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Secret of Spiritual Path | Who is God? | Power of Listening | Priorities

Chicago, Oct. 28, 2011, part 2

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7FTDSE-u4Y>

(The following is a Q & A session with Ishwar Ji. Only his answers appear below because all the actual questions were cut from the video before it was posted on YouTube.)

Answer to Question 1: The Perfect Living Master comes with his list of souls or seekers. Souls may not know that. So, when he comes, they all become seekers. That means he makes the seekers, too, right? But once they are made seekers, then he appears in a human form in their life by coincidence as their Perfect Living Master in response to their seeking. So, he makes them seeker before he appears. Then once they are seeking, he appears—maybe later on, maybe shortly after they start seeking. It depends, because seeking is not a one-time thing, you know. It takes place in several lifetimes. One keeps on seeking, and when the seeking is intense and it is accompanied by a feeling of disillusionment from this world (“This is not my place, I belong somewhere else.”)...when that feeling comes along with the seeking, the Master appears in his life.

Answer to Question 2: He makes them seekers the same way. For seven generations you become beneficiary of so many other souls, too. They get marked that way. So, the question... I read somewhere, very nice, it’s not that God qualifies, that God chooses the qualified. He qualifies the ones he chooses. So, of course, it’s...it’s a semantic thing, because the mind likes the semantics. Otherwise, the process is in no time. So, it’s not one or the other. It’s the same thing.

Answer to Question 3: Yes, that urge comes and that’s an intense form of seeking. When the feeling that you want to have, to look at the Master, to meet him, that’s a good form of seeking. When you miss the Master, form of seeking, a good form of seeking. Okay?

Answer to Question 4: No. Master is there and here at the same time. He doesn't go and come. He is here and there at the same time. You see him in his physical body here. He is in Sach Khand at the same time. We don't know that, but he knows. We can't see that, but he can see. He can see Sach Khand and this world at the same time. We can only see one at a time. That's why we feel he has taken us to Sach Khand, but he's been there already. Okay?

Answer to Question 5: Soami Ji of Agra, in one of his poems says—I'll quote in Hindi and then translate for you— *"Ek janam gurbhakti, janam doosray naam, janam teesray Turiya Pad, chauthay mein nij dham."* It's from that statement of his that people began to talk of four lives. Translated, it means one life is good enough for developing love and devotion for a Master. Second life is good to get initiated and work on it. Third life is good to reach the universal mind's state of Turiya Pad. And the fourth life, definitely you should be in Sach Khand. Now, when he laid out this, it was a general statement that this is not a one-life program. It takes place that you can have an experience of love and devotion, then you experience initiation, then you experience growth inside, then finally you go back home. So, the time period was not laid out in hard and fast rule.

On the other hand, my father, as a personal experience he had that he...he did not attend a satsang of Great Master. But in that Great Master said, "No person who is initiated ever comes back in more than four lifetimes in the physical world." So he went back to Great Master after that and he said, "Master, I missed your satsang today, but I heard that you said in the Satsang that no person who is initiated by a Perfect Living Master ever comes into this life more than four times, four lives." Great Master laughed, He said, "Lekh Raj"—that was my father's name—"Lekh Raj, why are you asking this? This is your last life. You don't have to come again." And my father said, "But Master, I was asking this question because maybe I like to come the fifth time. Is there a bar on that?" And he said, "Why would you like to come on the fifth time?" He said, "I hear Masters sometimes come again and again, and if you choose to come again, I would like to come back again with you." So, Master then explained, Great Master explained, that if a person who is initiated follows the directions of the Master, does meditation as he's advised, and follows the dietary and other small restrictions he places to keep the discipline of meditation intact, if he follows these directions this is his last life. You don't come second time. Only if you cannot follow these directions properly that you get a second life to complete the task. And if you leave the path and run away, only then he's called back to come on a third life. And if you go against the Master and say, "This was all bogus, humbug, it's a fake thing, I don't like it," run away, then only you come on the fourth life. So, he says, fourth life is not the rule. The rule is one life. But there are instances where a person can come again. Okay?

Answer to Question 6: Well, the mind's nature is to question. Great Master used to encourage questioning. I find some masters, some people on the spiritual path say, "Don't ask questions, just follow." That becomes a cult. You know, that's not a spiritual path where you cannot even ask questions, where you cannot satisfy your mind and move forward. The doubt will always remain in your head. The mind's doubt does not go away just by itself. The mind's doubt, Great Master used to say, "It's like a snake in a basket." The snake wants to come and bite you with that doubt. But you put the lid on it and say, "Oh, snake is now gone." And even after long time, you open the lid, the snake still comes out and bites you. So, the doubts in the mind are like that. The doubts and if you try to shut them out and say, "No, no, I am not supposed to question, I am not supposed to question and get an answer to my doubt," the doubt remains and keeps on hitting you from time to time.

Therefore, Great Master said, "You must clear your doubts." Sometimes he would say that people who are intellectual, who studied lot of books, studied lot of different paths, they have more doubts than people who have studied nothing. And therefore, they take longer to go over the initial phase of the spiritual path because they have to get all the answers to their questions. And they *should* get the answers to their questions so that the doubts disappear.

The reason why Masters answer the questions of the mind is because the mind is the only thing in our way, and getting good answers the mind says, "Yes! That makes sense. That makes sense," and you move on. Otherwise, the mind doesn't let you move on. So, that is why questions are asked and doubts are resolved by asking questions and getting answers. So, the good response is if somebody says, "I surrender to the Master," and it's a mechanical, mental thing that because books say you should surrender, "so I surrender!" But the doubt ("I am not sure what it is all like"), that doubt will creep in. So, doubt has to be resolved.

There, there have been people—I met one in Lithuania—and he, he had been initiated in India by a master. And he came up from through Europe and from there he came and saw me. He came, and although initiated, he could not make any progress, because he had doubt about the whole path, and nobody was there to give answers and remove his doubt. So, he had to come all the way to see me in another European city to get the doubts removed, and now he'll make progress. So, that means doubts can hold you back even when you feel that you are in the right path, but the doubt has not been resolved.

So, doubts have to be resolved, and the best way is...Masters give us teachings, Master gives us things ("Do this in this way."). They make the path appealing to the mind so that the mind may be kept out of the way. It's not that the teaching itself is spirituality. Great Master used to say,

“Even repetition of words and doing meditation, closing your eyes, is not spirituality. If you do it for the whole life, close your eyes and sit every day and repeat the same words like a parrot, you’ll make no progress. The real secret of meditation and secret of the spiritual path is love and devotion. It does not involve closing your eyes, it does not involve the body. Love and devotion comes from the soul, from the spirit. The spiritual path is based on love and devotion, but the mind comes in the way.” Therefore, the teachings have been prescribed to keep the mind out of the way. So, surrender mentally is all right, but the doubts have to be removed.

Answer to Question 7: You have done by listening to the Master repeating the words inside you? You have done by walking the Master walk in your body? And that’s all that’s needed. You don’t need to do anything more.

Now I want to emphasize that the power of listening is a power of the soul. If there was no soul, we couldn’t listen. The power of speaking is not the power of the soul, it’s the power of the mind. So, inside us, in consciousness, there are two powers built in: The power of speaking and the power of listening. The mind speaks, the soul listens. Now, speaking doesn’t mean speaking with the tongue. Even speaking with the mind. Thinking—is a speaking of the mind.

When we are thinking, in any kind of words, any kind of language, it’s the mind speaking in our head. And how do we know the mind is speaking? Because we listen to it. The soul listens to the mind speaking and we call it thinking. When the mind speaks in the head and the soul listens, we call it thinking. And then thinking distracts us, takes... All distractions, detachments go away when thinking attaches us to various things. So, the process starts from there. The secret of going back again is listening. That means, if you repeat the words and only know that you are repeating, you don’t make any progress. If you listen to what you are repeating, you make progress. Listening is the key, not the speaking, even in Simran. Even in repetition of words, when you repeat words, how intently you can listen to what you are repeating makes for progress. So remember: Listening is the key and not the speaking.

Answer to Question 8: Yes. The more you listen, the more quiet the mind becomes. The listening to the words of the Simran or listening to the Shabd Dhun inside, listening to the sound inside, both quieten the mind. The more you concentrate on listening, less on speaking, the more your mind becomes quiet. Listening is the key.

Answer to Question 9: What you call “repetition” Great Master called “habit.” He says, “The mind is used to forming habits.” That means if it forms a habit, it automatically becomes repetitive. That’s the habit of the mind. Mind can get habituated to anything. The answer to

your question Great Master gives is make the repetition of Simran a habit. Instead of just practicing by speaking, make it a habit. How do you make it a habit? By not using repetition only at the time of meditation but all the time, while walking, while working, while cooking, while doing any other job. Wherever the mind is not occupied in a concentrated work on something, where the attention is not needed to be concentrated on an external task, keep repeating the words. The mind will get habituated to repeating. If it gets habituated, you will see when you go to sleep at night, the mind will by habit start repeating the words. And therefore, the task become much easier if the mind is repeating the words by habit. All you have to do is to listen to what the mind is saying. So, Simran becomes much easier by creating a habit of repetition.

Answer to Question 10: Many problems are solved by listening inside, that's right! The more you practice listening, the more you will find answers coming automatically into your head. It's a very great art. The art of listening is the most important art. But we...we speak too much, both externally with our mouth and internally with our mind. We don't need to speak so much. When you have a repetition, the mind has to keep on saying something. So, when you practice and make a habit of repeating the Simran, then the mind doesn't think of so many other things, is repeating the Simran all the time. Every opportunity comes, you are repeating the Simran. You feel something is not going to happen good—is negative—Simran takes that negativity away, you repeat the Simran. Ultimately it becomes a habit, becomes...meditation becomes very easy after that. And listening gives the answers inside.

Answer to Question 11: Thinking does not allow this listening to the Bhajan at all. The more you are thinking of various things, the less chance of hearing a sound inside. But when you are repeating, you're replacing the thinking with repetition of mantra, repetition of Simran. When you are repeating those words, they are taking the same place in the thought stream as a thought would be, so you are blocking many thoughts from coming by repetition of those words.

With practice, if you make the Simran a consistent thing in your consciousness, the sound comes automatically because of fewer thoughts. But I agree with you, thoughts are contrary to the sound being heard. But Simran is a preparation for the sound to come. In fact, you'll be surprised, Simran has no other function. We think Simran is going to take us to God. No, it doesn't! What does Simran do? Simran prepares you for the sound. Simran prepares you by wiping out thoughts which would otherwise take place in the conscious stream in your head, and you begin to repeat the same words over and over again, they are replacing the words of thought. Ultimately, they replace almost all words of thought, and your attention is on the words. The attention goes only by listening to the words. When you put your attention on

listening to the words, ultimately the sound comes automatically because you are not thinking too much.

Answer to Question 12: You don't force yourself to hear the sound. If you force yourself, it'll never be the real sound.

Answer to Question 13: He (Great Master) said that in order to have Bhajan, in order to listen to the sound, you have to prepare yourself with Simran. Therefore, in his instructions, at the time of initiation, he would say, "You should do about one-tenth of your total time in every twenty-four hours in meditation," which means two and a half hours." He recommended that in the beginning do two hours of Simran, only half an hour of Bhajan or listening to the sound. The sound won't come. And the sound that comes in the beginning are artificial sounds which have many physical sounds. Some are sounds being created by the body functions. Some are even the blood circulating, the heartbeat. And many sounds are not at all really spiritual sounds. So, you practice them just for the sake of listening with your attention to the sounds. Simran for two hours. As you grow and sound begin to become good and melodious and are no longer the physical sounds, you increase the time for the Bhajan, decrease the sound for the Simran. If the sound can be heard all the time, whether you close your ears or not, whether you're sitting in meditation or not, Simran becomes unnecessary. That's what Great Master said—and it's true.

Answer to Question 14: Sinchit Karma is burnt. Sinchit Karam is burnt at initiation. It burns even your Pralabd Karma, yes. Listening to the sound burns even your current destiny Karma and lightens it up. And ultimately you find very light. What happens is that Karma is an experience. Supposing you say, "My leg is hurt, got an injury, I don't feel the pain," you are not paying any Karma off. If the leg is injured, you are not even feeling the pain, what kind of Karma are you paying? When you have pain, you say, "Now I am having pain, now you're being punished for what you did." That's payoff of Karma! The injury to the leg is not the Karma. The pain is the payoff the Karma. When you do more listening to the sound, the pains seem to disappear. The injury is still there. The external appearance of the Karmic process is still there, but you don't feel it. Therefore, the Karma is being burned. A beautiful thing, that you can burn your Karma, you can burn your Pralabdh even. Sinchit is burnt already by initiation, and Pralabdh can be burned by meditation.

Answer to Question 15: Nobody has any real Karma. Only mind has Karma. None of us has any Karma. Our mind only has Karma. Mind creates Karma, mind goes through Karma, mind goes through pain and pleasure, mind goes through good and evil. We identify ourselves, we think we are the mind, so we have Karma. The Masters do not have Karma because they do not think

the mind is their self. If we think the mind is not our self, and we realize it, we'll have no Karma either. There's no difference between the Masters and us—except awareness. They know it and we don't. This system is still the same. It's not that they have a different body, different soul, different—they are the same thing like us, but their awareness is that they know it. They know it all the time, and we don't know, even glimpses we get once in a while. That's the difference.

Answer to Question 16: The Siddhis that you are talking of, there are two kinds: Riddhis and Siddhis. Riddhis are inherent powers of energy within us, and we can deal with them with our energies. We come across problems every day. Don't we solve them? We solve them with the energy in us. We have to overcome an obstacle—we jump over it. You have to solve a mathematical problem—we solve it. These all Riddhis. All these Riddhis are operating from our energy centers below our eyes.

Siddhis are a control over those Riddhis, that you can “sidh” them. “Sidh” means to control them, make them within your own volition. So, when you control these energies, then you get the power of Siddhi. So, Siddhi powers are used by the energies below. They do not employ your awareness. In fact, if you use your Siddhis, you move yourself away from awareness. And therefore, people who are disciples of Perfect Living Masters, who've been taught not to go below the eyes in their meditation, when they employ Siddhis, they lose the other benefits of meditation. So, the advice is: Don't go after Siddhis and Riddhis! Use the Siddhi of the Master instead!

Somebody asked me, “Why don't you have proper white hair?” I said, “Why should I have? Master should have!” Fair enough. (laughs) White hair, if it comes by worry, he should have it, why should I have? If the Siddhis have to be used, why should I use the Siddhi? Let him use it! So, that's the surrender, that when you really feel that the Master is within you and working within you and you leave things to the Master to do it. You will, like an auto...automaton, like a robot, perform the functions. People will think you are doing it, and you will know Master is doing it. Mostly these are needed for that.

Answer to Question 17: It all...it all depends on the definition of God. What is the definition of God? Supposing the definition of God is a power sitting somewhere hidden from us but who controls everything, has made up everything, exists in everything, exists in us but we can't see him—that God you can never see. No human being has ever seen such a God. The only way to see such a God is to become God yourself. Because by the time you're God, there's nobody else at all.

Where there is God, there is no one else. He is totality. Therefore, if somebody says, "Can man see God?" the answer is no! But can man see God in some other form than God but having the same Godly qualities? Yes! In the form of a Perfect Living Master. Because he will have all the qualities and awareness. Not only qualities, he'll have all the awareness that God has and yet he is somebody that can be seen. But not in the physical body, not as a being, you cannot see God. There...therefore, we have made so many different definitions of God. They are all man-made. Every person that I have ever talked to in my life who talks about God has a mental image made up by himself.

Nobody has seen God. Nobody has talked to God. They talk to their mind and call it God. Therefore, God cannot be...neither seen nor spoken to nor realized like this. It's all our mind. Ultimately, even in meditation that people are doing with various Masters in this world, they're looking at their own mind and the universal mind and calling it "the ultimate God." And say, "We found the ultimate God." It was the universal mind. They're still confused by the mind and call it "God."

So, the definition of God is so different. So, in the Indian panthology of gods, they said, "Forget about it, we have plenty of gods. We've got Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, and we've got smaller gods. We got a god who has an elephant head, we've got a god who has got a monkey head, we got all kinds of animals." The Greek had so many, and the Egyptians had even more. Animals sitting there, giving dictation to other people. A dog sitting there and—have you seen them? Birds and snakes, they were all conscious gods. In the Greek tradition, the god was always a human being. They never thought god is some invisible being. They saw Hercules as god, they saw these other gods amongst them. They were all human beings. Enlightened human beings were called gods.

So, definitions of God have changed throughout the ages in different cultures. But the religion, standard religion, makes us believe that God is separate from us, that we have to worship that God, and we can't see him, and we may sometimes speak to him and feel his presence. So they confuse themselves a lot by talking to their own mind and thinking they are talking to God. The messages from God come into our head, they are all mind's messages, mental messages. I want to see a single person who gets a message in a spoken word from somewhere beyond the mind. It's impossible! So, that's why we get confused by the very term "God."

So, I hardly ever use the word "God," you might notice. I say, "Totality of Consciousness," the "Creator." We called it "God," "Ultimate God"! Now, why do I say, "Ultimate God"? Because

there's so many gods. When you are sitting in this world and you say, "Who is god that we worship?" In Christianity, he is the lord of the astral plane. Who is the god that the Hindus say he's Ishwar, Parmeshwar, Niranjana? He is the lord of the astral plane. Who is Allah? The Muslims are always saying, "...who gave us Al-An'am and gave Quran." The lord of the astral plane. Why? He is the creator of the whole astral plane, whole physical plane, the creator of the universe. That's the definition of god. He created this universe. It's being created from the astral plane. They don't have any idea that there is anything beyond that. Then, other people say, "No, no, no, this is not the real god. There is a higher god than that!" Who is the higher god who created the three universes, who created time and space? And you go up above to Brahmand, and Brahma is the creator. The ultimate god. They're still confused. I say, "No, there is another god higher up."

When you have an experience, built upon layers of consciousness, every layer creates a different creator and a different god. Not only that, supposing you have no Perfect Living Master, and a Master of a lower order who has thought that the god that we worship in church, and temple, and mosque, he is the ultimate god and teaches you to reach the god in the astral plane, you will think you've reached Sach Khand.

There is no way you can find out if there is any Sach Khand beyond that. Because it's a complete system. You see the creator, you see the world being created, you see this whole physical world being created from the astral. What else can there be? The mind does not expect, mind does not see anything beyond. Even initiates of Perfect Living Masters, when they reach the astral plane they think, "We have reached Sach Khand." The Master has to goad them to move forward. "This is not it! We have to go forward!" "But we see the creator sitting right here." "That's the creator of this lower universe. There is more than that. There is still time and space."

All the gods that we worship are all working in time and space. "In the beginning was this, then they did this, then they did that, they took six days, seven days to do this. They did take a million years, they took three million years, they took three seconds." It's all time-created universe, has been created by those who are within this realm of time. The Ultimate Creator, the Total Consciousness, exists way, way beyond time, way beyond all these thoughts that we can have, way beyond the mind. So, that's why, unless a Perfect Living Master comes from the Totality, we can have no idea whatsoever. And we think "that's God" when we come to the very first stage. So, we ultimately discover there's more and more, and the Great Master used to take disciples above by telling them, "This is not it. Move forward!" So, at every stage we think we have reached the end, and we have reached our destination, and it's not the destination.

Answer to Question 18: In some worldly activities we are very bright and quick. When it comes to meditation, we are lazy. It's only for some things we are lazy, and we are very selective. The mind says, "You know, we have plenty of time to do meditation. After all we have...we have bills to pay, we have to work, we have a social responsibilities, kids to take care of, other relations to take care of, business to take care of, we are working, we are human beings, we are ordinary human beings, we have to take care of everything around us. Meditation is a small part. We can't give more than 10 minutes to it. We...we don't have time. We're so busy, we have no time." And all our priorities go awry, all go wrong because of that kind of thinking.

We are spending time and attention on things, and when we die we realize, "What did we do?" These things are just disappearing right in front of our eyes. We took so much care. "Oh, we have to get our house painted. It is very important. The window is breaking up." You die, the house is disappearing in front of you. Children are disappearing in front of you. Everything is disappearing. "So, what I wasted all my life on this? And what is now appearing I never gave any attention to it?" It's too late, you're dead, the opportunity finished.

So, the Great Master and other Perfect Living Masters come and tell us, "Now is the opportunity." There...there is, there is that book *Glimpses of Great Master*, published pictures of Great Master. And in the beginning of that book they have put an autograph. I don't know if some of you have seen. It's in a book called *Glimpses of Great Master*, of Baba Sawan Singh. And the opening they have put a little oblong thing on which the signature that he wrote. He says, "Mil Jagdeesh milan ki baria." That's what he writes in Urdu. He says, "Meet the lord, now is the time!" That means do not think tomorrow is the time. It's always now! Don't waste even a moment!

Don't waste this useful time that you have because, only as a human being, with a human consciousness, with human seeking, human free will do you...do you have a chance. Otherwise too late! We all discover at the time of death, "Oh, we should have been different!" Too late! You come again and forget everything again and say, "Oh, we have other things to do. Very big responsibilities! What about our kids? What about our jobs? What about paying bills? We can't, we are, are ordinary human beings, and you teach us to give priority to meditation? How can we do that? How can we ignore all these things?"

Now, the truth is, if you meditate regularly you become so efficient in doing everything else. You can do everything so much better. And you almost feel you are not doing it, that the Master is doing it. Things work so smoothly, just because you set your priorities right, that you are giving a higher priority to this spiritual path, higher priority to your meditation than the rest of anything.

When you set your priorities right, everything runs smoothly. It's not that you have to give up the world to do meditation. It's not that kind of meditation at all. It's not that you have to become a monk and go into a monastery, or you have to become an ascetic and run into a

forest to meditate. You are right in the middle of the world, you are right in the middle of a household, you have children, you have family, you have everything, and everything is being taken care of while you are meditating properly and regularly.

So, people say, "No, I can't meditate, I...I am short of sleep, I can't sleep." Try meditation. You don't need that much sleep. "No, but you know, I have to earn my living and eat my food and all that." You don't need so much food. You don't need anything so much, if you meditate properly, if your priorities are right. So, our priorities are wrong. We are putting priority on things which are totally temporary, and it will go away. And we'll see it going away. Then it'll be too late. So, it's better to see it now and here these Perfect Living Masters are coming and telling us that "Look, time is short! It's a very small window that opens. After that the window comes after a long time, based on our Karma."

If our karma is such heavy that we have to go through several other forms of life before we become human, you can imagine how rare the window of opportunity is. The window...of opportunity is only the physical human life. So, don't waste it. One man went to Great Master. he said, "Master, I want not to lose an opportunity. Make me a human being in my next life!" Great Master said, "Are you a donkey now? Why do you want to wait for next life? You are a human being now. Do what you want to do now!"

So, we...we don't take advantage of this opportunity, and therefore, if you set your priorities right... I have been one of the busiest people in worldly activities here. I'm only looking at my own life. I had three jobs. I was working three jobs, taking 22 hours of my time, for seven months, the sleep was only two hours, in a car, moving from one station to another...to another job. For seven months I did three jobs, never felt tired, never felt it was too much, never complained. How is it possible?

Just the right priority, that Master can do anything. I have to spend my time with the Master. He'll do everything outside. So, I am not talking from some book that I have read. I am telling you experientially that these things happen. You do not become less qualified to do your worldly duties if you are meditating properly. If you give high priority to meditation, you'll still be able to do your duties, worldly duties, better than you are doing now. Your mind will be more clear. Your decision making will be absolutely correct and on the dot every time. Not that you have to start thinking, "Maybe I should not do this, maybe I will do it." All the maybes and perhapses will finish in your life if your priorities are right.

So, therefore, meditation is not something that you have to give up your life to go and do it. You do it right in the middle of life and doing everything else that you are required to do. And the beauty is, in order to do worldly work you can make the worldly work into meditation. Great Master's own grandson, Maharaj Charan Singh's brother, Parshotam Singh, he joined the military and became a young second lieutenant in the army, and he was posted to another station in army base somewhere. He came on a vacation and talked to Great Master. He said, "Master, I am very unhappy that I wanted to spend my life in the spiritual path at your feet. I wanted to serve you and practice love and devotion and meditation. And now, what has happened? I've joined the army and so far away from you. And I should resign and come back and serve you." Great Master said, "Go back to your station and do your duty thinking that the Master has asked you to do the duty. If you do your duty as an army lieutenant thinking that, 'I am doing Great Master's duty', it will count exactly like meditation sitting at my feet." What else could he say? It's not the physical proximity that matters! It's the mental proximity.

If your mind is close to the Master, you are close to the Master. And therefore, the other day David Lee sent me a letter of Great Master written many years ago to a disciple, saying he wants to come from India to...to come to India from United States to be closer to the Master. The Master says, "It's not the physical closeness that matters. It's that you—you can travel to India without using your body. If you are close to the Master inside, you are close to him physically also." So therefore, don't worry about the physical distance that you think there is between the Master.

Of course, it's always good to be able to see the physical form if you haven't seen the inner form. Once you see the inner form, it makes no difference. When you see the radiant form of a Master inside, it does not really matter, though you still like to see the physical form, because now the physical form looks different. When you see the radiant form of your own Master inside in meditation, then you look at the physical form, you say, "Wow, this is same guy here! See, how he's behaving, pretending to be an ordinary person." That's how you feel. "Look at this guy. I know him, I know him because I've seen him, and he's still talking like he knows nothing, as if he's just an ordinary person like us." It gives you a puzzle, but it makes more, it makes the mystery of the relationship with the Master even more interesting and more enjoyable.

I was once standing with the Great Master in Dalhousie, a hill station. We were standing in the garden. He was walking in the morning, I happened to be there, and I was walking with him. And we were looking at the beautiful mountains, snow covered mountains and beautiful trees and flowers growing in that garden. And I mentioned to Great Master that, "Look, how beautiful these things are looking." And he said, "When you go inside, they are even more beautiful. The

view inside is even more beautiful. The mountains are more beautiful, even in the astral plane. The mountains more beautiful, the sky is more bright, the colors are more beautiful, the flowers are alive inside. It's big experience. But once you have had that experience, when you come out, even these look more beautiful." So, he made a point that if you have the reality behind you and seen it, illusion looks even better.

And Great Master used to give an example of how the illusion can be made to look better than reality. He said that, "Once upon a time, there was a competition between the Japanese and the Chinese in the court of the emperor. The emperor had invited, must be the emperor of India or emperor of China or somebody, big emperor. He invited painters from around the world to come and paint on his walls of the palace and whoever does the best painting, he'll give an award. So, it was a painting contest on the wall. A wall mural to be painted.

So, the ultimate finalists were a Japanese and a Chinese team and they were given the wall, opposite walls in the same hall. But he put a curtain in the middle, so they don't copy each other. So, the Japanese were preparing the wall, polishing it all the time. The Chinese were crafting very beautiful paintings, putting the best color on them. They were given seven days to complete the task. On the sixth day, the emperor came and saw the Japanese are still polishing the wall—and when will they start painting? So, the Chinese had almost completed the work. So, on the last day when the emperor came, they had just polished the wall, the Chinese had done a beautiful painting. When they removed the curtain, the reflection of that, of the Chinese painting on the wall was even better than the original painting. The reflection was even better, and they won the award and they painted just the reflection." So, Master says, "If you have the original, you've seen the original, the reflection will look more beautiful. Because you now know where it's coming from. You know the reality of the illusion."

This, this business of illusion and reality is a very interesting subject according to me and confusing, too. It is very easy to say, after reading some books and hearing Satsangs and stories, that this world is unreal. It's an illusion. I never found a person who thinks it is illusion, he says it's illusion. You put a pin prick on him, and he cries, "Ouch!" If it's illusion, why does he say, "Ouch"? Why does he experience the pain and pleasure of this world? So real. If it's illusion, everything should be illusion. Even with enlightenment, the illusion still remains real.

Story is told of a mystic named Shankar in India. Shankar was in Bombay and he was walking down the street. And his leading disciple, who was the most advanced disciple of his, was right behind him. And Shankar saw a snake on the ground. He said to the leading disciple, "What do you see here?" He says, "Sir, it's a rope, it's just a piece of rope, looks like a snake. In reality it's a rope; in illusion it's a snake." He said, "If it is a rope and you know it, just pick it up. It's just a

piece of rope, it's not a snake." He said, "Yes, sir!" So, he picked up the snake. The snake crawled around his arm and bit him. He said, "Ouch!" He said, "Now tell me: is it a snake or a rope?" He said, "Master it's a rope, looks like a snake." "Why did you say ouch?" He says, "Rope bites like a snake." (laughter)

The point was simple, that we have not used illusion to create illusion. We have used illusion to create reality. If you want to know what is actually real, if you ask me the simple ultimate question, "Tell me what is ultimately real," I'll say, "Nothing is real." You...can anybody explain what is real? It's all created. If what is created is illusion, if what is created by consciousness is illusion, everything is illusion, including Sach Khand, our true permanent home. It's created! So, the definition of reality would be the Creator! Definition of reality would be the Experiencer! The definition of reality would be one that perceives illusion as reality. The perceiver may be real. That's the only definition I can give. Everything else is illusion and created. Therefore, nothing is real. On the other hand, the Creator is not creating illusions. Want to create reality. Therefore, there (are) levels of reality being created, not levels of illusion.

When we say these are different levels of consciousness, it does not mean they're levels of illusions. The process of illusion, the process of creating something by pure consciousness has been used to create reality. So therefore, when we say it's real, we judge it as real from the perception we have of that reality with means at our disposal within that reality. We don't judge it from means outside of the reality. Which means...supposing I am asked, "Is this cup of water real?" I'll say, "I can touch it, mmm...I taste it, too. I put it on the table, table is hard, too. It's real!" How am I testing reality? I am testing reality by the means being created at the same level as the cup. I am taking the cup to be real because I am testing its reality with everything else.

Supposing I were sleeping, having a dream. In the dream also I saw the same cup. In the dream also somebody asked me, "Is the cup real or not?" and I'll do the same thing in a dream. I'll take up the cup, "Mmm...I can drink the water, the table is real, and the cup therefore is real!" and then I wake up. Neither the cup was real, nor the table, nor the water I tasted. How could I call it real when waking up destroys the whole reality? Waking up from a dream has destroyed the whole reality! The reason is I had no way to compare the cup or the table or anything that I saw in the dream with a wakeful state. The wakeful state was totally different. I was trying to test the reality of the cup in relation to the reality of everything else at the same level of consciousness. Therefore, everything remained real to me till I woke up.

It's the same thing in this physical world. In the physical world, we are testing out reality by putting one sense perception against another and saying, "Because I can touch it, taste it, smell

it, it's real!" And when we wake up to higher level of consciousness, all that disappears. And we find the reality lay somewhere else. It's merely a reflection, a dream from that state. And we say, "Now that must be real, because now we had a dream."

When we wake up one step more, that becomes unreal. It's just created reality. We say, "Maybe where does it end?" We keep on waking up. Ultimately, the ultimate person wakes up and says, "I don't even exist." Only the power to dream exists. The power to dream the dreamer exists, and he must dream in order to be a dreamer. If the dream finishes, then even dreamer disappears. Therefore, if creation disappears, the Creator disappears, and therefore the Creator for his all sustenance, for being a permanent Creator, must have permanent creation. And the more levels he creates the more permanent he becomes! What a good mental explanation.
(laughs)

So, the truth is that whenever we talk of reality we are always talking of a relative reality. We are talking of a reality at one level of consciousness, and we have no means to test it. Nobody, even advanced meditators I have come across, they cannot hold two levels of consciousness together at the same time. You cannot be deep in sleep, having a deep dream, a terrible dream, in which you are being chased by your robbers and things in it and terrible things are happening, at the same time you can't be awake to be able to say, "Oh, that's just a dream." You may even say in the dream, "I know it's a dream," but you are still telling everybody else, "Dream, run! Run from here, it's a dream!" That means you don't even know it's a dream. You are still speaking the truth.

In this wakeful state, people speak the truth. It's illusion, but they don't know it. There's no awareness of it. There's no experience of it. The experience of the illusion of a reality only comes when you wake up to a next level of consciousness. Not simple enlightenment that there is another level. Not simple glimpse of something that's unusual. That's not enlightenment. That's not wakefulness. To be awake to another level of consciousness, you should be as awake as you get up from a sleep from a dream and say, "That was a dream and I know it." Don't look for proof for that. Does anybody ever look for proof? People wake up every morning from sleep. I've never seen a person saying, "I am now going to search for proof whether I am awake or not." I've never seen a person saying, "No, that was not a dream. Maybe that was real, and now I am dreaming." Except one philosopher.

Fa-Hien, he said so. Chinese philosopher. He said that he had a dream in which he was a butterfly. And the butterfly was flitting around in a garden. The flowers were so beautiful, the

colors were so beautiful, he'd never seen in his life. They do not exist in the physical world, but in the dream they were there. And the butterfly, and he did not feel he saw a butterfly going around, he was the butterfly. He was flapping his wings and going around, everywhere. He had no notion there could be anything else other than a butterfly. The butterfly was going through all the flowers, and he woke up and he finds he's a philosopher. And he wrote, he says, "I am not sure if I am really Fa-Hien, the philosopher, who had a dream that he was a butterfly, or I am really a butterfly who is now dreaming that he is Fa-Hien, the philosopher. How do I determine the difference?"

So, the difference is determined by the imminent knowledge, imminent awareness of the difference of level of consciousness on waking up from one level to another. Which means, when you're sleeping and having a dream and you wake up, you recall—that point is not mentioned very clearly that you recall—you were sleeping, and after that sleep when you went to bed then the dream came. When you woke up, even before you opened your eyes, you remembered you had gone to bed. That's the connection. It's a memory connection with the past in that level that convinces you it was only a dream. If you did not have that connection, you would be confused like Fa-Hien, the philosopher. That you wouldn't know if the dream was real or wakefulness is real. Then you'll be sent to a mental house. Then you'll be locked up in a nuthouse.

But if you remember, if your memory is good enough to remember who you are, then normal sleep, a normal dream, then you go about your daily business. In the same way, in the spiritual path when you are able to wake up to the astral plane, you do not feel you've come to some new place, you were there already. You were there even while you were here. But you had shut that experience off and operated that experience through the physical body in the physical system to generate the reality of this physical world. When you wake up you discover that you were already there, and you were using that very system to have a physical dream or a physical life and that you were there much earlier than you were in the physical body in this physical world.

So, your life was much longer there, and you remember that your name was not what you think it was. You just gave that name in the physical body; your name was different. And I have...some people have come to me and say, "How do we know who we are?" I said, "Give a different name to yourself and check it out whether that was your name." Because you will find that in one astral life the average length in time of that astral life is between from one thousand to three thousand physical earth years. That's the average life.

That means we have been in the same astral body from one thousand to three thousand of physical years. In one thousand or three thousand physical years for an enlightened person, one who's been enlightened enough to know that this is what happened, that person does not go back into other species but is born from human to human. We have had several human lives in that one thousand-three thousand period.

In every human life we had a different name for our body. Then when we are there, which is our real name? We had so many names in a physical body, and do we have a particular name there? Now, astral life is so different from physical life. Here we are given a name to our body and we think that's our name. When we are called by that name, we think our whole self is being called by that name. We don't distinguish that this is name of our body and we may have another name somewhere else. We can't even think of it. In the astral body, you discover that was a local topical label given to us. And that we've had several labels, and a new name comes up which flip flops to all the names that you have ever had. So, your name was not what you think is in one life. So, astral life is so different that way.

There are many differences. There's one other difference, that language and use of vocabulary and language is very different there than it is in the physical world. In the physical world, I went to Lithuania, they spoke in Lithuanian, I couldn't understand. I need an interpreter. If it was the astral plane, and they had spoken in Lithuanian, I would have understood without interpreter. Because there, the spoken language means nothing.

The spoken language is just a conveyance of what you are thinking, and the thoughts are captured directly in the language of the recipient. That means, you can speak Pashto, other person will hear it in English. It's an automatic translation system going on, not because of translation but because what a person says in spoken language is designed in the mind as a message. The message remains the same, no matter what language you use. The message is conveyed to the other person and gets translated into the language, spoken language of that person. That's why it doesn't matter.

In...in even in physical occasional telepathic experiences—I don't know how many of you've had telepathic experience—if somebody had thought something, you are able to understand it at a distance without spoken communication or written communication or iPhones or telephones. If you have been able to read what the other person says, it doesn't matter at all what language the other person used. You will understand in your language even in this physical world.

The telepathic experience is actually an astral experience that can occasionally happen in physical world like so many other astral experiences can take place in the physical life also. So, it's very interesting, it's so, such a great adventure. We came into this world for adventure. I tell you: the journey back is also quite a bit of adventure. You'll find many adventurous things on the way back. So adventurous that many disciples even of Great Master are stuck there enjoying the adventure. They say, "Let's enjoy this first before we go to Sach Khand." They're more attractive than even the so called "distraction and attractiveness of this world." Too many heavens built there, which is probably another form of the trap. According to me, that's also a trap that you can be held to attractions even when you are on the way back to your own home. But they exist.

Answer to Question 19: There was a man who wrote down every word that Master spoke. And there used be a local magazine in which they were published. And there may be some old copies of that magazine in which all the original spoken words are there. But people recorded in hand, which was the old traditional way of recording, just write in shorthand. And the Master's words, although sometimes he spoke in Punjabi, were recorded in Urdu, Urdu language. And I saw those recordings, I saw them. They were published in a magazine in...in the, in the Dera itself, and some records of it are available.

The other day I showed a book to some of you. I don't know who saw the book. You saw. The book where the original words of Baba Jaimal Singh have been recorded. And that's also, there's, it's a translation from the Gurmukhi, Punjabi language, and there's one sheet in that that contains his actual handwriting in which he wrote himself. So, at some point I'll show you that, just out of curiosity how the recordings were done at that time.

Answer to Question 20: Yes, I have got the two books, two volumes, which were printed way, way, back about 80 years ago or 75 years ago, very old books. And they are really really old. But my daughter Simi, in San Francisco is collecting all the old books, so I promised to give those to her because she is collecting anything that's old. She asked me. Her daughter, my granddaughter, Simi's daughter asked, "I would like to see the original writing of my grandfather, Lekh Raj Puri, and the original writing of Great Master." So, this was a request she made, and the request was sent to my sister who is in New Delhi, Chander, who came—some of you met here. Chander, by strange coincidence, at that very time found that my father had sent a registered insured letter to Great Master and that you had to fill up a form that "said insured and sent to Hazur Sant Maharaj Baba Sawan Singh" and Sawan Singh himself has signed on it.

So, both things she was looking for are on one piece of paper, and she has now, the granddaughter, is now saving that as a unique antique piece.

Answer to Question 21: “*Mil Jagdeesh milan ki baria.*” “Meet the Lord. This is the time to meet him.” And there’s a translation of it. This is very...his original handwriting by Great Master and his signature made on 17th July 1939. “*Mil Jagdeesh milan ki baria. Sawan Singh.*” I used to write letters to Great Master in Urdu. I have some of his original letters in Urdu to me.

Answer to Question 22: I took...yeah, this published in Hong Kong. (*Glimpses of The Great Master*). I bought...I bought 25 copies of that book straight away as soon as they were printed before they came to India. I bought them in Hong Kong as soon as they were printed. Again, my daughter came. “I don’t have the book.” And there was... I said, “I have a copy.” And my wife said, “Don’t give that copy. It’s the only copy we have.” I said, “Look, we are not going to carry the copy with us, we are old people. She is young. She wants the copy. Give it to her.” “No!” I said, “Simi”—that’s her name—“go and take the copy. Don’t tell your mom.” She went, and I knew there was a copy lying in the...under the books. She picked up—there were two copies. (laughter) She took one, the other is still there. I said, “Some miracles do happen on a daily basis.”

Okay, friends, I am very happy that I spent this time with you telling you stories and describing what the essential part of this spiritual teachings is of Great Master. Great Master’s teachings and the practice of those teachings have been very very satisfying for me. They really satisfied all my curiosities. And therefore, I hope that they’ll benefit you also. Even for a very skeptical mind, very curious mind like mine, they were satisfying.

So, I believe if they can satisfy a mind like mine, who was skeptic even after initiation, who ran around to every yogi, swami, yogeshwar, any practitioner of any kind of spirituality, every religion that he could have access to, tried out everything for eight years and run back and say, “I couldn’t find anything better.” So...and still based on Great Master’s instruction to me, if I can find something better, even today, I’ll take it. I’ve not been able to find anything better. Not only have I not been able to find anything better to practice on, I’ve not even heard a better description of something better. Therefore, that’s the best I could find. It has worked very well with me. I hope it’ll work equally well. It’ll keep you on top of the world It’ll keep your priorities straight. It’ll help you do your worldly duties more efficiently, more effectively. Don’t have to run away from anything. Don’t have to run away from any relationship. Don’t have to run away from any duty whatsoever of this life. Do it better and still be anchored to the spiritual path and go within.

Thank you.