he asked the parrot, "Do you have any message to send to your folks back home in Africa?" The parrot said "Yes, tell them I'm enjoying my life in this cage. I eat churri and I eat chillies and I dance and I sing and I am very happy." So, the businessman left for Africa. When he reached there after finishing his

business, he went to the same forest and he saw all the parrots. He called them, “Gather here. I have a message to convey to you from the parrot I took back with me last time...”

So, they all gathered around him and he said, “The parrot I took with me has sent you this message. He’s enjoying his life in the cage. He eats churri, he eats chili, he dances, he sings, he’s very happy.” On hearing this, an elderly looking parrot, older looking parrot, sitting on a branch on a tree had tears in his eyes. He was so sad to see him. After that the little parrot with the tears fell down dead. He said, “This parrot must have been very close to the parrot I took home, and he could not bear to hear his message and he gave up his life.” Feeling sorry he returned home, and he told the parrot in the cage. He said, “I did convey your message that you are having a great time eating chillis and churri, dancing and singing in you cage. But when I gave this message there was this one elderly parrot there, he had tears in his eyes and he fell down dead.” Upon hearing this, the parrot in the cage had tears in his eyes and he fell down dead. The man was very sorry. Why should he have conveyed this message if one parrot couldn’t take it. How would this parrot take it? So, he opened the cage and threw the dead bird out. As soon as he threw the dead bird out, the bird opened wings and flew up and sat on a tree. He said, “Oh, you are not dead?” He said, “No, I’m not dead, nor is that parrot dead in the forest. He only sent me a message. His message was, “If you want to get out of this cage, die while living.” That’s the story. Again, it makes a point that we can have that experience of what is beyond by dying while living.

This teaching of the Great Master, Hazur Maharaj Baba Sawan Singh, whose Bhandara we are celebrating—the great day, tomorrow, 2nd of April, is the anniversary of that date when he expressed himself in a radiant form that we’ve not really seen like that, who has been with his disciples every day, every moment 24/7 ever since. How can you not celebrate that occasion? How can you not see what is going on?

Bhandara means...*bhandar* is abundance. The word bhandar has been used as abundance. Very often it can be abundance of food. Sometimes they celebrate Bhandaras and have a lot of food to eat. Bhandar also means anything else in abundance. We celebrate the 2nd of April every year, and I invite you to come and join me. I celebrate it every year and new friends come and join me, because it is the abundance of grace. Abundance of grace of the Great Master. I have not seen so much grace, so generously distributed, so freely given, so non-judgmentally distributed which I see on the 2nd of April. So that is why, for me, it is the greatest day of the year, 2nd of April, the greatest day of the year to celebrate abundance. Bhandara means celebration of abundance. Tomorrow we are going to celebrate abundance, abundance of grace. Now how is grace so important? It is important because we were just talking

of the futility of struggle and effort. Then what substitutes it? I said, love and devotion. How do you get love? How do you get devotion? Except for grace we don't get those things at all. It's grace that gives us love. It is grace that gives us devotion. It is grace...sometimes we don't know what grace is. When we go through a spiritual training and we go through a spiritual path, gradually step by step, we realize that the effort we were making, which we were required to make in order to reach the point of finding out it's not effort that's going to do it... When we reach that point, we discover grace was even in the effort we were making, that we could not have made an effort if there was no grace, that the grace starts from day one, which makes a seeker, grace starts from day one when we start meditating, grace starts on day one when we feel we have to get something. These feelings don't come without grace.

At the end, when we reach the end of the journey and find our true home, we've found that the whole thing was based upon grace, that grace is the reality, that without the grace of God, without the grace of the master...because I say grace of God, then I follow up by saying grace of the master, because master is carrying with him at that time the consciousness of God. A master, a Perfect Living Master, is not one who has had some great experiences. He's not one that's reached his true home and come back to tell us what is it. A Perfect Living Master is a human being, like ourselves, who while he's a human being, sitting amongst us, is still carrying the awareness of totality of consciousness of God himself, at that very moment. Therefore, he carries that awareness at all times. To be able to be in the company of such a person, who is carrying that awareness, there's nothing like it. I couldn't find anything like it, that here a human being is sitting like ourselves and his awareness, in his awareness, he knows all levels of consciousness including our own totality, where he can feel and see that we are all one and the many at the same time. We can't do that. Therefore, it's the grace of God and the grace of the master—I think they're identical. There's no difference. That is why, when we come across a Perfect Living Master, which means we are ready, our time has come. Then he initiates us, definitely he's accepted that your time is ready and I've accepted you and we are going to go together. He becomes a companion, a friend, a co-traveler with us. He doesn't have to travel anywhere. He's already there. He's there when we meet him. But he becomes a co-traveler and joins us from where we are.

Again, a little story will illustrate this point. Once upon a time...it's how we start most stories...once upon a time there was a nice king, very benevolent king, who wanted all his subjects to be happy. So, he would sometimes disguise himself, incognito, and go out looking at people, how they are living. This king once took a walk in the forest and saw an old man, not an old man, but a very haggard man, because he was working so hard on logging woods, using an axe to cut the woods. Then he would carry the wood

to the market place, make a few bucks, come back and take care of himself. So he sat with this man and said that, "You know, I would like to help you. I'd like to take you to the king's palace." He said, "Nobody can go there!" The man, poor man said, "Do you know you talk of kings' palace? There are guards way outside from there, outside the palace. They don't let anybody come near. How do you think you'll be able to go there?" He said, "I have a little acquaintance with one of the guards and he does listen to me." He said, "I don't believe you. I don't believe. Nobody has that kind of access. You're just like me sitting in the forest. Better cut wood with me and work with me."

So, the king starts cutting wood and carrying on his back, along with this man, and selling in the market, became like him. Then he felt happy. He's a real person, and he's not talking that foolish stuff about going to see the king and all that—nobody can do that. So gradually, one day he convinces him, that he became friends, and he had some trust in this man, and says, "No, he doesn't tell lies." But he says he knows one of the guards. Maybe he does. Let's try. So, he goes and the king goes and beckons the guards not to mention who he is because he's on this experiment to go incognito. So, he tells the guard, "We just want to have a little peep into the palace. Will you let us have it?" And this poor man is saying, "We'll probably be pushed away, and we'll probably be punished for saying, doing this." The guard says, "Yes, since you are my friend, I'll let you look into the palace." So, he took a little peep in the palace. Poor man's so happy, "I was able to see the palace." He says, "You're a great guy that you know this guard."

After a few days he said, "I also know a guy who lives inside the guard, one of the attendants to the king." He said, "Okay let's..." A little faith has built up now. So gradually he takes him inside, and he then talks to the attendant and says, "I can...if you like? I can introduce you to the minister." He said, "He knows the minister also..." "The attendant is introducing us. I have met the minister before." So, the king says, "Let's go and see him." So, he goes and sees the minister. Ultimately, they came back, still cut wood and selling it, and says, "You are a great guy, with all of these connections...why are you cutting wood with me?" He said, "Because I am your friend. I am doing this thing...I am like you. I am not different; we are both woodcutters. We both cut our wood, go and sell our wood in the marketplace. I just happen to have a little connection there." Then he takes him back, takes him to the minister and he says, "Minister, can you also take us to the king himself who sits in the palace?" Ultimately the minister agrees. So, this wood cutter goes with the king and goes inside the palace, and the throne is empty, and he says, "Where is the king?" The king sits on the throne. He says, "I am the king. Welcome." He says, "Why didn't you tell me first?" He says, "I didn't...I couldn't tell you the least part of it. You didn't even believe that I knew a guard."

You only knew I was a wood cutter like yourself. That's why you believed me, became my friend and came to see the king."

That is our state. We can't know who a Perfect Living Master is unless he becomes just like us, lives like us, becomes our friend and gradually opens the door and says here's a little peek, I can show you something inside. And then ultimately he takes you little further inside, and he knows all the different regions, all different places and gradually the master takes us inside. When we reach our true home, he says, "I will introduce you to Sat Purush, the creator of everything." We go there, and the master sits there. He was the Sat Purush all the time, not at that time—right from day one. We are not accepting these things. We won't even accept if he doesn't become just like us. If he becomes extraordinary, we can worship him, we can't accept him as a friend, not a co-traveler.

That's why this is such a wonderful thing, that these perfect living masters, they come and work amongst us, become like us, share our life and see no differences. That is why we become friends. That is why we experience true love of a human being for another human being. You cannot experience true love, except for a human being.

I am saying this so strongly, because all else is attachment to the mind. True love comes from our soul. When we say, "I love my house," it's an attachment to your house; "I love my kids," it's an attachment to your kids; "I love so and so"...these statements are made by us with a great ego. "I do this, I am loving this," as if I am a big guy, I am great, because I can love so and so. It's only an expression of your ego. There is no love in it. Where there is love there is no ego.

Supposing, you really fall in love with a person, a human being. Have you noticed what happens to you? You don't talk of 'I' at all. You talk of the beloved; the beloved occupies your mind. You think of the beloved, all the time. You can't be thinking of yourself. In all other attachments we are first thinking of ourselves and what we are doing. Even when we tell people all the time, "I love you, I love you..." and I hear this phrase every day, people talking to each other, as if they're so insecure they have to repeat it again and again. If you love somebody, does it disappear every second that you go on repeating this? When you say, "I love you," the other person says, "I hate you..." you also say, "I also hate you." What kind of love is that? That is not love. These are ego trips that we make, and these are attachments, infatuations and attractions based upon something else for people. Mind being attracted, sensory system being attracted—that does not constitute love. Love is something that takes hold of your soul inside. Love is something that pulls you, without you knowing how it is happening. Love is that which pulls you when your whole mind is trying to fight—and still pulls you.

Such a love is not easily found. It is there in this world, but you can certainly find such a love, that unconditional love, non-judgmental love, in a Perfect Living Master. I've almost come to the conclusion if you want to have a sign, who's a perfect living master... People used to give a lot of signs: "He's like an ordinary person...he doesn't take money from people...he gives them things...he's not a taker...he does not perform public miracles...he teaches how to go within—a number of items people used to read out, most of which can be duplicated by any clever man. Any clever person can have all those and pretend to be a master. But the one thing which a person cannot pretend, and that, I think, is true criteria of a perfect living master—his unconditional love, which remains unconditional no matter what happens, no matter what the circumstances. His non-judgmental compassion and love for us cannot be matched by anybody. It is that love that pulls us and therefore, if somebody says, "I want to know who's a master?" It's whoever pulls you with that unconditional loves...follow him. Even if he's not a Perfect Living Master, I say...still follow him, because he's taking you in the right direction. He's showing you that the journey to true home is within ourselves and love and devotion is the real secret. So long as we know that, we are on the right track.

We have come to a point here where we are so beset with our minds activities that we want to find everything with the mind. We want to find our true home through the mind; we want to somehow think hard to find the mind. We want even to find God through meditation, through the mind. Don't forget mediation is also a mental thing. Imagine our true home, our Sach Khand, to which we belong, where totality of consciousness exists. There is no time and space. Everybody says that. Even the books say that they are beyond time, beyond space, beyond time and space. Time and space have been created for our experience here. Now here is our true home, out of time and space. How can you describe it? How can you talk about it? We have no language that can describe such a thing. It doesn't exist. Therefore, to think that intellectually we can do something, by physical means we can do something, is out of the question. By repeating words, which is repetition of mantra, has anybody ever gone to their true home? Words are only local words here. How can they take you beyond the mind? How can any mantra in the world ever take you beyond the mind, when it's a spoken word, spoken with your mind? How can any meditation, which requires some physical asanas to be performed, body movements to be performed, body stillness to be performed, take you beyond the mind?

These are all mental plans and mental activities. But the one thing that takes you beyond the mind and does not belong to the mind, does not belong to the body, and that is the soul's power of love, the souls power of intuitive knowledge, intuition, the soul's power of appreciating joy and beauty and bliss. That alone, that power takes you beyond the mind. All the rest is just a preparation, just a way to find out, "This will not

work.” We work hard to find out this will not work. But can’t we do it from the beginning? That if it does not work, why should we try to work? The mind does not accept that. The mind does not accept that I cannot get anything that I want with my own effort.

People will debate with themselves till the end: “I know what I want...I can get it with my own mind, with my own effort. It’s not somebody else’s who can help me. Nobody else can help me. It’s only self-help with my mind. With my own effort—I will get it. It doesn’t work. But how will you be convinced that this doesn’t work? By trying hard, and then failing.

There was a devoted disciple of Great Master. He was a judge and a finance minister in a state and highly educated person, who, when he retired from his job, came to Great Master and said, “Master, I want to now serve you for the rest of my life.” The Great Master said, “You are a very highly educated person. You have held a very high position in the government. You can take any job you like. You can be secretary general of this organization. You can be legal advisor to us. You can be this thing, all top posts that are available in the service of this organization which we are having—these satsangs, these discourses, these initiations... You take anything you like.” He said, “I only want to be your doorman, just stand outside your door. That’s the only seva I want.” Great master said, “All right.” That man—he’s passed away—his name was Daryai Lal, and he’s written some very nice books also. So, Dewan Daryai Lal stood outside the door of the Great Master till the end of his life. Dewan Daryai Lal one day told the master, after a few years of that seva, he said, “I have been enjoying this seva—I see people coming with such love in their eyes. It’s an inspiration to see them. I’ve very moved when I see them. You’ve given me the best seva to see how much love and devotion actually exists in this world for a Perfect Living Master and I enjoy it. But master, I left out one thing: I did not meditate properly. I did not carry out that part of the instruction. I should be meditating. So, will you give me the opportunity to meditate this summer? I understand that you are not going to your hill station resort, which you normally go in the summer, in Dalhousie. Will you give me the keys of your house? I will go in your house, with all the great vibrations of yours, stay there and I’ll go meditate there for three months, without break, and catch up with all the lost meditation I could not do for these few years.”

Great Master said, “Here are the keys...go, enjoy, meditate.” The man went up and he opened the door, full of great anticipation, passion, anxiety, all... “Now, I’ve got a chance. Let me see Great Master’s house. I’ll be inside that.” As soon as he opened, a plumber came. He says, “I’ve been waiting for somebody to come because I’ve got a lot of work to do inside.” So plumbing work started, all knocking went on. Two, three other people came, “Oh, you have come, Dewan sahib. We really wanted to meet you.” He

tried his very best to meditate in Great Master's house. He could not meditate even like he could anywhere else. He felt so disappointed and he went back to Great Master and returned the keys and said, "Sorry, master, I failed. I failed... I thought I'd be able to catch up on my meditation. I totally failed." Great Master laughed and said, "No, Dewan Sahib, you passed, you passed. The whole thing was an experience for you to discover that your effort will give you nothing. You would never have found this out except by trying."

Now, coming to the conclusion that this is not a path of effort. Effort can give you a lot of things in the different worlds around here, mostly the physical world. But it is not effort that will take you back to your true home and therefore this is a path of love and devotion within yourself, and it is not something that you can have just by your mental effort or by saying with your mental will, "I am going to get it. I will get it." It is not that kind of a yoga.

There are many yoga's based upon that principal. The hatha yoga. *Hath* means stubbornness. Hatha yoga means, "I am going to get it no matter what. I'll sit in meditation, even if I die I must get it..." Nobody gets it. You can try too; anybody can try. Hatha yoga has never taken anybody to their true home.

How can you go above the mind except with something that is beyond the mind, something that does not belong to time and space and does not belong to things here. We are caught up here, in laws of cause and effect, in the law of karma. Here we are bothered all the time with our karma. We are bothered: Is it good, is it bad, am I going to suffer, am I going to be rewarded? We're bothered with this law 24/7 here, and we are going to our true home where this law doesn't even exist. The entire karma that we talk about, which is holding us here and continuously drawing our attention here, is all on the mind. There's no karma on the soul. Never was.

The soul has never had any karma, never will. It's pure consciousness. It doesn't have anything to do with created time and space, created events over here. These have been created by the mind so that they can be experienced through the mind. They leave completely when we go beyond the mind.

Yet we are so much trapped in these things here. So how can we be rescued from here? How can any system of meditation take us beyond the mind when the whole system is based upon mental activity? It does not mean that you have to do particular kind of yoga. All these yogas they are dealing with either repetition of words or they are dealing with different positions of the body, different types of breathing—all physical stuff or mental stuff. The whole system is based upon things of the mind, and we are talking about going to our true home.

Of course, you can get a lot of things even with these systems of yoga. If your desire is only for those—you want to be healthy? Do some good breathing exercises. Call them yoga or don't call them yoga and you'll be healthier. You want to be healthy? You don't have to follow vegetarian diet or rice diet or this gluten free diet or this diet, just eat less, you'll be healthy. Eat one-third of what you really eat, you'll be healthy.

I was very pleased to find out the latest research has told us that although the cellular inter-communication in the body is instant and cells through the nervous system communicate instantly, but the stomach, to tell the brain that, "I am full," takes twenty minutes! It's a good discovery for us to know that when we are eating food and we think we can eat more, we are actually full, because the stomach is saying, "I'm full, I'm full!" The message has not gone yet. For twenty minutes we overeat, and that is why we are all obese. We are overeating; we are not healthy. Simple method: eat less. Eat much less than we are eating, we'll be healthier. You can check it out, try it out.

But these are not the methods to go to our true home. These are good for other reasons. Supposing somebody wants to see the astral plane and say, "There is my soul flying around." Of course, soul is never flying. Soul is power of consciousness—flight requires time and space. So, soul can't fly. Soul experiences, but soul does not fly—we need something to fly with. You can fly with a physical body, by taking... somebody asked me, "Can you fly?" I said, "Yes! Go and buy a United Airlines ticket." It's not difficult to fly; these days it's easy. The inner self takes on an Astral Body, you can fly. Beyond that go into your mind, go into your universal mind, go into that you can be anywhere—that's also flying. But you can't fly when we're talking of Sach Khand, our true home. This is not flight as we know it. None of the terminology we are using for spiritual experiences applies to our true home.

There's no word for it at all. So that is why, the words which we can use, which are actually states of being, and they are not flying or doing something, something happening to us—no, it's not even happening, not even experience. You can't even call being in your true home an experience. Experience takes time. Therefore, there is no word for it. But it is our true home. Everything is being created from there and imagine the possibility that we can have that state of being of being, in our true home, right when we are in our physical bodies here. There is no other form of life in which we have this opportunity, and that's amazing, because there so many forms of life. According to our Indian scriptures, they say there are 8.4 million—*chaurasi lakh*, 84 lakhs—8.4 million species of life that exist in this universe, in the current universe. Of course, in the current universe, when they talk of physical universe, they include the astro-physical overlap within it. What is the astro-physical overlap? Which means when we die and our disembodied self, which means the astral form, is still here and can

stay in this form or rise above this to a pure astral form from the form that is still here. When they can...dead bodies are removed, the person that stays on is the astral form that can still move around here. Why do we call it the astral form? Because astral refers to something up in the sky and since that body flies freely, has no gravity, so it's been given this term, Astral Body, and that whole experience as Astral experience.

So, the astral experience overlaps this experience, and you can have the experience of this world as a disembodied spirit. If you meditate, you meditate and leave this body behind and jump out of the other body and move around, you have the experience of this world. If you fly away to a higher level, you can have an experience of a world outside of this world. They all, both are part of the astral world. So, since we have these experiences of the overlap of the physical and astral, that is why we come across ghosts, we come across spirits moving around. People say our house is haunted. They say spirits come to us at night and somebody died, and the same spirit is there. Of course, they are there. They can see us, because they have all the sense perceptions open, even more than we have here in the physical body. We can't see them, because we have our eyes covered up by these physical eyes and they restrict our vision to what is material. Eyes are the same. When we are looking with the eyes outside, we are not looking with the physical eyes; we are looking through astral eyes through physical body, through physical eyes. Therefore, we are restricting what we can see. It's like covering your eyes with some lenses and you can only see what's in the lens. You cover your eyes with light green covers, and the green is visible. We are looking at this and only physical is visible—we can't see more than that. But if you remove this, the same eyes which are seeing now open up and see a lot more. These people who have left the body but are still here... And why are they here? Because of attachments. They are attached to people, they are to things, they're attached to what's left behind—they can't handle it now.

Some people saved money... A friend of mine, he saved his money which he had inherited from somebody and he packed it up and was hiding it all the time in his house. When he died he was constantly there, and his wife felt it and she asked me, "What happens to a man when he dies? Does he go to heaven or he still roam around here?" I said, "Depends on his attachments." "Oh." "Is anybody bothering you?" "No, no. I just asked a general question." After a few days, she again says, "What happens to a man, especially if he is initiated...does he not go back to Sach Khand when he dies?" I said, "It depends on his attachments." "Oh." "Is anybody bothering you?" "No." Ultimately, she once told me, "Somebody is bothering me. It looks like that guy—he's not dead. He still roams around, bothers me." I said, "You loved him. Why are you bothered now?"

I said, "I can tell you. Let me come to your house and see why he's coming and bothering you. Maybe he loved you so much and you don't love him anymore now because he's a ghost. When he was a human being, you loved him. So that was very conditional love. You said, "I'll love you as long as you are human. When you become a ghost, no more." Anyway, we went there. I said, "Where do you feel he's going?" She said, "I feel he's always coming from this door. I feel...sense him and he goes right to that corner." I said, "What have you hidden there?" "No, no, no, nothing, nothing." Ultimately found out all those securities and cash which he had saved was packed up and hidden there. And if she moved it to some other place, he went there. So there was another friend of ours who was staying with this lady, and the friend told me, "This lady will never get over this haunted thing unless she gets rid of that package she's holding. So, I also advised her: Distribute the package, make use of it, spend it, do something, don't hold it, drawing the attention. But she wouldn't listen. So, the friend then one day went and looked up the package, threw it open all over and threw the currency and securities and the big notes that were there, she threw them all over. This woman cried. Then they distributed them. The guy never came back. What kind of love was that? I'm only telling you a true story, that sometimes what we say is haunted, because the disembodied spirits are still here. They're like us. They don't have a body. People ask me again and again, "How do we handle this? I felt that I was not fair to my mother. I think I treated her very badly and now she died, and I feel very regret and I feel so guilty. What can I do?"

I give them a simple prescription. It's called one-word prescription. It's called forgive. There is nothing like forgiveness to get over this situation. Forgive her, forgive yourself. When you practice forgiveness, you go over this hump that is holding you back. There are so many things that hold us back—our attachments, our desires and our guilt is one of them. "I did something wrong" Forgive yourself. "So, and so did so much to me. How can I forgive?" Forgive. One day my wife opened a book containing a daily quote, some wise statement of the day. That day the wise statement was, "Some things in our life are unforgivable. That is where you should forgive." When you feel something is so unforgivable, that you can never forgive, it is too bad, too hurtful, you are hurt so badly, you can't forgive, that's exactly where you should forgive. Forgiveness releases you from that problem which will stop you from going within, because you can't concentrate your attention. You can't pull your attention unless you have forgiven and unless you have forgiven yourself and forgiven others. When you forgive you are ready to move forward.

I'm bringing this point, because this does count on our spiritual journey, on our spiritual path. So, if we can practice these things: of forgiveness, love and devotion, meditation

with love and devotion. People say: how can we have love and devotion? How do you have love and devotion here? You run at night, you park your car at one place to meet your beloved somewhere else. You jump over walls just because you have physical love for somebody. And here we're talking about responding to an unconditional love. If you want to practice love and devotion in your meditation, in your search for the truth and search for yourself, sit behind the eyes. Your master who initiates you sitting there already. He may be hiding behind a curtain, the dark curtain you see—he's hiding behind that. Not bad... if my beloved sat behind a curtain, I would talk to him and say "When will you remove the curtain?" Maybe I will go tear apart the curtain sometime. But I will not sit idly repeating words. I'll be interacting. I'll be interacting with my master. A master, who is giving his unconditional love to us, sits inside us. We sit there and we think meditation is not to think of where he's sitting, what he's doing, but to keep on repeating with own minds certain words. That's not meditation. Words are used to prevent the mind of thinking of other things. Mantra is used for that, simran is used for that. So you don't think of other things. Engage the mind in these words so that the mind can't think of other things but does not stop you from thinking about the master sitting inside. Talk to him, talk to his passion, complain to him, be angry with him. That's all love. When you realize somebody's so close to you inside and you interact like that, then you are expressing your love and devotion right from day one in your meditation. Meditation will be successful. Otherwise you can keep on churning water, like they say in India, churning water hoping one day butter will come out of it. It doesn't happen like that. But it's not a mechanical thing, it's something of your passion, of your love, of you feeling being pulled and having a friend, a true friend. How would you deal with a true friend? The only friend you can completely trust 100 percent, with whom you can share everything—that's the kind of friend sitting inside. If you were initiated by a Perfect Living Master, you have such a friend sitting inside you in the moment you are initiated by a Perfect Living Master.

You have such a friend sitting inside you from the moment of initiation. That is the guarantee of initiation. That's the wonder of initiation. Initiation is not a method of teaching you to do anything. Let us not think that initiation is a method of teaching you how to meditate. You can learn from books, you can learn from anybody, and it's the simplest of methods. I am openly saying, "Put your attention here." That is the method. What other method do you want to learn? The mystic Bulleh Shah says, "It's not difficult to find God. Just put your attention from here, over here—you'll find God." Simplifies it. Go within. Everybody says go within. The kingdom of God is within you; go within. Where's the problem? Method is not difficult. It's the question of how do you sustain your stay inside when the mind is constantly wandering outside. The best method is, if you have a true friend, a permanent friend, inside you, in your

consciousness, in your head, in the physical body, talk to him, daily. Talk to him at all times. If you do that, the friend will be with you externally and internally at all times. You will have an experience of friendship that you've never had before, because you've never had a friend who's 24/7 with you. This is a friendship that is 24/7 with you.

So, I have come here to celebrate the Bhandara, the day of abundance of grace of the Great Master tomorrow, and I'm so happy that you all came to join me. Somebody said, "If you were alone, would you still have a Bhandara?" I said, "I'm never alone." I say, "I still have a Bhandara. Who? I and my master. We enjoy it. We enjoy this day, and there is so much grace that flows. It's amazing to see that grace."

I welcome you all to experience his grace tomorrow, which is one of the greatest days of the year for me, far more important than my date of birth, far more important than my wedding anniversary, far more important than the celebration of any festival—it's the greatest day of my life tomorrow, the day when Great Master became permanently visible, permanently with me at all times in all experiences, and that is what you can get by getting initiation from a Perfect Living Master, getting the radiant form inside you, his inner form inside you at all times. That's the promise that the Perfect Living Masters give us.

They never die, and we should know also we never die. Only bodies die; we survive. They stay with us, and they don't tell us the way to go—they take us there. They don't leave us half way and say, "Now the rest you take it yourself." They take us right to the end because they are the end and this we discover only at the end. This is the beauty of these ordinary human beings, ordinary faces, ordinary lives and they live just like us. They will live... Supposing there are disciples... I saw it with great master. I saw it in his life. There is a person who was a very rich... There was a maharaja and Great Master walked in like a maharaja—we all saw it. He talked to him like a maharaja, he talked like he had the same authority like the maharaja in his kingdom had. When he was with a rich person he was rich, when there was a very poor person, in a village a small village, Great Master dressed and sat like him, like a poor person. Why do these masters take the same level which we are at? Because that's the only way we can be truly friends with them. When they come to our level, first of all, they've come into human form because we are human beings. They've taken our level, within the human station, they take that form like us, and they become our friends.

One of the great disciples of Great Master, Dr. Isher Singh, that veterinary guy whose stories I tell, he told me, "A master is friend first, then master. If he's not your friend first he cannot be your master." A master is not a teacher, someone sitting on a pedestal

telling you what to do. A master's one who loves you as if he and you are on the same level, and from there he takes you up to the final stages.

I welcome you all to the celebration of this Bhandara. And we'll have a break today— I'll see you again later in the afternoon. But I would like to urge: Make best use of this moment. This day tomorrow, coming up, 2nd of April, is a day of abundance, day of bhandar, day of abundance of grace. Absorb as much as you can. You'll find something which can be absorbed which you have not experienced before. I experience it every year on that day, and I want to share that great abundance with all of you that I experience every year.

Thank you very much for your very patient listening to me.

<https://youtu.be/7DzkYjhntu8>

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