

Levels of Competency of Spiritual Masters

Chicago – May 11, 2012 – Part 2

Jo Mange. I found there are about 20 versions of it by different singers from India, and a couple of them are from the Golden Temple of the Sikhs, because this poem is from the Sikh scripture, *Guru Granth Sahib*, by the fifth guru of the Sikhs, Arjan Dev, and he wrote that poem. It's a very nice poem. I like it! When the cat sang, I liked it even more! I said that anybody can sing that means.

But the message of the song is more important than the words, and the message of the song is, "Whatever you ask from your Master, you get it." That's very elementary. Whatever you ask from your Master, you get it. The emphasis is on "you," not on "asking," not on "Master," which means the other way of looking at it is, "What your mind asks may not be given," and we forget that. We think that this is a way of fulfilling our mind's wishes. That doesn't happen.

But whatever our soul wants, you'll get it. No question about it. If you have a Perfect Living Master who has initiated you, taken responsibility for you, whatever your soul asks, you will get—guaranteed. If you say, "I want to get knowledge of myself," you'll get it. If you say, "I want to reach Sach Khand and be merged in totality into the creator," you'll get it. If you want to go beyond...many people didn't know there is a "beyond-the-creator" also. People keep on finding something beyond all the time, and now the "beyond" they found was Alakh, Agam, Anaami, beyond Sach Khand, beyond the true home. And people say, "We'd like to go there, too." And the difficulty is that when the totality itself is lying in Sach Khand, the fifth level of consciousness, how can there be anything above that?

So those three levels which have been mentioned: Alakh means which cannot be described, cannot be *lakya*, cannot be known or described; Agam means which cannot even be known; Anaami means which cannot even be named—and yet they name it Anaami. Just a little contradiction, but these regions are meant for totality to experience in order to generate all the other experiences below. So if any individual soul wants to have the experience of those, it must first merge into totality and become one with the total creator. Then you can have the experience of these regions. But if you ask a Perfect Living Master, "I want that," you will get that, too.

So this song is very powerful. It has always affected me very deeply. Then, on the physical level, it says that if a man who we don't know, who looks ordinary person, but who has an influence over the nine realms—it goes into all the realms possible—and if he comes and puts his hand on your head, what kind of blessing are you getting? Can get you anything better than that? That such a person can put his hand on your head physically, it's the

greatest of miracles! It goes on further to say, “Kanth lae avguna sab mete.” If he happened to give you a hug or an embrace, he can wipe out as many of your karmas as he likes. He can free you of all the vices that you have ever had. He can remove all of them just by giving a hug. Now he’s talking of physical level, that a person with that awareness, with that high awareness, even in the physical body, has this kind of influence on...our life changes immediately after that—and we’ve seen it.

So that is why this song is so great, because it does not deal only with some abstract knowledge. It deals with what a relationship with a Perfect Living Master can do with us. But remember: these words that are there in the song almost seem to show that the Master who comes and puts his hand on your head, he gives you hugs, he does this—has to be a human being like us. And yet the whole of the Sikh community today believes that a book can do this, and they believe the *Granth Sahib* can do it. And they believe that to be the guru, and they read this very passage from the same book, which surprises me that it is such simple elementary thing. The truth is, this was written by a guru who was a human being. It was written with a reference to a master of his who was a human being like him. In fact, in that line of human beings who were the Sikh gurus, it’s a tremendous story.

One of the gurus, when he got old, he said, “I think I should appoint my successor, somebody to carry on my work.” Now everybody knew he was a Perfect Living Master, and he will choose one of his devoted disciples. So he called the disciples, all the disciples: “I want to choose one of you.” They all came prepared. They did their meditation, got ready. He said, “There’ll be a test. Whoever passes the test will be my successor.” They all got ready. “We’ll be now tested spiritually, how much advancement we have, how faithful we have been, how loyal we have been”—they all thought like this. He said, “The test is very simple. Go out and there is some dirt lying there. Pick up the dirt and make a little platform out of it. Whoever makes the best platform will be my successor.”

Many of them thought that the guru has gone crazy, that we talking of spirituality, and he is talking of making platforms, making little heaps of dirt there outside! So many left at that time. The others said, “Okay, there may be some secret in this why he is doing it.” So they went out, and they began to make the platform. Each one tried to make it better. Then they called the guru, “Look at the platform we have made.” He went, looked at all of them with his little cane like that, and he did like this, and he said, “They are no good. Make new ones.”

So they began to make new ones. He kept them busy all day, making one after another and said, “Destroy these. Make a new one, better one.” At the end of the day, he says, “I think the dirt here is not right kind. Let’s go to the other hillock and work there.” More than 70 percent left him at that time. Then they went and worked on the other hillock. The next morning they were busy again making the platform—few people left. And then he said, “No,

these are not good enough. I think we should move to another place.” At that time only one man was left. He said, “If my guru says keep on making these platforms for life, I will keep on doing it, because I know that whatever he is saying has some meaning in it.” He was appointed the guru.

The story illustrates that it is not the action. It is your realization of who a master is. And once you realize that, the whole thing, the whole of the spiritual path, begins to revolve around that. If you don't have a master, then what matters? Books? Studies? Satsang? Discourses? Go and listen to everything. It's only a preparation. The ultimate truth about meditation is there is no meditation that works like love and devotion. All meditation of all kinds ends at a certain point. Most of that ends at the astral plane, and the rest can go right up to the causal plane. Nothing has ever gone beyond that. Meditation is not the answer. It's just a way to prepare. The real secret of going above the mind is the love and devotion you have for a Master.

You cannot have the experience of love and devotion except for a human being. We don't realize this. What we call love for things—we love our house, we love our car, we love our cat, we love our son, we love our family—these are all names given for attachments. We are attached to them. We call them love. It's not love, because love is something where you identify yourself with that thing. If I say I love this table, then I must think I am the table. If I don't think so I can't love it. This identification with another is the secret of real love. Real love pushes the ego completely back, whereas attachment keeps the ego high. “I love you—do you love me?” There's always a question mark there. It's a proper relationship we have, and therefore it becomes a business transaction—it's not love and devotion. So love and devotion is the secret of spirituality. And those who have ever gone to the highest level of consciousness have gone through that path. If that is so, Perfect Living Masters, who are coming with that consciousness, they know that the rest of the talk is all a preparation, that the real path will start when a disciple has an experience of love and devotion.

Love and devotion are two words. Why are they two words? Because they are used in that sense. We cannot love something. We don't know how to love. We have been too much used to attachments, so we don't know much about love. We think we love, but our love is like a business deal mostly. We just expect something. When there is expectation, it's not love. Whenever you expect something in return, it is neither spiritual nor love. Therefore, without expectation, we are not used to it. Therefore, where does love come from? Love comes from a master whose love is unconditional without expectation at all. The love that a master gives to us is totally unconditional. You can experience it. The master loves you if you love Him. Master loves you if you don't love Him. Master loves you if you hate him. Master will love you if you kill him. That's unconditional love. That doesn't come except unless you have raised yourself to a level above the mind. It just can't come. The mind

blocks you from that.

Therefore, in the actual relationship in this physical world on the spiritual path, love is always coming from the Master. How we respond to it is called devotion. So therefore, we are capable of devotion, of responding to love and not really capable of unconditional love, but devotion is good enough. Therefore, love and devotion go together, and that is the path to every higher level of awareness and consciousness. So we prepare with meditation, practicing recitation, even singing nice songs and hymns, even the cat song that I just played and other songs that we sing, is all preparation for bringing up a feeling of love and devotion in us. They all help us to prepare. Then we do simran, we repeat mantras in our head, all in preparation for the spiritual path. Then we go and understand the mind. We disassociate ourselves from the mind. We see it's separate from us, and we are able to control the mind—all in preparation still.

Where is our spiritual path? Our spiritual path starts when we realize who we are—the soul—and our home is Sach Khand, the totality of ourselves. That's the spiritual path. Great Master used to say, "My path doesn't start at the causal plane. My path starts at the Par Brahm state, beyond the mind, and goes to Sach Khand, where we are all one, total.

So this is a very important point to understand, that here is a song that I like so much, which is telling us that a person with that awareness, his love and power is so strong, merely interacting with such a person changes our life. If he puts his hand on our head, it completely gives a blessing which people, which other entities around the cosmos are trying to get—and we get it. He gives you a hug, he takes away so much of your vices of the past, clears so much of karma, unbelievable, and this is a person, a human being, doing it. What does it really mean? It means that friendship is a very important factor in the spiritual path. A master is a friend first and a master next.

There was an old disciple of Great Master, a veterinary doctor, Isha Singh, and he used to tell me, till the end he said, "We have never recognized our Master. We always think he's a teacher. We think that he's teaching something and he's telling us how to meditate and is doing this thing. He's not doing that at all. He's using all this to become a friend of ours, and once he's a friend, we are zapped. We can't go anywhere."

So this zapping through friendship and love is the secret. We don't realize that we don't recognize a master. He keeps on acting according to our level. If we are acting like ordinary skeptical disciples, he's skeptical too. If you go and ask the Master and you have some doubts in your mind, the Master will say, "Well, what do you think of it? Could it be like that?" And if you go with the confidence of certainty, he'll give you a straight answer with certainty. If you go thinking that he is at a different level, he'll act like that different level. He will be like a mirror, reflecting your own level, and that's the beauty of it. Why does he

do that? Because that is the best way to establish friendship. The best way to be friendly is to be at the same level. So therefore, these masters are very clever people, I must tell you. They are good actors. They can conceal themselves. They can work incognito. And there is a...you know, the incognito people in Indian language, we call barupia. That means they cover themselves with disguise. And some of the mystics have said, "All mystics are barupias." That means they disguise themselves.

I'll tell you a story of barupias, because that's a true story. We were living in a town in India, Pasharpur, and there used to be some people who were professional barupias. That means professionally they would disguise themselves and pretend to be something else and come to your house. If you recognized who they were, you only paid them five bucks for their makeup. If you couldn't, you had to pay fifty bucks! So a policeman would come, dressed up like a police officer, "Sorry, I understand you did something wrong. I have to give you a ticket for that." "Sorry, officer, what did I do?" "Fifty bucks. I'm not a police officer. I'm just disguised like one, and you couldn't make it out."

So sometimes they'll come like swamis, traveling. "We are going to the Himalayas. We need some food for the way." "All right, Swami, what can we give you?" "Fifty bucks." "Why?" "We are not swamis. We are disguised only." They are called barupias.

One day my dad was taking me to a hakim. Hakim means a Greek physician in India. My dad believed only in that kind of medicine, not allopathic or homeopathic medicine. He wanted Unani medicine, which is Greek medicine. Now the Greek physician lived in an area, in a lane, you had to cross the lane of the "red light district." You know what red light is? Where these prostitutes live. So I was taking him, and he was going. He said, "We'll go together and meet that hakim there." And as we were passing through the red light area, a woman leaps up and catches my hand, "Good to see you again!" I said, "I have never seen you before." My dad said, "No, no, no, son, don't worry. These things happen at a young age." I said, "I never really saw her!" He thought I was hiding from him something. I felt so bad that she convinced my dad that I had been coming to that place before, and I kept on saying, "No, no, no." My dad kept on saying, "It doesn't matter, son. You are forgiven, whatever you did." "Forgiven for what? I have never been in this area!"

Anyway we went there, and I was very sad. Why how could this happen? How could this woman make a mistake like this? Next day a man delivered a mailbox: "I've got an express delivery for you." I said, "Okay, express delivery, I know you are not a mailman. You're a barupia." He said, "But I still need fifty bucks." "What for?" "For yesterday. I was that woman." So you see, these barupias, as a profession, disguise themselves and function differently. The mystics have said that the true mystics are like barupias amongst us. They don't reveal their self. They disguise themselves according to what we need at that time,

and that is because they know that friendship is very important. And only in friendship can we build up that trust and build up that hope and build up everything that we want. If we have no friend, we are very, very alone. It doesn't matter how many people are around us.

You know, I give interviews to people in these programs that I have, and 90 percent complain of loneliness in their interviews, that they are very lonely...they don't have...and yet many of them have a number of friends, what they call friends, but they are lonely. People are sitting in a crowd and they are lonely, because nobody matches their inner emotions. Nobody matches their inner feelings. They are all skin deep. The friendship is skin deep. It doesn't go beyond. So this loneliness is a very big affliction with us in this world. And yet when you have a Master who is a friend, that loneliness disappears, because he is a friend at all times. The friends we make here who look like real friends, they no longer friends after a while. We think we have met a real friend, and then the real friend seems to hurt us after some time. And the real friend thinks we have hurt them!

Misunderstanding is so common here. And there is one person you never misunderstand and he never misunderstands—the Perfect Living Master. At least he never misunderstands. Even if you temporarily misunderstand him, he makes sure you remove that over time. This kind of friendship is very rare and yet with that friendship, loneliness disappears. And it further disappears when you find that the friend who was just an ordinary person...you wanted...you are missing him and wanted to meet him. Again and again you want to meet him. Something is happening, making you miss that friend. When you meet him, you feel happy. But then when you don't meet him, you miss him. Then the friend tells you, "I am actually with you all the time, and in the spiritual practice you can manifest myself in meditation, and you can see me exactly as you see me now, talk to me like you talk to me physically, and be with me. And we practice that meditation, and he manifests, and he is with us day and night, 24/7, 365, etc., etc. That's a very big advantage of having a friend who can be with you all the time. How can you ever have loneliness?

A Perfect Master's disciple who has done preliminary homework to go to the state of the first threshold of the astral plane, where he meets the radiant form, astral form of the master, who he manifests and develops the ability to stay here whenever he likes can never be lonely ever again. I'm not telling you from books. I'm telling you from my and other people's experiences. Therefore, the masters come and tell us that we are here, both of us in physical bodies. We don't see who we are. We don't see we are one. We see each other differently, separately, we look separate. But the fact is that in the physical body we have a relationship as a Master and a disciple and a friend. When we go higher up, the relationship continues to be of a friend but is permanent. We go higher up, and we find we are the same. At the highest level there is no difference at all.

There is a story told of a very benevolent king who used to go around. In India, by the way, there are a lot of stories of kings, so don't mind if I tell stories of kings again and again.

There was a benevolent king who wanted to make sure everybody was happy in his kingdom, so he used to move around barupia, incognito, like an ordinary person just to see how people are living. If he acted like a king, they would all be in a different state, so he became an ordinary person so he could see their ordinary life.

He used to go and saw that there is a man who carries logs of wood on his head and sells them in the market, earns a few bucks and then he is surviving with great difficulty. So he accompanied that man to see where he lives and he saw that wood cutter lives in a forest where he cuts and chops the wood, logs, and brings them to the market, sells them, and he goes back to the forest, lives in a very small log hut. So he went and told that man, "Look, you are living like this. I want to help you." He says, "Who are you to help me? How can you help me? You don't even look as strong as I am and I at least cut my wood and do that. You can't even do that. How will you help me?" He says, "No, I have some connections with the king. How about that?" He says, "I don't believe you. Nobody has connections to the king. Nobody can even enter the palace. There are so many guards there. How can you help me?" He said, "Well, in what way do you think I can help you?" He said, "Cut the logs with me and carry them to the market. That will be help...and share the money with me."

So the king begins to cut the logs and carry them to the market. And every day he tells him, "I have connections, you know," and he said, "I don't believe you." One day he says, "Okay, let's see. You keep on telling me every day that you have connections in the palace. Let's see if the guards will let you in." So he instructs the guards privately that, "When I come, don't tell the person with me who I am, but just say, 'Okay, you can go in.'"

So he goes to the palace, and he tells the guards, "You know who I am and this." The guards say, "Okay, we will let you in." This man is surprised! He says, "You really knew them. I should have believed you earlier." And then he goes in, and then he tells him, "Look, I also know the minister in charge." He said, "I can't believe that one." But he takes him. To cut a long story short, the minister is told, "Okay, you can go in." "I can meet the king!" Now that's a big surprise for him. He says, "No, nobody can ever meet the king. He only comes out once in a year or something in his royal dress." And he said, "Okay, let's go and see." So ultimately he does go and gets the permission to go and see the king on the throne. And there the throne is empty and this man, the wood cutter, who is with the other wood cutter and sits on the throne and says, "I am the king. Welcome to the palace." He says, "You cheat! Why didn't you tell me first?" He said, "I told you on day one. You never believed me. So I had to go through all the phases of your life and bring your faith gradually up to that point where I could just bring you to the palace. I had to bring your faith up to the point that you could believe to come up to this point. And only when I brought you here, now you are

saying I should have told you earlier? I was telling you all the time!"

So, the truth is, who are these Perfect Living Masters? What is their state of consciousness? They are living in a totality of consciousness. They are living in the five levels of consciousness at the very time they are in the physical body with us. They are not going to access those levels while we are doing it. They are at all levels, and the only way to be at all levels is to be from the top and then be at all levels. Otherwise when you are ascending, there is no way you can be at all levels. You are...only one level prevails. You are either physical level, and when you withdraw your attention you can be at the astral level. Physical disappears. From the astral you can go to the causal level. Both physical and astral disappear. You go to the next one, all others disappear.

But when you go to totality, everything is contained there. And from totality with the fifth region of Sach Khand or Sat Lok, you can have an experience of all of them even when you come down again to the physical form. The only way to retain in memory and experience all levels is when you have reached the fifth plane. You need not be a master. You can be a gurumukh. That means you can be just a follower of a Master and still have the same experience. But you have to have that experience in order to retain an awareness and jump from one to the other as you like. Perfect Living Masters come and sit amongst us. They are constantly in touch with all the levels. And therefore, their function, their way to work with us, is very different. They can immediately work with us depending on which level we are. If we are skeptics, they'll work like that so our skepticism can be taken care of to some extent. And the moment we are little higher up, they will act higher up, because they are constantly at all levels. So as we go to the spiritual levels, we recognize them more and more. At the end they are the king sitting on the throne, and we realize they were the king all the time, not when they went there.

So this is a very unique experience. And yet to meet a person like that who can act like an ordinary human being...sometimes they act more human than most human beings. They never have to proclaim, "We are masters." Why would they? If somebody comes to proclaim, "I am a master," I would have a big suspicion that he is full of ego. He is still trying to demonstrate something to us. A master is so fully aware of our totality, he never has to say that he is a master, and they never say it.

To my knowledge, no Perfect Living Master ever in history has said that he's a master. He has called himself servant of the Lord, servant of his master, called the servant of people. And Great Master, my own master, never said he was a master. So that's why...some people say, "Are you a Master?" He said, "Has anybody ever said he was a Master?" People ask me this question! I said, "Do I look like one? Do I behave like one? Do Masters go to casinos to play? I do." So don't be mistaken. Go in and find out first. Go in and find out. You don't need

to look from outside. You don't need any answers. The answers are inside you. So discover everything inside.

So that's why it's very important that the friendship element is so important. It takes away loneliness. It's a very unique relationship. To have the knowledge and experience of friendship with a master is so unique, different from all other friendship that we know. It is pure friendship. It's unconditional friendship, an unconditional love, which we cannot find anywhere else. So that's why I said there is so many benefits. Forget about Sach Khand or wherever it is, or if it is there or not. Forget about all the skeptics notions. Go and find out. You will find out everything is within yourself, nowhere else. All the answers are inside you. But at least while you are here, your life changes! It changes in a big way just to have a permanent friendship with a person like that. So that is why I have always said that the value of the spiritual path is not merely spiritual. It's a value at all levels. At all levels of our progress, it's valuable.

People do ask me questions about...they give me different names and say, "Tell us, tick off which are the Perfect Masters out of this list and which are the Masters who have reached Par Brahm and which are the Masters who have gone to causal plane and give us a whole list and tick it off according to their levels. So I said, "How am I qualified to do that first of all? Second of all, what is the definition of a spiritual master? Forget Perfect Masters. The definition of spiritual master is one who draws you to your spirit. That's simple. If a master is saying, "Go on a pilgrimage to that particular place and worship a stone," I can't accept him as a master. If a person is saying, "Travel around the world to find this thing," I can't accept him. If a master says, "Go within," I will say, yes, he is a master. He is a spiritual master. He gives the right direction. Should I bother how far he has gone? Not at all! When we haven't even gone one step, why should I be worried about what step he has?"

A student who is joining elementary school says, "I want to be taught only by a Ph.D. who teaches in college to my elder brother," will never go to college. He has to start with elementary school. An elementary school teacher will not have the same qualifications as the college professor. Same thing is true in the spiritual path. It is not necessary that we find a Perfect Living Master to go on the spiritual path. Any Master who tells you to go within is a good master. He may not be a Perfect Master, but he is a good master because he is giving you the right direction, taking you the right direction. And he will take you only far as he has gone. No master can take you beyond where he has gone. Once he has taken you to that point, he will himself declare, "This is it."

If your seeking is beyond that, you will not stop there, and you are bound to meet a master who takes you further. You may meet several masters in one or several lifetimes. You'll meet several masters till you reach a Perfect Living Master. It doesn't matter at all! Because

you are on a spiritual course which is the right direction, and the fact that you have found a master who took you halfway is not a bad thing, because he took you halfway. And the Perfect Master can take you the rest of the way.

So one should never worry about this thing. I say, “Any Master who says ‘Go within’ is good”—and follow Him. When you can’t go any further, what should you do? Should you seek another Master? No. Just be a seeker. Don’t seek a Master. Seek something higher. A Perfect Master will come into your life by coincidence and lead you from there. That simple method is the onus of mastership is not on the disciple. It’s on the master. If you are a seeker, it’s not your job to find who the master is. It’s the master’s job to find you. And if He cannot find you, He’s not a Perfect Master. A Perfect Living Master will always find a perfect seeker. A seeker who wants to go beyond where he is will always be found by a Perfect Master. So one has to remember not to worry about it.

I frequently tell in these meetings the story of a friend of mine, Mr. Trilochan. Trilochan was an engineer in Burma in Rangoon, and he worked in Manu and Rangoon. And he had a great desire to meet a Perfect Master. He read all the books, and he found that a Perfect Master is one who can take you to your own highest self, but he requires that you surrender to him, in body, wealth, and in your mind.

He heard this because of an old story of King Janak, who lived many centuries ago in India. That King Janak was also a great seeker of the truth, and he was a king of the country at that time. And he wanted to find the truth about himself, about spirituality, about reality, about God, so he told his ministers and his advisers, “Where can I find somebody who can give me real knowledge?” And they said, “King Janak, you are very lucky. You’re living in a country full of masters. There are gurus all over, and all you have to do is to have a big feast. They love good food, you know. So have a big feast, and all the gurus will be invited. And then you can go amongst them, and one of them will give you the truth.”

So the king held a big feast in his palace, and he set up a big compound, and he disguised himself incognito like an ordinary person and walked amongst those people. And he heard the different gurus who had come, the yogis, the swamis, and people covered with ash, some covered in white clothes, some covered in yellow clothes, some covered with blue clothes—all kinds of different dresses, different...and some covered in nothing. They all were sitting around there, and he walked around them and listened to them, and he found they were all full of ego, each one saying, “I know more than you. I know the book said this, not what you are saying.” They were quarreling. Some were coming to blows even. He said, “What kind of people are these? What kind of knowledge will they give me?” He was thoroughly disappointed by the end of the day. He went back to his palace and called his advisers. He said, “I am thoroughly disappointed. These people know nothing. They don’t

have knowledge, they have learning. They all are very learned people. They have read all the books. They have read the scriptures. They quote from there. Verbatim, they quote from scriptures, but none of them has real knowledge. I didn't want these people. I wanted some real knowledge."

So the advisers and ministers of his cabinet said, "King, if you want that kind of knowledge, this was a very small sample of gurus we have. The whole country is full of them. Have a big feast, seven-day feast and invite people by beat of drum from all over the country."

So he had a second session, and he made a very big compound with a lot of tents and all that for these different gurus to come—and hundreds of them came along from all over the country once the announcement was made by beat of drum. There was no television, no telephone in those days, so only beat of drum to announce that the king wants all these spiritual people to assemble in his palace. When all of them had assembled, for seven days they were put on good feasts and all the goodies were given—some goodie bags maybe were given to them. But they all enjoyed it, and the king moved around every day, and he found the same thing repeated what he had seen in the first session. He said, "These people are very learned people. They have all the book knowledge, but they have not controlled their anger. They have not controlled their ego. They have not controlled their lust. They have not controlled anything. That is causing them a downfall when it comes to relations with people they are teaching anything. So these are not the people who can give me true knowledge. I want true knowledge!"

Then the ministers said, "King, if you want that kind of true knowledge, these people won't give you. Such a person won't come to you for your feast. You have to go and beg him." "Is there such a person?" They said, "Yes, there is a man living on the bank of the river in a little hut, and his name is Ashtavakra." Ashta means eight, vakra means waves. "He is a hunchback. Eight waves on his body. He is a little crippled with his body, but his eyes are very sharp, and he is a Perfect Living Master. If you want real knowledge, go to Him, and invite Him to come. Then you'll get real knowledge." The king said, "Why didn't you tell me first?" And he went to Ashtavakra in his little hut. Ashtavakra got up, "Your majesty, what brings you here to my little hut?" He says, "I have not come as a king. I have come as a seeker. I have come as a seeker of real knowledge, and I want to invite you. Come to my palace and give me real knowledge." Ashtavakra said, "If the king invites me, I will certainly come."

So a date was fixed, time was fixed, and Ashtavakra appeared at the palace. The king invited all the neighboring kings and queens and princes and princesses. He invited all nobility around, and in his auditorium in the palace every seat was filled up. When Ashtavakra arrived, he was followed by five or six of his disciples. They took off their shoes, which was

customary in those days. So he took off the shoes at the entrance to that auditorium, and he slowly walked toward the dais where the king had placed two chairs, one for himself and one for the master. As he walked up, people looked. Crippled man, a hunchback walking. They said, "Is this the kind of man who is going to give us true knowledge? The king was mistaken calling this man to give us a discourse on knowledge. The man himself has got a crippled body."

So they laughed and, you know, were humming some odd kind of words. So by the time the Master reached the stage and he sat down on his chair, he asked the king, "King, what is the price of leather today?" He said, "Master, the price of leather? What has that to do with your discourse today? I thought you had come to tell us about true knowledge." He said, "No, but I wanted to know the price of leather. Aren't these all leather merchants sitting here?" "No, Master, these are nobility. These are princes and princesses. These are kings and queens." He said, "Oh, I thought they were leather merchants the way they were looking at my body. I thought they wanted my skin or something."

Then everybody realized he had a sense of humor, so they kept quiet. Then Ashtavakra said, "King Janak, you want knowledge, true knowledge. What kind of knowledge do you want?" He said, "I want real knowledge, want it right now, instant knowledge." Must have been an American in a past life. They all want instant stuff, you know—instant coffee, instant knowledge. And the king said, "I want instant knowledge and real knowledge." Ashtabaka said, "You know there is a price to pay for it." He said, "I'll pay any price. All my wealth and coffers are open to you to take any amount of money you want. I'll give you the price if you give me true knowledge." He said, "No, I don't want all that. I want only three things." He said, "Name your price. You can take ten if you want." "Only three things that I want." He said, "Yes, name your..." He said, "I want your wealth, I want your body, and I want your mind. You give me these three, I'll give you true knowledge."

It's a strange price tag, by the way, but the king thought, "It's strange what he has asked for, but I really want the knowledge." "Okay, Master, all my wealth is yours. My body is yours at your disposal. My mind is yours." "King Janak, are you sure you have given all these to me?" "Yes, sir. Yes, Master. They're all yours." "Is this body mine now what you have sitting on this chair?" "Yes, Master." "Why don't you pick up this body, which now belongs to me, take it to the shoes I left at the door and put your body on the shoes." He thought, "This is an odd order, but I have given my body to him. I have to follow what he says." So King Janak got up and walked towards the shoes, and people began to murmur, "This is a strange thing that has happened. We thought we would hear a good discourse from this man. He is making the king sit on the shoes?" So they were murmuring all the time. The king said, "These people don't know. They only know my kingdom, my wealth, and all that. Therefore, they are laughing like this." When he thought like that, Ashtavakra shouted

from the stage, "King, you have no business to think of that wealth of yours. You've already given it to me. How can you think it's yours?" "Oh, my God," he said. "I didn't realize that's not my wealth any more." Then Ashtavakra shouted, "King, you cannot even think whether you gave it or not. Even the mind is mine." And he put his hand like that, "I can't even think any more." When he did that, instantly his soul got an experience internally, because the grace was flowing from the Master. He was just preparing him. And he prepared him to that point, and he got the knowledge.

He said, "King, you don't have to sit on the shoes. Come back." The king came back, and he said, "Did you get your true knowledge?" "Yes, Master." "Are you sure?" "Yes, Master." "Any questions?" "No questions." "How long did I take? Before I asked you, you told me a definition of an instant was in the morning when you go to ride a horse when you put your foot in the stirrup and get onto the saddle, that's an instant. Did you get the knowledge within that instant?" "Master, it was faster than that. I got it in a faster instant." He said, "Now, this was merely a sample of what exists inside. It is just for demonstrating to you the truth lies inside. Now meditate for 20 years, and you will get the whole thing again." So the king then began to meditate.

Masters do this quite often. They give us a little sampling of what is there and that builds a basic faith for us and we say we have seen something. And then we wonder why it doesn't come again and why we have to now struggle again with meditation and all that? Because they have established a seed of our faith with that short experience, one or more short experiences, and then they lead us through the stages where the real thing develops, which is love and devotion of the master, where the spectacle is not that important. In the beginning, the miraculous spectacle is more important for us. At the end, nothing is more important than love and devotion of the master, and pleasing the master gives you everything right to the top. So this change takes place very naturally.

And that is why when Ashtavakra's story came up, this engineer from Burma with whom I started the story, he decided that he'll find a Perfect Master. He found that there was one in Madras City in India. He traveled from Burma to India, went to that Master, who was a swami there, and, "Swami Ji, I want to find absolute real knowledge." He said, "Have you heard the story of King Janak?" "Yes, I have heard." "Well, I do the same thing. Give me your body, give me your wealth, give me your mind, I'll give you true knowledge." He said, "Okay." He said, "How much wealth do you have? First tell me about the wealth." He said, "All my life"... (You know he was a very miserly person, that Trilochan. Even when he wanted to spend one rupee, one quarter, and he would look at the quarter in his hand, "To spend or not to spend? To spend or not to spend? Not to spend." He put it back in his pocket. And that's how he saved thirty thousand bucks in his account.)

But his desire for knowledge was so strong, he told that swami, "I have thirty thousand bucks in my bank." He said, "First, transfer those to my account. First step." He transferred the whole money. He transferred those thirty thousand bucks to the account of the swami, and the swami said, "I have to start building a temple," and he began to build a temple with that money. He said, "Now give me your body." He says, "Yes, sir. It's at your disposal." He says, "To meditate according to my method, you have to use the pranayama system, the system of breathing in which you have to breathe once with one nostril and second time with the second nostril. It must alternate. Only then your attention will be pulled inside to the higher levels, but you cannot use your hands to do like this. If you do like this to your nose, then your attention will be in the hands, and this is an internal thing. Therefore, it must be done with the tongue inside. The tongue must go back. From internal nostrils it must plug one, then go to the other, and then... For that purpose, the tongue must be freed from its tendons to be able to roll back." He said, "I got it done."

So the Master opened his mouth and took the tongue out like a snake's tongue, and it was completely detached from the bottom, and he could turn it around and practice that kind of pranayama, the practice of yoga by breath control from inside. He said, "You have to do the same thing. And I will perform the surgery to cut your tongue from the tendons, and this is your bodily surrender to the master. And I will not do it very simply with the scissors or something. I'll sandpaper it on a daily basis till it's detached. And if necessary, I will use some nettle rash, a plant which stings really bad, so that you feel the pain. Without pain, no gain. So, therefore, I will cause immense pain to you so you feel you have made a sacrifice to get knowledge." Can you imagine this engineer, qualified man, educated man, went through the torture and got this done every day?

When I met him, he showed me his tongue like that. He said, "We'll feed it like this." Of course, after some time he said, "Give me your mind," and he taught him some mantra. He was able to see some lights and colors during his meditation, but he was not satisfied. He said, "I wanted true knowledge. I didn't want just a little spectacular experience in meditation." So the Master said, "That's all I can give you. That's all I have. If you want more, find somewhere else." Then on the course of time, Great Master found him—Trilochan—and he got initiated and went beyond that.

One day he was sitting with the Great Master along with about 15-20 people in an evening private session. I was there, too. That's how I remember. He said, "Master, had I known you are my Master, I would not have given those thirty thousand bucks to the swami there." And Great Master laughed at him, and he said, "Trilochan, you don't know. The day you came to me I transferred those thirty thousand to myself. They are no longer with that master."

He was surprised how he did that. Then he explained. He says, “That was not a useless time that you spent. Whatever you do with any master, it builds up, accumulates. When the ultimate Perfect Living Master finds you and you follow him, everything that you have done with any master all counts up and joins up and therefore you have lost nothing.” So he said, “Don’t think that you wasted anything. Neither you wasted your money, nor you wasted your time, nor you wasted your sacrifice. It’s all added up to the point which brought you to me, and therefore you made so much progress much faster than other people sitting around you.”

I am telling you this story because some people get worried about this. Do I have a real master or not? Is my master a Perfect Living Master or not? I always tell them, “Don’t worry about it! So long as a master is saying ‘go within’ you’re on the right track.” He will automatically not be able to take you beyond where he has gone, and your seeking will be seeking that will determine if you want to go beyond that. If you don’t want to go beyond that, that’s fine. If you do yoga just to improve your health, fine. Get good health. Yoga is done. If you want to do yoga to have real union with yourself, you will automatically not be satisfied with just improving your health. You’d like to go further, and you will find a master who goes further.

So one should not really bother much about it. So when somebody says, “Tick me a master,” I say, “Do they teach you to go within?” “Yes.” “All are good. Take the whole list back.” So I’m not commenting. Firstly, I don’t think I am qualified to give judgment on any master. They’re all doing their good work. Secondly, each is good if they are taking you up to the point they can take you. They cannot take you more than that. And if your seeking is beyond, automatically you will go to the next one. It is the spiritual seeking that takes you on the spiritual path and not a man outside—no matter who it is, no matter if it is a Perfect Living Master or not. A Perfect Living Master comes in front of you, and you are not his marked soul, you will not be attracted to him—you may be attracted to another master. It is not even necessary that the same master may be master for all of us, because—don’t forget—there’s a huge population on this earth, Planet Earth. There are seekers all over—spread out—on this world in different continents, different countries. How can one master cater to all the seekers of different countries?

Obviously, the masters will appear where the seekers are, and they’ll appear for those seekers. In a simple metaphorical way, they say that each Perfect Living Master who comes in the human form in this world carries a list of marked souls. He carries a list of those he has to take back home because that was preprogrammed right from the beginning, that these souls themselves preprogrammed their journey, and the master is appearing in their lives to take them back according to the promise already given long back when the creation

took place.

So therefore, each master has a list—List A. Somebody called it List A. I have never called it List A. Somebody in an email told that there is a List A and another List B. So I understood what they meant. List A is the marked souls this master will take back to the true home where he belongs. List B is where people will come to him, be drawn to the path, but he's not their final master who will take them back. The final master may be next life, may be third life. It depends on which life you are on the spiritual path. So, therefore, the List B are those who are drawn to the masters, Perfect Living Masters, but the masters do not consider that they are part of those who go to the true home with Them. Now when we say go home with them, we are referring to that lifetime alone. We are not referring to they will take them in the next life. Any time you feel that you are going to come to another life, most likely you are not part of the list of the A List of that master. Because only the master who initiates you, in whose lifetime and in your lifetime you reach Sach Khand and do not come back ever in rebirth, is really the master on whose List A you are. So if you are initiated by a Perfect Living Master, you die, the master dies, you are reborn, another master comes up, it's not the same master. It's another master, different form, different human form, different soul functioning as a master. You can't say, "Who is your master? The one who initiated you first or the one who has brought you into his fold now?"

They quote a saying, "Many are called but few are chosen." They apply it here. That many are called by the masters, not that they have chosen for those masters. They're called because they were chosen for another master who'll come later. Therefore, those chosen ones are chosen by the master who finally takes them out of rebirth in this physical world. It also does not mean that if a master you are on his list, A List and you do not have a further life in this world that you're going to reach Sach Khand in the same life or the same time. In one lifetime you may only reach the astral plane. After that, when you're never born again, you were on the list, and that master will remain your master forever till you reach Sach Khand, even if it takes thousands of years.

I am saying all this, because in your own journeys, spiritual journeys when you go within, you will find that masters, even previous masters, are still there taking care of their disciples at different levels, in the astral plane, the causal plane. The disciples are stuck there for various reasons, and those masters are with them, the same masters. And you can sometimes wonder, "This master was here 500 years ago. This master was 2,000 years ago. How come they're still here?" Well they're here for those marked souls whom they brought out from the physical universe, but they are gradually taking them step-by-step to their true home. Some go very fast. Some go slow. What determines the speed of your going or ascending to different levels of consciousness depends upon your own attachments and particularly your desires in this world. When your desires for something are very strong,

those desires are fulfilled some in this world, some in the astral world, some in the causal world before you go up. Sometimes they can be so strong that people are held up for long periods—and they don't mind.

And one thing I have noticed is that these Perfect Living Masters always give you a long rope. "Okay, go ahead. Do this," and they'll pull you up in the end. That means that they will take you, but they will let you have an experience which you so desire so that the desires are fulfilled before you reach home. You cannot say, "Oh, I left all my desires home, and I couldn't fulfill them and I have come home." You can never say that on the spiritual path. Whether the desires are fulfilled in the physical world or the astral world depends, because astral world has more easy instruments and tools and environment for fulfilling desires than the physical world. So therefore, whatever is left over here is mostly fulfilled there. Some of the desires are very spiritual and desires are very metaphysical. Those are fulfilled at the causal plane. All are fulfilled before you leave the causal plane, and you are totally free from all desires before you ever reach your true home. It's a beautiful way it's all set up.

And I want you to not just hear this story about this from me but examine all this yourself. Whatever I am saying is in each one of you. Complete. Nothing is missing. There is nobody special who only has that and others don't have it. Everybody has it. All human beings have it. All human beings have it. It's not created by a human being. It's created by the Creator who creates the human body in such a form that you can have all this stuff inside you.

And therefore, the spiritual path that I am talking about is not theoretical. It's not a theory. It's a practice, and you should not believe anything till you experience it. And only believe that much which you experience. If I say ten things to you and you experience two, you should believe two, not believe ten because I have said so or anybody else has said so. Because if you believe something that you haven't experienced, it is called blind faith. There is no place for blind faith in true spirituality. True spirituality is based upon direct evidence and experience of your own self. So that is why the Perfect Living Masters say, "Whatever we are saying is from experience." They do not say from books. They speak with the authority of somebody who has personally experienced them.

In the Bible I read when Jesus Christ gave the Sermon on the Mount and he spoke so authoritatively—in the Bible itself it was written, which appealed to me. It said, "He spoke like one with authority and not like the scribes." The same thing here. When Perfect Living Masters speak, they speak with authority because they are speaking directly from their knowledge and their experience, not from the books, not from what they've heard or read. They speak directly from what they actually experienced, and that is what they recommend to everybody. They say, "If you want to follow the spiritual path, follow it, but believe what

you can actually experience. Do not reject the rest because you cannot have experience. Don't reject. 'Oh, it's not there because I haven't experienced it,' but believe what you have experienced and be ready for the rest. That's part of the spiritual path."

I have shared all this information with you with the hope that you will all benefit from it and all practice it. Do not leave it at this. Do not take a discourse like this, a conversation like this, with one ear and as you leave it goes out from the other ear. Hold it in the head, go back and practice and check out what I said was true or not. Okay? Thank you very much. God bless you.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9FAikxBqUc>

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