

PRICELESS PRECEPTS

BY
KAMALA

*"I have made Thee Polestar of my life."
-- "Whispers from Eternity"*

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Author: "The Flawless Mirror."

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*This book is Dedicated
to
Paramhansa Yogananda*

With love and gratitude for his Precepts



PARAMHANSA YOGANANDA

PARAMHANSA YOGANANDA, a Master of Wisdom, and Emissary of Divine Illumination, has given guidance through his PRECEPTS. These are Ways of God that lead men from darkness to Light in their spiritual Quest.

The talks in this book focus upon his Precepts. They have been given at Self-Realization Fellowship Services by Kamala, a minister who was ordained by Paramhansa Yogananda.

“Paramhansa” is a spiritual title meaning: param = supreme; and hansa - swan. The swan is symbolically the vehicle of the Infinite in scriptural lore. The title describes one who carries disciples to the Shores of God-Realization. Paramhansa Yogananda was given this title by his Guru, Sri Yuktiswar.

“Sri” is a title expressing respect, meaning = holy. “Ji” added to a name or a title, as in Paramhansaji, is a term of respect.

A “Guru” is a spiritual teacher; the word is from the root “gur” = to raise, to uplift.

“Yogananda” is a monastic name combining: yoga = union, and ananda = bliss. The attainment of divine bliss through union with God.

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THE DIVINE MAGNET

Spiritual magnetism is both a drawing POWER and an outgoing FORCE. It draws to one that which is constructive and good. This quality that is in everyone may be developed, and has been described by Paramhansa Yogananda when he spoke about many kinds of magnetism: Personal and Divine.

He has likened GOD to a DIVINE MAGNET:

“He who rubs his soul on the Divine Magnet by concentration becomes part of that Magnet (GOD).”

By constant attunement with the Infinite, the saints and sages possess Divine Magnetism. This quality in the Guru lifts the devotee's thoughts to God. The disciples of Jesus were drawn by the spiritual radiance in Christ, and the multitudes felt its power of attraction.

A magnet draws certain metals to itself. This Force within it, this property of attraction, is called magnetism.

There is electronic, molecular, protonic and atomic magnetism. The cohesive power inherent in them is the magnetic Force.

There is chemical magnetism, such as in water: H₂O; that which holds together the 2 parts hydrogen and 1 part oxygen.

Plant magnetism enables the plant to draw the nourishment to itself out of the earth, air and sunlight. The magnetic needle of the compass always turns north through the attraction called magnetic north.

EVERYONE possess magnetism of some kind or kinds - Personal or Divine.

Our interest in discussing it is because:

First: The magnetism of others can affect us and influence us.

Second: We influence and affect others.

Third: We can ACQUIRE magnetism, by various means, of the kinds we desire to possess, and can STRENGTHEN the kinds we already have.

A Magnet draws to itself pieces of iron or steel within a certain range. If rubbed against a piece of non-magnetic iron or steel, the latter BECOMES magnetic.

This LAW also applies to us in various ways. Paramhansaji explained that one way magnetism is acquired is through ASSOCIATION.

Keep company with the person who has the KIND of magnetism one wants to have. If one desires business success, be with successful business men. Don't sit with the man on the bench who is grumbling about things. He will give a depressed outlook. If you want to be a trapeze performer in a circus, don't be with people who are afraid to climb a ladder because one gets the fears of another. If you want good health, be with those who have a good health consciousness and radiate health. Be with athletic, or literary, or artistic people if you seek to acquire or strengthen these Qualities and Abilities.

Don't try to believe that one can take from another just what is desired and leave the rest. We ABSORB qualities unconsciously.

KEEP the COMPANY of those who Love God, our Preceptor advised.

Group Meditations help to strengthen individual efforts to realize God. GROUPS can influence by the kind of gathering it is that one attends.

An important Law that goes hand in hand with that of Association concerns the varying degrees of magnetism, from Strong and Positive to weak.

We affect others, and are affected ourselves, according to the degree of strength of any quality. Paramhansaji illustrated this with a man who is weak, yet allied with goodness, and the person who is dominantly wicked. When meeting, some of the strong and forceful evil feelings may be imparted to the weak individual, whereas only a little good will be conveyed to the other. This is because the opposite attraction for evil has a Force of magnetism which can be felt just as definitely as the drawing power for Good from the spiritual one. Thus we need to be strongly good, and not just "allied with" the good.

In our lives in certain circumstances a Calm Person is with a Restless Person and may wish to help that one. But unless the calm one is a master of calmness, the nervousness and restlessness of the other will affect him and take away some of his calmness.

It is therefore good, until strength has been developed, to avoid whenever possible, those who have the strong tendencies we do not wish to absorb or express. Sometimes a Peaceful Person is robbed of his peace by the anger feelings of another unless this peace is so strong that he

can not be drawn away from it. Thus we seek to developed STRENGTH in Spiritual Qualities.

A very practical example of a strong negative force successfully overcome, was demonstrated by some Gold-Star Mothers - a group who have lost one or more sons in the Service of their Country and band together to help one-another and others. One mother discussed with another, her plan to visit a third. This 3rd mother was so depressed and gloomy that whenever anyone went to see her they came away just as depressed as she, instead of cheering her. But they evolved an answer! They learned that if two went together they could keep happy and at the same time lift her spirits. This way the positive cheerfulness of one was enforced and made doubly strong by two.

Sincere friendliness radiating with magnetic warmth from people imparts a friendly feeling to all who are near, giving to them more of this expanding quality of the heart.

When a minister or a doctor comes into a room a patient is often lifted from a lethargic feeling and has a rise in spirit. A strength has been magnetically imparted to the patient who draw it to himself before any word has been said, without any treatment given except a smile. The patient is like the non-magnetic steel that RECEIVES the magnetic qualities from the magnet. There is actual strength given and received, flowing from the strong one to the weaker.

This Law operates on the Physical, Emotional, Moral and Spiritual planes as well.

In Kipling's story of KIM, there is a beautiful instance of the IMPARTING of QUALITIES. It is shown between the boy, Kim, and the old Lama.

LOVE bound these two. The very healthy young Kim gave strength to the old Lama; in return Kim absorbed spiritual qualities from the Lama. A few lines from the book show Kipling's insight on this subject. It was a day when Kim had been overcome by strain and fatigue and he blamed himself for neglecting his loved Lama.

The Lama replied, "Neglect me? Child I have LIVED on THY STRENGTH as an old tree lives on the lime of a new wall. Day by day I have stolen strength from thee. Thou hast never stepped a hair's breadth from the Way of Obedience."

Comforted, Kim replied, as he made the Lama some tea: "Thou leanest on me in the body, Holy One, but I lean on thee for some other things. Dost know it?"

The Lama's eyes twinkled as he replied, "I have guessed, maybe."

Pilgrimages to Holy Places indicate understanding of the INFLUENCE of PLACE as Lourdes for healing. The Force remains in the ethers. The magnetic vibrations affect one accordingly. In the story of Paramhansaji's efforts to help the husband of his sister to become more tolerant of religion, he did not try to help him at their home where the husband's doubts held sway; but they went to a Temple, a place of very spiritual vibrations.

Another instance: Paramhansaji referred to the holy vibrations where St. Francis lived when he said, "God was flowing through me at a place where a great Saint had meditated."

Our Guru remarked, "Cities have magnetism. I could go into a city blindfolded and feel the vibrations of the peoples." At that time in Boston it was: How much do you know? In New York: How much do you have? In Philadelphia: Who are you? In Los Angeles: How much do you know about God?

In Boston, where Paramhansaji stayed for his first few years in America, he tells about his lectures in a little place to a few people. He recalled, "The talk was successful but the audience slept peacefully!" Then, in another part of the same city, he gave the same talks to an audience of several thousand enthusiastic people. He said, "Praise does not make me better, blame does not make me worse, but MAGNETISM OF PLACE IS FACTUAL: results come accordingly. Some people function best in one place; some in another. What can a racehorse do in a little yard? Place him in an arena. Seek to find what is best. Do not always blame self."

Frank Laubach mentioned the blessings he received through the vibrations of "place" and he described them in his writings. Here he tells how they came to be there. He wrote: "One can take a little rough cabin and TRANSFORM it into a palace, just by flooding it with thoughts of God. When one has spent many months in a little house in daily thoughts about God, the very entering of the house, the very sight of it as one approaches, starts associations which set the heart tingling and the mind flowing.

"It does not matter where one is, one can begin to BUILD HEAVEN by thoughts which one thinks while in that place."

He not only knew God in the worship of his own heart but he served others each day, bringing the light of self-help to them through patient teaching. The spiritual life described by Paramhansaji combines Service to others and inner Communion: a balance of the Outer and the Inner.

Our Guru wrote: "If a man continuously thinks, lives and dreams on Moral or Spiritual subjects, this kind of magnetism is developed." It is a compelling thought that we direct the results by selection. The writings of men of wisdom reflect their spiritual vibrations. We may receive their special and holy influence through their words if they pervade our thoughts. It is by choice of our thoughts and our actions, and even our longings, that builds within us the kind of magnetism that others receive from us.

"That which we ARE we shall teach, not voluntarily but involuntarily," Emerson said. We see this when we feel confidence in one whose life has been lived with integrity. We sense it when we take courage from lives where courage has removed every vestige of fear from the consciousness. Such ones can pour courage into others, into those who have fear, and heal them. In these ways people impart blessings, and attract them.

Our Preceptor counseled, "You should strive for SPIRITUAL MAGNETISM. It is a drawing, uplifting, expanding power. It is a Quality of Spirit. One who meditates on Om and GOD night and day develops this. The Lord is drawn by the devotee's magnetic ardor.

"Love is the MAGNET from which GOD can not escape."

WILL POWER

In the Western World, up to the time of the 16th century Divine Grace was considered the only way to know God. This attitude then changed within the churches and disciplines by the Will were accepted as a way that man could hasten the gift of Grace.

We may then ask: How can our Will serve us in this way?

Discipline by will for mastery of self has been practiced through the centuries but it is a difficult method when used as a single means of attainment. However, will is of spiritual importance.

Will is a 2-edged sword. It depends entirely upon how it is used. Will carries out our chosen plans when we act. The motive back of the will is therefore of significance. We should know if it is blindly used, reasoned, or wisdom-directed.

Paramhansa Yogananda has given understanding of this by describing 3 kinds of Will.

The first is: BLIND WILL. This is so-called because it is not guided by wisdom. It is used when one acts in a blind way through anger, passion, temptation. Results are often hurtful to oneself, or another. So many of the tragedies everywhere result from this, causing people to suffer from their acts long after the emotions of anger, or the temptations of the moment are past.

The second is: THINKING WILL. Thinking Will is carrying out what is decided through planning and reasoning. We use this in daily decisions, generally finding satisfaction, but we learn it can prove right or wrong depending on the judgment used. According to the kind of analysis, premise, or motive, it may be a good or bad decision: a certain investment is chosen; we plan to move to a new location; we select one thing rather than another. Sometimes we make a good and wise choice; sometimes we regret our selection. Our will generates power to carry through these reasoned decisions.

The third is: GOD'S WILL. This always gives wisdom and right guidance through intuitive perception. Our Guru has said, "Contact God first, and thus harness your will and activity to the right goal. Do not will and act first."

For one to try to remove or withdraw his own will with the idea that God can "take over" and in this way do what He Wills with us, is a misconception, because, as Paramhansaji explained: "God's Will is not something separate from our will. If our will is guided by Wisdom, it is God's Will. If it is guided by ego it is without God's Sanction."

We do not make our will passive; rather we remove restless thoughts from the mind in order to be receptive to inner guidance and free from the motives that usually determine personal willful actions. We seek to become attuned to the Wisdom of God's Will.

Then, whether the decision carries one on the easiest path or the most difficult, there is always a deep assurance that is Right. "If you are guided by the Divine," Paramhansaji has said, "even when things seem absolutely black, you will see everything come out right."

God does not impose His Will on us and a Guru will never do so. When he observes the need for giving counsel, he will then very gently suggest a helpful and better way but with freedom to the disciple to do as he may choose.

In the "Autobiography of a Yogi" may be found illustrations of this freedom of choice in Paramhansaji's relationship with his Guru, Sri Yukteswar. Paramhansaji said that the Guru "turns your thoughts to God and shows you the way to spiritual independence. The discipline of such a Master FREES your will, never enslaves it."

We often think our will is free, but our Guru explained: "Will is bound by habits, desires and environment, but if we choose we can break these chains by turning toward God. Then we will see our will becoming free."

"Our lives are not predestined by God, or by fate," he said. "We may not escape our own basic pattern such as physical structure and race, but we can work in conformity with it. We are free to choose and discriminate to the limits of our understanding, and as we exercise our power of choice, our understanding grows. Then, once we have chosen, we have to accept the consequences of our choice and go on from there."

Will is the MOVING FORCE to act rightly after we pray and find the way of Wisdom. Sri Yukteswar said, "If temptation assails you with cruel force, overcome it by impersonal analysis and by indomitable will. Roam the world as a lion of self-control."

In the Biblical example, Jesus was tempted. Temptation is not held against anyone. It is not our being tempted that causes pain to ourselves or to others, but our YIELDING.

Temptations come differently for each person. One may be tempted to put off meditation; another to have worldly power; some to possess beyond their needs of material things; others may find one of the five senses takes an upper hand. Each should know his own, see it clearly and use will to achieve self-control.

A Legend of Moses speaks of the part Will played in his life. It describes a portrait of Moses that was analyzed by the noted physiognomists of that day. They said his features revealed many worldly vices, yet his goodness belied this appraisal. It was puzzling to all. But this Man of God said the painters had been accurate and that all of the vices revealed in his portrait had indeed been ascribed to him by nature. He explained: "By long and intense effort of the Will, I struggled with my vices and gradually suppressed them in myself, until all opposed to them became my second nature."

When an undertaking has been chosen, then we should "act with positive will," our Preceptor has said. Both will and enthusiasm bring added energy into the body, as we know by the laws of Pranic Energy. This gives to us the vitality necessary to carry out plans and actions.

For this reason will is a powerful force in HEALING. We know the importance of will in recovery: from deep sorrows, depression from disappointments, and physical illness of the body. Will conveys the healing forces of Life Energy.

Will does not mean physical or mental strain, or strenuousness. One should be completely calm. For Divine Guidance, Paramhansaji prayed to the Heavenly Father: "I will reason, I will will, I will act, but guide Thou my reason, will and activity to the right thing that I should do."

When a disciple felt unsure if he was yet acting by God's Guidance, our Guru counseled: "Do the best you know how. God wants from us the CONTINUITY of EFFORT, and that we should not run away from our duties." Our Preceptor recalled that he had himself recovered

from the "agreeable delusions of irresponsibility" under the wisdom-training of his Guru.

WILL can work MIRACLES.

One may be familiar with the story of the Two Frogs from an old Hindu Legend. It was put in verse by Bangs Burgess and appeared in one of the early issues of the SRF Magazine.

Two little frogs exploring, and feeling as fine as silk, soon wandered from the straight path, and fell in a pail of Milk.

The larger frog was frightened and tired to climb the side; he soon gave up the struggle and laid him down and died.

Quoth the little frog: "I'll paddle. It's an easy thing to die. I can not see my way out, but I am going to try.

So he paddled and he churned, till his heart all aflutter, he leaped to his freedom from a pyramid of Butter!

This winsome picture emphasizes "CONTINUITY of EFFORT" which, our Preceptor said, God wants from us.

The DEFINITION of Will is given as: "A steady-flowing effort of the attention toward a definite goal." Thus, that one using Will-power will KEEP ON until the spiritual goal is reached.

A LEGEND among the HOPI INDIANS serves to illustrate this kind of steady-flowing effort of the attention upon a chosen goal.

An old Chief of the Tribe, knowing that he was soon to join his fathers in the Happy Hunting Grounds, selected five of the most likely youths from among the Tribe's younger generation, that he might choose from this number the one best qualified to succeed him as Chieftain and Leader of the Hopi people.

Before these five he placed a novel test. He indicated a Mountain Range in the far distance which was only a blurred mass against the horizon. He said: "He among you who comes nearest to finding the SUMMIT of the Mountain, the same shall be Chief of all the Hopi Nation." He then indicated which youth should try first.

This boy returned later with a piece of Cactus. This indicated, the Chief said, that he had traveled past the Salt-marsh to the Desert.

The second young man carried a clump of Sage Brush. He had made his way far into the Desert.

The third runner had a branch of Cottonwood. He had gone beyond, to the Springs.

The fourth brought a Pine Cone. The chief praised him for his endurance. He said he had done well for he had climbed the Foothills into the land of the Pine Trees.

The fifth youth went on his journey, and after a long time returned with Empty Hands, and with no tangible evidence to prove the distance he had traveled. But UPON HIS FACE there was a GLOW; and a RAPTURE in his EYES; and his tongue moved haltingly as though incapable of recounting what was in his mind.

He said at last: "I have SEEN the SEA."

"Indeed," said the Chief. "You shall be the Leader of the Hopi Nation. You have been to the Topmost Peak for the GLORY of what you have seen is in your face, and the AWE of it bears heavy upon your tongue."

This Ancient Tale can be compared to our own Spiritual Journey. The Guru knows that the Disciple's WILL to PERSEVERE can take him into the peaceful deserts of holy meditation, on to foothills of inner joy, and then to the mountaintop of supernal Bliss.

GOD IS MY STOCKS AND BONDS

The beliefs of some American Indians are described by S. White in "Daniel Boone, Wilderness Scout," in these lines:

"Men are under the PERSONAL CARE of the GREAT SPIRIT. Nothing can happen to them without the consent and intention of the Great Spirit; good luck and bad luck, fortune and misfortune, happiness and misery, plenty and famine, are all bestowed by the Great Spirit for the purpose of developing His Children."

An occurrence recounted in this book of early frontier days exemplifies this belief:

James Smith, a long-time captive of the Delaware Indians, was out with an old Indian and a little boy. The old man was laid up with rheumatism and a thick snow crust prevented Smith from getting meat. It looked as though nothing could save them from starvation. For two days he had nothing at all to eat and had hunted frantically. The Indian and the boy had huddled in their hut trying to keep warm and conserve their strength.

Smith said: "When I came into our hut the old man asked what success? I told him not any. He asked me if I was not very hungry. I replied that the keen edge of appetite seemed to be in some measure removed, but I was both faint and weary. He commanded the boy to bring me something from a kettle. It was a broth made from some old bones that did not contain any substance, but it warmed and revived me.

"Then the old Indian filled and lighted his pipe and handed it to me, waiting patiently until it was smoked out. When I stated myself to be much refreshed, the old man said he had something of importance to communicate. He said the reason he deferred his speech until now was that few men are in a right humor to hear good talk when they are extremely hungry, as they are discomposed. He added,

But as you now appear to enjoy calmness and serenity of mind, I will communicate to you the thoughts of my heart, of those things I know to be true.

“He continued: Brother, as you have lived with the white people you have not had the same advantage of knowing the GREAT BEING ABOVE feeds His people and gives them their meat IN DUE SEASON.

“We Indians are frequently out of provisions, and yet are wonderfully supplied, and that so frequently that it is evident that it is the Hand of the Great Spirit that does this.

“The white people usually have barns that are filled with grain and therefore have not the same opportunity of seeing, and knowing that they are supported by the Ruler of Heaven and Earth.

“Brother, I have been young and now am old and have frequently been under like circumstances that we are now; and in such in almost every year of my life; yet I have hitherto been supported, and my wants supplied in times of need.

“Brother, the Great Spirit sometimes suffers us to be in want, in order to teach us our dependence upon Him, and to let us know that we are to love and serve Him, and likewise to know the worth of the favors we receive and make us thankful.

“Brother, BE ASSURED that you will be supplied with food, and that just in the right time; but you must CONTINUE DILIGENT in the use of means. Go to sleep, and rise early in the morning and go hunting; be strong, and exert yourself like a man, and the Great Spirit will direct your way.” It was the next day Smith found food to sustain them.

When we find things are so plentiful we may forget Who it is that supplies them. Paramhansa Yogananda always knew, even at a very early age. When his brother spoke of the family money, he said, “You know, Ananta, I seek my inheritance from the Heavenly Father.” He said to a friend, “I am conscious of my dependence on God. He can devise a thousand resources for His devotees.”

Many years later when there were important and urgent needs for the SRF Organization, and they were not at hand, Paramhansaji sought the answer in prayer. The DIVINE MOTHER responded by coming to him. She told him: “I AM your STOCKS AND BONDS; I AM your SECURITIES.”

God, in the tender aspect of Mother, provides lovingly. Her gifts may come through others, but She is the Giver. Paramhansaji said that what was need came right away.

When Jesus prayed, "Give us this day our daily bread," he did not forget the needs of our material life, but in fulfilling these things, he reminded men to seek FIRST the Kingdom of Heaven.

Paramhansaji counseled disciples, "If He sees Things satisfy you, He will never come." When disciples asked if they were not to pray for any needs, he answered, "It is all right to tell the Lord you want something, but it is much greater to say, Lord I know that Thou dost anticipate my every need. Sustain me according to Thy Will. Don't you think since He created you that He can sustain you? TRUST MORE in Him."

Our Preceptor said, "God alone has supported me. I did not have one eye on Him and one eye on the money. MY TWO EYES WERE WHOLLY ON HIM."

The Delaware Indian reminded one to be ever THANKFUL to the Giver of all; thanksgiving including the kindness and the beauty we find in our lives. "Thank Him," our Guru said, "because you see His Hand behind the gifts."

A spiritual renunciate in India, visited by Paramhansaji said, "The world is full of uneasy believers in an outward security. The One Who gave us air and milk from our first breath knows how to provide day by day for his devotees."

A true story during World War I, gives an endearing picture of this kind of faith. It was related by one of the officers present. He said that in the Canadian Services all clergymen of every faith were called "Padre." In his own division a Padre had made considerable impression by affirming with assurance, on numerous occasions, the words, "The Lord will Provide." The fact that he had always been right and response from the Lord had always been forthcoming, did not make too favorable an impression on the men. They commented among themselves that much of it was coincidental, and that if a real occasion arose the Padre might learn that the Lord didn't come to aid so eagerly! But so far, even in the small things, the Lord had done so!

At the time, while eating with some officers, all had found the meal nourishing but lacking a dessert, and one man expressed a rueful wish for something sweet, knowing none was at hand. The Padre

made his statement of faith about the Lord providing, and they all laughed good-naturedly at the improbability. Shortly there was a knock at the door. A young officer was standing there and said that he had something he wished to share with them: a box of candy he had received in the mail earlier that day. It was this sort of thing that was happening too frequently!

The men were fond of the Padre but all felt he should have a little "object lesson." There were plans for the next morning to move on to "the front" which was a whole day's march. The men would leave early, while a few would remain to break camp and go much later on horseback, to catch up with the foot marchers. The Padre was to remain with this group and go with them. However, when the rest had mounted their horses and left, the Padre found no horse reserved for himself. This had been planned, as the fine lesson for him, though he didn't know it! He realized he must join his company so he started out, walking down the now-deserted dusty road in the most restricted war zone in France.

He had not been walking very long when a Rolls Royce came down the road at tremendous speed with a 4-star General. It stopped - an unusual thing - and the General asked, "May I give you a lift, Padre?" The Padre got in, and in a little while they covered the great distance already traveled by the weary marchers.

As the car overtook the soldiers they turned off the road for the car to pass. Then they saw their Padre! One and all gazed in astonishment! And all up and down the lines, while he rode by, one could hear the soldiers murmuring: "The Lord will Provide!" The Padre had put his TRUST in the SAFEST Hands, and even without asking, those Loving Hands had PROVIDED for him.

When England faced a dark and critical period, King George addressed his countrymen, telling them of the need to endure, and for sustained strength in the days ahead. His country and the whole world listened as he spoke, and he quoted these words in their time of trial:

"I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown. And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put thine hand into the HAND of GOD. That shall be to thee better than light, and safer than a known way."



PARAMHANSA YOGANANDA - BELOVED GURU

GURU-DISCIPLE RELATIONSHIP

GURU is a term that should be applied only to one who KNOWS his Oneness with the Divine Father.

Paramhansa Yogananda was a Preceptor of Wisdom; of Enlightenment; a true Guru who sought to awaken within us deep love for God, and the happiness of God-Realization.

Do you recall the words Jesus addressed to the Woman of Samaria, when they were at the well?

He said to her: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water I shall give shall be IN him a Well of Water springing up into Everlasting Life."

Our Guru, seeking the thirst-quenching Waters, found them through the guidance of his Guru, Sri Yukteswar.

When one longs to know God, and books and talk no longer satisfy the devotee, then there is need for a Guru. The role of a true Guru is described by Paramhansaji: "GURU means one who leads from the darkness of ignorance to the light of wisdom. Such a spiritual teacher, knowing God, has but one desire: to implant the love of Him in others. He shows the devotee that God Alone is the Goal of life and tells him how to get there."

Sometimes there are questions that come into the minds of those who are deeply serious about their spiritual quest:

How is a Guru selected? As one might choose a college? Do we choose, or does the Guru do so?

How are we sure that we have found our own Guru? How can we know?

Why do some disciples progress faster than others? What does our Guru expect of us?

What if our Guru is not in the body - not on earth now, when one is just beginning his search?

The first question is answered when we recall that Jesus told his disciples: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Then later he prayed: "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me; for they are Thine. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be One, as we are."

Thus we have the word of Jesus that he chose his disciples, but that first they had been GIVEN BY GOD to him, to be his disciples.

This is the way of every true Guru-Disciple relationship.

How God and Guru choose is hidden in their great wisdom, but Paramhansaji has said it is OUR OWN LOGING for GOD that brings about our contact with our Guru.

How will we recognize him to be our Guru?

Our own Guru can be known by a RESPONSE IN THE HEART and soul. Many find and recognize Paramhansa Yogananda to be their Guru through various ways. It may be when reading one of his books; or from something heard: perhaps a church service, or words spoken by a friend, or seeing him in inner vision. His picture may elicit this feeling of response.

Numerous are the channels for FINDING our Guru. The Master KNOWS, but the disciple must make his own discovery and recognition.

It is not choosing a Guru; it is recognizing the Guru that God has chosen for us. One may know at once, or may not realize for a time. But when the devotee does know, it is because of an inner ASSURANCE - an inner CONTENTMENT that tells one: "I never need seek further; I HAVE FOUND MY GURU."

When the Guru is found, the individual still has the free will to accept discipleship, or to turn away and miss this blessing. Consider the Rich Young Man who came to Jesus.

Jesus told him: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and then thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and FOLLOW ME."

The man sorrowfully went away. We can see the choice was his. He was deeply attracted to Jesus and to the spiritual things of life, but Jesus saw also an attachment to material possessions that would have divided his attention and singleness of purpose.

Neither the heart nor mind can turn in two directions at once. God knows if we profess choice and the inner attention is elsewhere. Wanting to hold something of lesser value, God slips away.

A PERIOD OF SEEKING. On the spiritual path many have gone through a period of seeking.

When a new-born baby is hungry, he seeks food even before his eyes are opened! And he FINDS it because God has PROVIDED it through the MOTHER.

When the Spiritually hungry seek, if truly sincere, they find the Spiritual Food from the GURU, because God has provided it this way.

Paramhansaji said: "It is extremely necessary to remember that in the beginning it is wise to compare many spiritual paths and teachers, but when the real Guru and the real Teaching is found, THEN the RESTLESS SEARCHING MUST CEASE.

"The thirsty one should not keep seeking Wells, but should go to the best Well and daily drink its nectar. That is why, in India, in the beginning we seek many, until we find the right path, and the right Master, and then remain loyal to him through death and eternity, until final emancipation."

DISCIPLESHIP. From the time that James J. Lynn, foremost disciple of Paramhansa Yogananda, found his Guru, this American businessman stopped his searching and began to APPLY what his Guru taught. He continued until he achieved God-Realization.

It is of interest to know that at the time of his first meeting with Paramhansaji he has said of himself that he had lost his way and had even lost all sense of direction in regard to things of spirit essential to happiness. He added that he could not sit still, he was so nervous.

Yet that day he sat in silence with him for 6 hours, relishing the joy of God-Communion. He tells us that it happened in this way:

"After being with Paramhansaji a little while I was aware of sitting still. I was motionless; I didn't seem to be breathing. I wondered about it and looked up at Paramhansaji. A deep white LIGHT appeared, seeming to fill the entire room. I became part of that wondrous Light.

"Since that time I have been free from nervousness. I found that I had discovered something real, something immensely valuable to me. I had found entrance into a spiritual realm previously unknown to me. One knows he knows because he experiences."

This disciple, later called Rajasi by his Guru, said: "Of all the things that have come to me in life, I treasure more than all else the

Blessings that Paramhansaji has bestowed on me. This is a PRACTICAL path which brings RESULTS. It is not speculative.”

In Paramhansaji's own search in India to find a man who could lead him to God, he tells us that he finally found in Sri Yukteswar a Yogi who did not intellectualize about Cosmic Consciousness but could give it to a devotee, with a touch, when the disciple had prepared himself sufficiently to be ready to receive it. All spiritual teachers can impart truth, but only one of Divine Illumination can lead the devotee's inner consciousness to the Infinite. Very rare is such a one.

The Guru's revered and unique place in man's spiritual ascent can be compared to the sherpa mountain guide. The Sherpa is a special kind of guide, trusted and exceptional, who can take the climber to the highest peak because he has been to the Summit and knows the entire way. Both the beginning and experienced climbers are safe with him because he is familiar with every part of the ascent. Others may look to the Summit and point the direction; analyze hazards and a best approach, but only the one who has already been to the Peak KNOWS the Way.

From the lower peaks, many surmise the View above, but only one who has experienced sight of the Panoramic Vistas can speak with authority.

The disciple's own part in reaching the Summit is important. Paramhansaji refers to this in his Autobiography, writing: “A Master bestows the Divine experience of COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS when the devotee has, by meditation, strengthened his mind to a degree where the vast vistas would not overwhelm him.” It can “never be given through mere intellectual willingness or open-mindedness. Yoga practice and devotion” prepare the disciple.

When Paramhansaji received the Kriya Yoga Initiation from his Guru he has described: “A great light broke upon my being like glory of countless suns blazing together; a flood of ineffable Bliss overwhelming my heart to its inmost core.” Later, his Guru gave to him the Cosmic experience of the SAMADHI which he sought, and its liberating Omnipresence.

Paramhansaji's own nature was predominately devotional while Sri Yukteswar taught in terms of wisdom. Yet Paramhansaji found that by becoming attuned to his Guru, his devotional approach to God was increased.

Why does one REACH the goal and another linger on the way? Again this answer was given by Jesus when he asked:

“And why call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whomsoever cometh to me and heareth my sayings and doeth them, he is like the man who builds upon a foundation of rock that can not be shaken when the flood arises.”

Do we KNOW the Guru's PRECEPTS and FOLLOW them?

Do we use his meditation techniques and abide by his teachings? They lead the Way of CHRIST, and the Way of KRISHNA. These guiding Precepts bring God-Realization.

Paramhansaji said, “The most destructive shaft of delusion is unwillingness to meditate and thus prevent oneself from TUNING IN with GOD and Guru”.

Rajasi's willingness to meditate made him more fortunate than kings, our Guru said. Rajasi continued his active life in the business world but he found hours for meditation each day and night. The devotee who seeks the fulfillment of God Communion finds time for these devotional periods.

The practice of deep meditation lifts the consciousness. It develops spiritual strength for the problems and decisions in daily life, and it makes one receptive to the help of the Guru, and the Blessings of God's Grace.

Some wish the Guru to appear before them. He HAS APPEARED to devotees, but in his God-directed wisdom he chooses the hour. At such times, when the veil lifts, we know the invisibility is like the mist that dissolves in the sunlight.

We are in our Guru's sight even when our own spiritual eyes may not yet focus. It was at the time Lahiri Mahasaya first met his Guru, Babaji, that he learned his life had always been in his Guru's thought and care from early childhood.

This memorable meeting, told by Paramhansaji in his Autobiography, expresses a Guru's Divine and eternal friendship for the disciple.

Sister Gyanamata, the most spiritually advanced woman disciple of Paramhansaji wrote to her Guru that she received blessings from him that brought her a sense of “floating in a sea of Peace and Joy.”

At that time Sister Gyanamata was at the SRF Hermitage in California and he was traveling in India. His bodily presence was far

distant yet that was not a barrier for his blessings to be with the devotee who was in tune with him. This is equally true now that our Guru is beyond. He once said:

“My body is nothing. Whether I am in the body or not, still those that shall be in tune I shall stoop down from Heaven to make them realize the love of my Father.”

The Guru-Disciple Relationship is a HOLY BOND of mutual, unconditional love and loyalty that securely ANCHORS the disciple in the Infinite.

“Emancipation is the sum total of the Yogi's whole-hearted effort, the Guru-Preceptor's guidance, and the Grace of God.”



“You must SEEK HIS LOVE,” our Guru said, “for it encompasses Eternal Freedom, endless Joy, and Immortality. Day and night you must think of the Divine Beloved; then your heart will always sing.”



The Living Christ

RESURRECTION

Easter is a time for Joy and for New Beginnings, as God shows us in Nature: a Renewal. It is a time for renewed spiritual effort; for awakening the Christ within us.

“I am the Resurrection and the Life.” What tremendous power lies within these words that Jesus spoke.

JESUS was the happiness and hope, and the whole life of his disciples, and with his crucifixion all vanished in seeming death, when suddenly they saw that he was as greatly alive as he had been. From the deepest grief felt by his followers over the crucifixion of their loved Master, there came on Easter morning a great rejoicing because Jesus was seen by Mary Magdalene in a Living Form, RESURRECTED. Then later he appeared to the other disciples and spoke to them; permitted Thomas to touch him. He had come back from the other side of the Curtain: proof beyond doubt that the tomb is not the end.

Even though he did not remain long visible to their sight, they now could understand that he was still living; they could understand when he told them, “I am with you always.”

What a blessed promise! What priceless assurance! His words and message are as electrically alive today as they were 2000 years ago.

Some devotees see Jesus in true vision through love and devotion; many feel the presence of the formless Christ of Spirit. Minds and hearts find him eternal, radiant, loving and compassionate.

Jesus said: “No man can ascend to Heaven, except he come down from Heaven.” He wanted us to realize that we are already Children of our Heavenly Father. Even though we live amid material and worldly attachments, and thus may forget.

Christ was completely identified with God In and Through every Atom of Creation; one with Divine Love and Wisdom. He knew that all men must realize this expanded Consciousness. This is CHRIST CONSCIOUSNESS. When Christ said: “No man cometh unto the Father

but by me," he indicated man must know this spiritual Oneness of Christ.

There are many kinds of Resurrection. We Rise when we give up all of the negative feelings we have toward ourselves or others, for a positive and happy attitude. We Rise when we replace ego with humility; change despair into courage; and restlessness for peace; when we speak gently at times when greatly tested; when we forgive and forget resentments, hurts and sad memories, and attune ourselves to God through meditation and prayer.

As Nature can put forth new blossoms, we can begin today to bring new beauty into our lives in so many ways. We find that God, Christ and our Guru are helping us. We realize this most fully AFTER we have put forth effort of our own.

There are two ways to realize Christ in our lives: the INNER WAY and the OUTER WAY. Each has its own special importance. They are based on the Two Commandments of Christ.

In the first, to Love God, we follow the Way of MEDITATION, where His Love, sacred to each heart, may be realized fully in the sanctuary of devotion. Paramhansaji said, "Any man can receive Christ in his Consciousness by expanding it in meditation. The Omnipresent Christ Intelligence, caged in the little physical body of every man can be released from imprisonment behind the walls of material possessions and body consciousness, into its own vast Omniscience. The soul, caged in the body, can forget its confinement in the little body when it is Resurrected by right meditation into Omnipresence."

In the Second Commandment Jesus gave, to love one's neighbor, we follow the OUTER Way of Christ in BROTHERHOOD.

A story about James, the brother of Jesus, illustrates the Outer way. Often a story will serve to imprint a Precept in our mind. The following is condensed from "The Brother" by Dorothy Wilson.

James was a man who lived by the letter of the Old laws. He never approved of the way Jesus had stepped over these Laws when he saw fit, (such as traveling on the sabbath), and yet he had a deep pang that he had been unable to do anything to save his brother's life.

A young boy came from another town seeking his friend Jesus because his father was near death and sought forgiveness from him. When Zeri, the boy, was told Jesus had been crucified, he surprised James by asking, "Will you come with me in your brother's stead?" But

James refused. Zeri's father had shown many unkindnesses to the family of Jesus and James, when they had been neighbors. For this reason he did not care to go. Then the boy said, "Jesus would have gone with me." And suddenly James realized that his was something he could do for his brother! He told Zeri, "Yes, I will go with you." And he traveled on the sabbath to reach the dying man.

On the way he saw a slave with a great burden, and he carried it a way for him; he gave water to a pilgrim who was ill, and did many things he had never done before.

When he returned home later, he was met with the joyous news that Jesus was alive and he replied, "Yes, I know." They asked, "Then you have seen Mary Magdalene?" "No," he answered. "Then how did you learn this?" And he recounted slowly:

"You ask me how I know that my brother lives? I will tell you. I know he lives because HE WENT WITH ME on my journey every step of the way. When I looked into the face of my enemy whom I hated, and when I had spoken to him the words of pity and forgiveness that he asked of me, Behold! It was MY BROTHER'S FACE into which I gazed!

When I turned to help a stranger lying by the roadside, it was MY BROTHER'S VOICE I heard calling to me. When I helped a slave carry a heavy burden, the hand that I clasped was MY BROTHER'S HAND." James at last UNDERSTOOD JESUS.

How important is right action, even when difficult for us. Sometimes, as with James, the mind and heart FOLLOW in the wake of the right deed and come afterward rather than first. Right behavior can in this way Resurrect us in the Ways of Christ.

Paramhansa Yogananda has said, "We shall laugh at the dream of death when we are Resurrected in the Immortality of Christ. Christ did not die at all. He went into the Ocean of Spirit, and came back again replete with the Power of God to show that all life is Immortal."

The Life of Christ was a ministry of Love, and the reassurance and promise that Jesus gave continues to comfort the hearts of men:

"I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

THE PARABLES OF CHRIST

Paramhansa Yogananda has explained that all Divinely-inspired writings have THREE MEANINGS: the obvious outer one; a mental interpretation, and an inner spiritual one.

The Inner Spiritual Meanings which our Guru describes from the Parables of Christ in this talk are Precepts of Divine Guidance on:

Attending the Festivity of Wisdom

Increasing the Oil of Devotion

Banishing the Thief of Ignorance

Tilling the Vineyard of Self-Discipline

Opening the Gates of Intuition

Planting the Seeds of Self-Realization

THE FESTIVITY OF WISDOM

Matthew 22: 1-14. Jesus said THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN is like unto a certain King who invited many to his son's wedding, but they made excuses that they had to look after their farms or their merchandise, and they did not come.

Then he sent his servants out to the highways to call in as many as they found - and THEY CAME.

But the King found one of them did not wear a wedding garment, and could offer no reason, and the King had him bound and cast out.

Jesus then said, "Many are called but few are chosen."

Paramhansa Yogananda explained: "The Heavenly Father sends forth Servants of Divine Vibrations and Magnetism in different directions to draw seekers. But many truth seekers pay no attention even though God is here HONORING THEM with His Invitation in response to their former prayers to know Him. Thus they dishonor God's Call to attend His Festivity of Wisdom, and continue with their material occupations."

But the others, on the highways, responded to the Invitation and came to the Ceremony of Wisdom and Truth.

This Parable shows how the Kingdom of Heaven can be entered by appreciative devotees through a proper RESPONSE to the Invitation of God.

When the Divine Father came to see who had been attracted by His Invitation, He discovered a hypocrite had joined the others. He had no wedding-garment of SINCERITY. Some good qualities had brought him the invitation to be there, but he had not sustained enough spiritual interest to partake with the others.

Many seekers draw the attention of the Divine Father with His Invitation to partake of Cosmic Consciousness, but only a few are chosen to enter into this Oneness with God. Those who merit it have shown their sincerity through meditation, a spiritual life, and responsiveness to God.

THE OIL OF DEVOTION

Matthew 25: 1-13. In this Parable Jesus said: "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom."

The Kingdom of Heaven was desired by ten devotees who, in meditation, had once lit their Lamps of Inner Realization, and had gone forth to meet the Bridegroom of CHRIST CONSCIOUSNESS.

Jesus said, "And five of them were wise and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

Those who were foolish had their Lamps of Realization, but they did not have enough OIL of DEVOTION and regularity in meditation, to keep them burning indefinitely.

The wise devotees, however, kept within their hearts enough Oil of Spiritual Enthusiasm, and deep regular meditation, so that their LAMPS of WISDOM would continue to burn steadily.

Then "while the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept."

At this time the Bridegroom - the Christ Consciousness - has not yet come, and this is the WAITING PERIOD and seeming delay when the devotee does not know if he is making any spiritual progress.

"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."

Here we learn that in the middle state there is a cry. This is a spiritual VIBRATION felt within, that the Christ Consciousness is near, and one must try to lift the light of his own consciousness to meet it.

"Then all arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, "Give us of your oil for our lamps have gone out." But the wise answered, "Go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves."

The foolish ones found they lacked the Oil of Devotion and good habits of meditation, so the Light of Self-Realization would not burn. The wise ones told them that Oil of Devotion can not be transferred but only obtained where such fuel is found: in daily meditation.

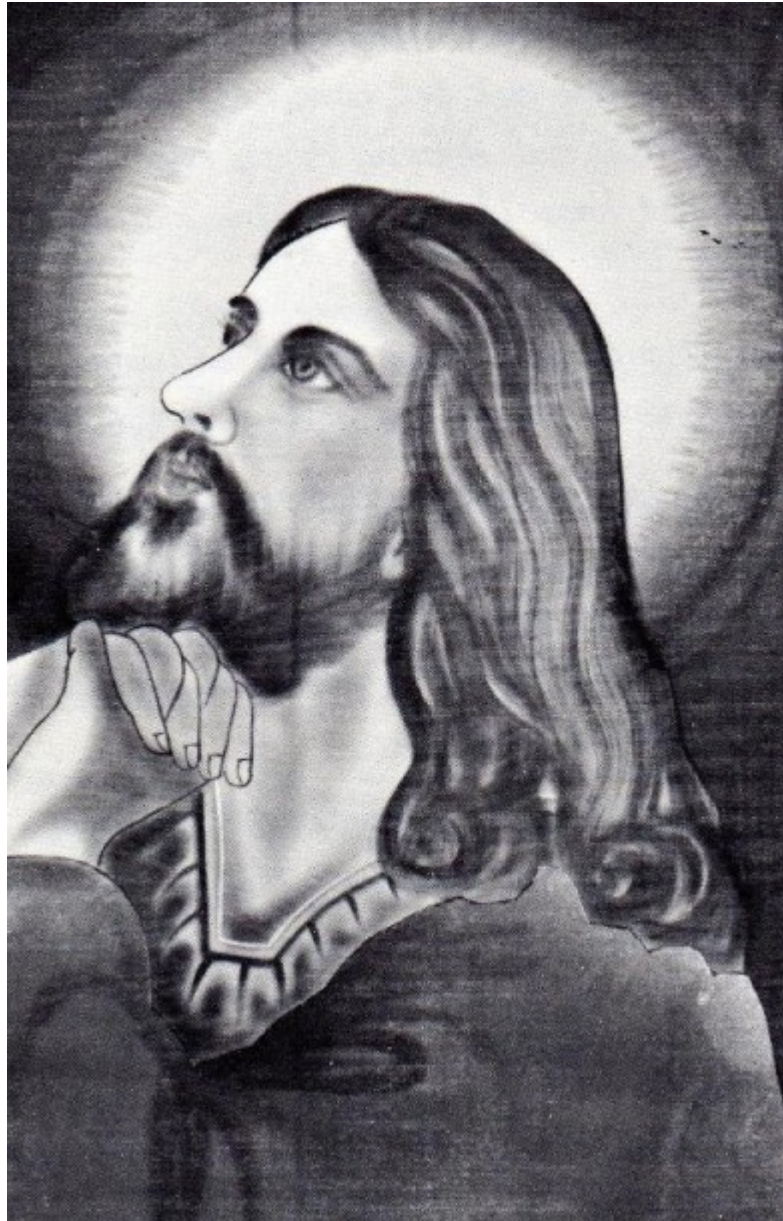
"The bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. When the other virgins

returned, saying, "Lord, open to us," he answered, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

Jesus cautioned: "WATCH therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."

The devotee should keep the Inner Consciousness and Intuition always ready for the unknown day or hour when Christ Consciousness will manifest; to draw unto that Spiritual Communion at the hour HE CHOOSES to come.

The Divine One will be found entering the heart that is lighted by the steady flame of DEVOTION.



CHRIST in Prayer

THE THIEF OF IGNORANCE

Jesus gave this Illustration of the Thief:

“And know this, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not have suffered his house to be broken through.”

“Be ye therefore READY, also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not.”

The good devotee will keep his Mental House well guarded so that the Thief of Ignorance can not come in suddenly and break through his Consciousness, stealing his spiritual qualities. He will guard them as a good man would watch so his house would be protected.

We must be aware so that we let nothing rob us of our habits of meditation, and of our good qualities. Then God will find that His devotee is ready to Receive CHRIST when he comes.

THE VINEYARD OF SELF-DISCIPLINE

Matthew 20: 1-16. "For the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is a householder which went out early in the morning to hire laborers. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day he sent them into his vineyard."

He found more men in the third hour standing idle in the market place and he promised to pay them what was right. And in the sixth hour and the ninth hour; and again in the eleventh hour he found those who had no hire.

A God-Illumined Preceptor calls all devotees to labor spiritually in the Vineyard of Self-Discipline and thus earn the WAGES of WISDOM in his fields of Divine Consciousness.

He calls all truth-seekers who stand idle.

This means those whose material possessions are NOT keeping them all-absorbed, and yet they have been unable to find God. He says, "Come, I invite you to work in my Vineyard and I will give you Cosmic Consciousness for your labor."

Later, after their labors, he instructed his Steward to pay all the workers exactly the same: those who had labored from the early part of the day as well as those who came at other hours including the 11th hour.

The first ones objected, as they had labored long for the same pay. He replied, "I give unto this last even as unto thee. Is it not lawful to do what I will with mine own?"

When he had his Steward give them pay, this signified the COSMIC LAW of CAUSE and EFFECT governing each one's rewards meted out by the JUSTICE that is not measured by human variants but by what one has earned.

Due to Spiritual Enthusiasm and Intensity of Effort, the last MERITED the same Divine Wisdom. The first may have needed a longer time in the Vineyard of Discipline, and since they received their promised wages of Realization they should be satisfied.

Thus it is that one may enter the spiritual path early and not attain Cosmic Consciousness until late in life; another may receive this same Divine Attainment sooner.

THE GATES OF INTUITION

Luke 12:35. "Let your loins be girded about and your LIGHTS BURNING, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding. Then when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

Jesus continued, "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find WATCHING: verily I say unto you, that He shall make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."

To keep your Lights Burning refers here to the LIGHT in the FOREHEAD and SPINAL CENTERS for they can Lift the Consciousness from the finite body to the Infinite, by sending the Life Force up through the Centers into Spirit.

When Cosmic Consciousness comes and knocks at the GATES of the devotee's INTUITION, it must be received with Immediate Response.

God will then serve the watchful devotee with the meat of True Wisdom and DIVINE COMMUNION.

THE SEEDS OF SELF-REALIZATION

Matthew 13: 3-9. Paramhansa Yogananda said of the loved PARABLE of the SOWER: "Little seeds are sown. Then comes the birds of the air to take them away; then some are trampled. Some people grow the seeds into young plants, water them for a little while, then forget to water them and the plants die. And some keep on watering the plant and surround it with a hedge to protect it until it grows a big trunk and becomes strong.

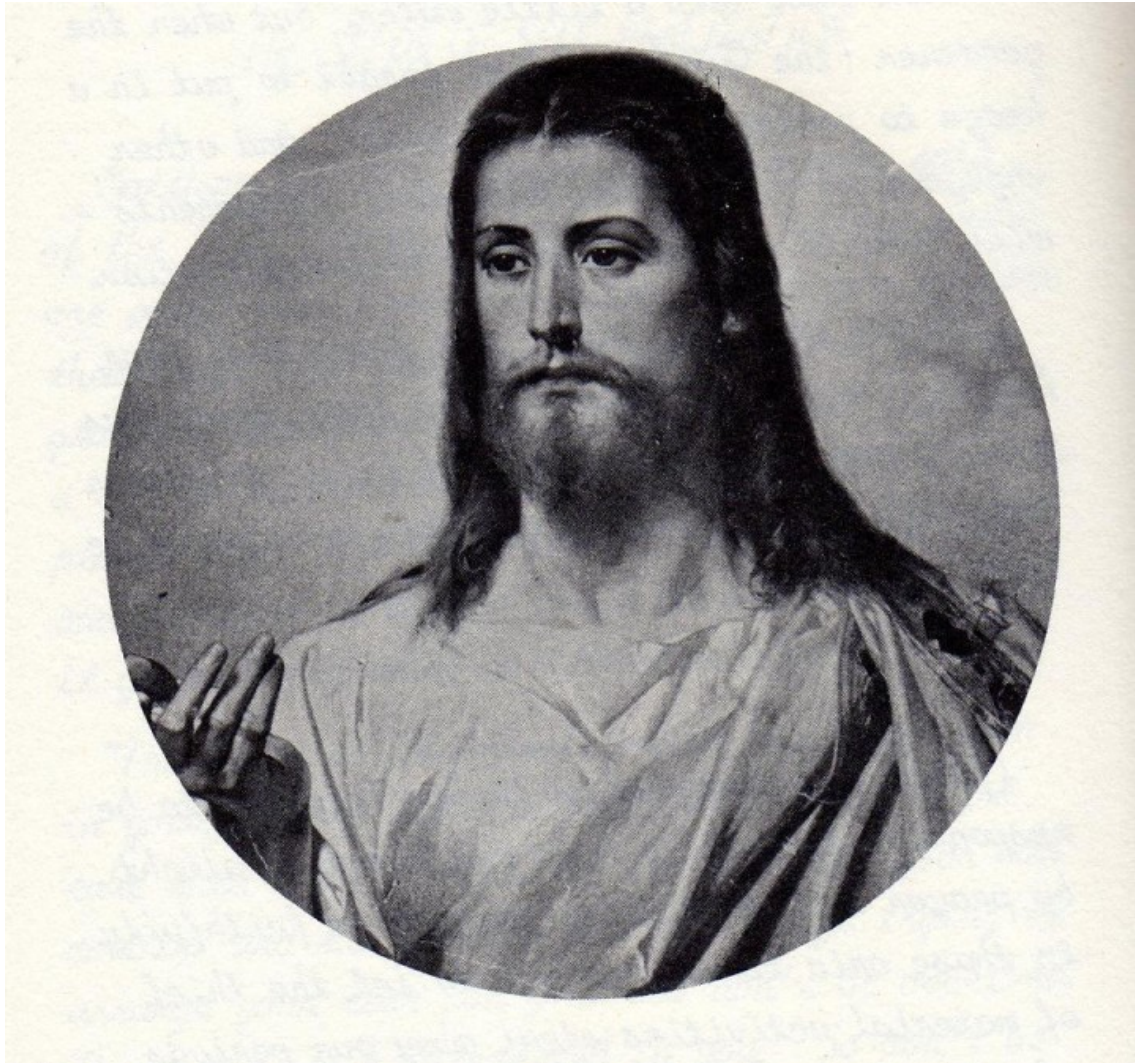
"The Seeds of Self-Realization have been sown in your garden, but the birds of the air might take them away. "Birds of the air" are you own doubts, and the friends who are always trying to arrange your time for you. But don't be deceived. The world isn't interested in you. So don't be used by the world. You waste your time and when death comes you don't know where you are going. The world never shares the effect of the habits and actions that are created in you. No one but you can answer for the effect of your habits of restlessness and indifference to God. It is up to you not to let the birds of the air take away your seeds of meditation.

"Some will keep a little water, but when the gardener (the Guru) is gone, forget to put in a hedge to protect the little plant. And other engagements, so-called important engagements, will trample on your plant of Self-Realization.

"If you remember this, your seeds will bear fruit; plant these seeds in the Super-conscious mind, plant them in the Soil of Life, and water them with daily practice and they will never be lost."

CHRIST has reminded us in his Parables to be responsive to God; to keep our devotion alight by prayer and meditation; to keep on faithfully in those arid times; and not to let the thief of material activities steal away our periods of meditation, or the Peace of our meditations.

Paramhansaji said: "As your Seeds of Self-Realization grow into a Tree that is strong and enduring, then many souls will come to bask in the shade of your Peace."



"My Peace I give unto you."

THE PEACE OF CHRIST

When Jesus told his disciples: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you," he indicated that there are 2 KINDS of PEACE:

The Peace of Christ, and another kind of peace which the World gives.

What kind of peace can the world give?

There are many things, conditions and circumstances that bring to our lives a great feeling of Contentment. We say, I am blessed with this, or that: with health, with work I like, or debts paid; or any number of things. We are Content; we are At Peace with our life; with ourselves.

What brings this to us might not bring it to our neighbor. He may know satisfaction from other things, conditions or circumstances. Yet each feels thankful to God, and at Peace with himself. This is a good kind of Contentment although this differs from the Peace of Christ. Because it is dependent upon outer conditions, we know that if circumstances change we may lose it.

Emerson referred to this, saying: "A political victory, a rise of income, the recovery of your sick, or return of your absent friend, or some other favorable event raises your spirits and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself."

Paramhansa Yogananda has clarified for us the 2 kinds of Peace so that we may seek and find the one lasting, unshakable Peace of Christ, and not mistake the one for the other.

A visitor to the Hermitage questioned Paramhansaji, asking: "Do you feel that your teaching helps people to be at peace with themselves?"

He replied: "That's right, but it is not my central teaching. It is best to be at PEACE with THE CREATOR."

Jesus exemplified this many times during his life. He did not lose this Divine quality when circumstances were the most cruel. He hoped God would remove the cross from him, yet he was at Peace whatever

God Willed. When the multitudes praised him, or when they turned upon him, he remained at Peace with the Creator.

When Paramhansaji was with Sri Yukteswar, he said he could "feel the vast Ocean of Peace his Guru had created within himself." These words, "had created within himself" tell us one should not wait for this to come as a gift.

We realize this peace through attunement to God, and when it is found our Guru said that it should be guarded from all outer influences that threaten it, and not let it escape. We know that contentment can ebb away from many causes. Many are the ways our peace can be invaded! But the Peace of Christ is a sanctuary if our consciousness can remain in this castle of serenity when invading disturbances call us to leave.

There is need in everyone to share his joys and thoughts and give or receive comfort to another in times of pain or sorrow. These blessings of love, friendship and understanding are found in the world but they are not always present. It is GOD ALONE who is ever-near; only God can fulfill all of these needs - the One Who is our eternal Father and Mother, Friend, Creator.

Because of this, the attainment of peace is interwoven with an awareness of God's Presence. It is from God that Christ received his Peace. His ministry called men to seek the One Father.

In the quiet times of the day, and in the stillness of the night the soul becomes attuned to the Creator and realizes the PEACE that is OF CHRIST.

WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT

Jesus Christ said: "The hour cometh, and now is, when true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

We worship with love and devotion but how may we also follow this Precept of Christ to worship God in Spirit?

We seldom think of Time and Space as barriers to spiritual attainment, yet the saints and sages who have experienced the Infinite in Cosmic Consciousness have described the feeling of ETERNITY wherein Time is forgotten; and OMNIPRESENCE which transcends Space.

Emerson expressed this when he wrote: "Before the Revelations of the soul, Time and Space slip away."

Paramhansa Yogananda said: "The soul can not be confined within man-made boundaries. Its nationality is Spirit; its country is Omnipresence."

He has written that the rushing of God's Spirit broke the boundaries of his soul and he was baptized with the Waters of Eternity; and his being melted and was baptized in Infinite Omnipresence.

Baptism in Eternity and Omnipresence! How may we realize this blessed baptism in Spirit? What stands in our way when we seek this holy experience?

Emerson was referring to this when he noted, "The influence of the Senses has, in most men, overpowered the mind to that degree that the WALLS of TIME and SPACE have come to look real and insurmountable."

How do Time and Space block our way when we meditate?

There is the illustration of sitting in a train when another train passes on the track beside us. It is often impossible to be sure whether our own train or the other is the one moving. If both move in the same direction at the same speed, and we keep looking into the same window opposite our own car, we will see no motion at all. Both cars

may be going 10 miles per hour, or 100, yet we will still feel as if both cars are standing still because we do not see any change, any movement, next to us. Then, when looking out of the train window, if we see an automobile on the road outside that passes the train, we feel that we are moving very slowly, and if we pass a car in a flash, we feel that we are moving at a higher speed.

These illustrations show how our Senses can confuse us, even though we must heed them in our daily 3-dimensional world. However, to go beyond this limited sphere of the 5 senses which reaffirms Time and Space, we should understand their limitations and their inability to open the door for spiritual perception.

TIME-SENSE is associated with MOTION.

The movement of the Sun divides our day and night for us into Time. Movement and change in outer matter, and within our bodies, tell us of the passing of Time from childhood onward. The changing seasons tell us of the passing of Time. Any Change affirms a Time-interval. Growth or decay indicate shorter or longer periods. The only possible way we can conceive of Time is through Motion. STOP MOTION and ALL TIME CONCEPT CEASES.

Imagine everything on earth suspended at this second - all movement stopped - the way children play "statue" and remain motionless. If also our thoughts are still, we will have no conception whether one year or a hundred years pass.

This is why the Yogí seeks stillness in mind and breath; because only then can he PENETRATE the BARRIER of TIME and experience Eternity.

Paramhansaji likened Time to a restrictive net, and said in deep meditation he "fled the NET OF TIME."

When we consider SPACE we find it appears to be illusively divisible. We measure space by the distance between things. Whether mountains are dividing a continent; or oceans dividing other continents; or objects on a table before us, we DIVIDE SPACE by DISTANCE BETWEEN OBJECTS or between ourselves and other 3-dimensional form. We count this space in inches or miles, or far or near. We think of Europe as farther away than our own downtown shopping Center. It is this way in human consciousness, but not in God-consciousness.

In order to see IN SPIRIT we must learn to see God's way.

To illustrate: we know our eyes are divided from each other by so much space, but to oneself they are equally near. We feel our right and left hand is equally near, and that both are a part of us. That is the way we all are, in God; we dwell equally close to His Infinite Being.

Our far-and-near concepts divide space; divert our sense of Omnipresence. Our Guru speaks of finding God beyond space. He prayed: "Burst open the Doors of Space, that I may see Thee behind the mists of the illusion of matter."

One who has merged his consciousness with the Creator is "free from matter-consciousness, and free from the three dimensions of Space and the fourth dimension of Time," our Preceptor wrote.

He explained that to realize this, an inner stillness is essential: "So long as even a little tremor of thought and mental restlessness are present, you cannot reach Cosmic Consciousness."

The most helpful way to turn the attention from all distractions, and eliminate mental and bodily movement, is through the Concentration Technique taught by Paramhansa Yogananda. With practice, absolute stillness of body, mind and breath can be achieved to a degree rarely possible without it.

In silence, in deep meditation, the walls of time and space melt away, and we find that the hour has come, "and now is," when we can follow the PRECEPT of CHRIST to worship the Father "IN SPIRIT."



Paramhansa Yogananda expressed love for the Creator through many relationships: "Divine Father, Mother, Friend, Beloved, God." He prayed, "May Thy Love shine forever on the sanctuary of my devotion."

PRAYER

“My soul will constantly hum, unheard by any: God! God! God!” - Paramhansa Yogananda.

Paramhansa Yogananda was a man of Prayer. His “Whispers from Eternity” are prayers of love, devotion and worship. In his book we read:

“The CARAVAN of my PRAYERS is moving toward Thee. With folded hands, bowed head, and heart laden with the myrrh of reverence, I come to Thee. Thou art ever-near with Thy never-failing Love.”

We become attuned to God through prayer. The devotee may speak words of his own; or the written thoughts of another can voice his feelings.

Jesus gave words for all to use in the beloved prayer: “Our Father, Who Art in Heaven.” We feel the love of our hearts deepen, and know a closer relationship with the Father as we pray.

The 23rd Psalm gives us spiritual strength through our assurance of being in the personal care of the Heavenly Father and in times of our deepest needs we seek, and learn as the sage of Concord wrote: “How dear, how soothing, arises the idea of God, peopling the lonely place, effacing the scars of our mistakes and disappointments.” Thus, in the lonely place we find Him, and His Touch can efface the sorrow and pain we have confided to Him.

Prayer was the basis of the spiritual growth of Mahatma Gandhi. He said, “I have found people who envy my peace. That peace comes from prayer.”

When Gandhi was a young man he described himself as overly full of vanities, uncertainties and fears; a college youth who gave the greatest importance to clothes and fashion. It was years later that he met statesmen, wearing only a loin cloth; not in affectation but because others, in their poverty, could not clothe themselves.

How did he change from his fears, to a man of courage; from his uncertainties to complete assurance regarding his decisions? He answered:

"I am a firm believer in PRAYER. Of all things it is the most important. It is THE SUREST STAFF on which to lean."

When asked why he had such profound belief in the virtues and efficacy of prayer, Gandhi replied, *"I know myself fairly well. By nature I am timid; anything but a brave man. I should never have been able to face certain crises with courage or endure them with fortitude had it not been for prayer. The most dramatic example, I remember occurred many years ago in South Africa."*

Gandhi then described how he arrived there by boat, going as an attorney to oppose a law directed against the Indians there. He was advised to stay on board for his physical safety. The crowd of men had gathered on shore with the announced intention of lynching him. Gandhi continued, saying: *"I went ashore, nevertheless. I was stoned and kicked and beaten, but I prayed for courage to face the mob and courage came and did not fail me."*

How amazing was this man whose prayer was not "God protect me" but rather, "God give me courage." He saw his path of duty and only asked for courage, even knowing he might face death within that hour.

He advised all who were in confusion or weakness with problems they could not solve to turn to prayer for its concrete and PRACTICAL VALUE. It can be without the use of any words, he said:

"I am indifferent to the form. It is better in prayer to have a heart without words, than words without a heart."

Gandhi has emphasized Silence as essential to prayer, saying that in silence the still, small voice will point out the right answer; the right answer when there is conflict in duty. He said, *"One will find the spiritual value of silence after practicing it for a time. Silence must be more than closed lips."*

His belief in prayer depended upon a wholehearted belief in the existence of Divinity without any intellectual exceptions. It had nothing to do with anyone's religion or their interpretation of belief. When a Buddhist said some men could do without prayer for Buddha never prayed: he meditated, Gandhi replied, *"The name does not matter, nor does the form. Buddha's was a spiritual meditation, and*

what is that but prayer? You may call it meditation if you will. What is important is the reaching out to the Eternal.”

“Prayer is the Key of the morning, and the Bolt of the evening.” These beautiful words of the Mahatma suggest: The Key to unlock the door to God's Presence and His Guidance and Strength before our day begins, or at any time. And the Bolt to lock within our consciousness the sweetness of God's Love.

Prayer can also unlock God's Storehouse of Wisdom. We have an example of this in the life of George Washington Carver. He found answers were given to him by God that were not contained in textbooks.

This spiritual man used his knowledge in the bettering of the working opportunities for the people in the South through his discoveries of specific uses of products grown there. He found over 300 uses for the peanut; over 100 for the sweet potato. He tells how this came:

“No books ever go into my laboratory. The thing I am to do and the way of doing it comes to me. I never have to grope for methods. The method is revealed the moment I am inspired to create something new. Without God to draw aside the curtain I would be helpless. If we put our hand in His, God will reveal things to us He has never revealed before.”

This guiding Precept was given in another century and country by Mohammed as the Koran reminds us, “Arise in the midst of the night and commune with thy God... things will be revealed to thee thou didst not know before and thy path in life will be made smooth.”

Sometimes there is a feeling that God has not heard our prayer. Our Guru said that one of the reasons for this is because our mind-microphone is broken by restlessness. Emotional and mental disturbances ruffle our clear perceptions and we do not receive God's Response to us. “Pray until you feel an ever-increasing joy of contact with God. Then is the time to listen and to feel His Guidance.”

“He that planted the ear, shall He not hear?” the Psalmist has asked. “He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall He not know?”

Sri Yukteswar spoke of God's awareness to us when we pray, assuring one, “Seldom do men realize HOW OFTEN God heeds their prayers. The Lord Responds to all. He is not partial to a few, but listens

to everyone who approaches him trustingly. His Children should have implicit faith in the Loving-Kindness of their Omnipresent Father."



*SRI YUKTESWAR - Revered Preceptor
of Paramhansa Yogananda.*

IMMORTALITY

“I come not to entertain you with worldly festivities but to arouse your sleeping memory of Immortality.” - Paramhansa Yogananda

Awareness of ourselves as Immortal may be a belief one accepts, but this does not always include complete inner assurance, which is an important need of the soul.

A devotee on the spiritual path had a terminal illness and a short while before going on she said that she had been having a very frustrating dream. She was about to get on board a ship to sail on beyond, when it went on without her, leaving her there on the pier, and she knew she would have to wait longer. After telling this, she said in her smiling way, “I keep wondering when I will get my passport!”

She was AWARE of herself as Spirit. It was only her body that was 90 years old. She had separated herself from the body, as when she sometimes said, “I get awfully tired of this old lady I live with!” But a sense of joy remained within her through the difficult months, and uplifted everyone who knew her.

It is difficult for us, within our hearts, to separate the soul of a dearly-loved one, from the body in which the spirit resides. Yet the body has only been a temporary dwelling place.

When the final curtain comes down upon a beautiful drama we have been so engrossed in it that it is not always easy to remember that the loved player who is out of our sight is still alive and active BACKSTAGE where the GREAT DIRECTOR is looking after his welfare.

In writing words of consolation, Paramhansaji told bereaved parents: “The temple of your son belonged to God; He gave it to love and serve, but when it was His Will, he took away what already belonged to Him. This life is a novel and God is the Writer. Each page is full of contradictions until the answer is revealed in the last chapter. So please do not question this, but go on with limitless fortitude, until

you are completely in the Divine Spirit. Remain anchored in the Infinite, which is changeless, and He will satisfy all the demands of your heart.”

Just as important as fearlessness of the Great Adventure Death, is the courage to live.

Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, at a near-death experience, said, “It dawned on me in a flash that it is the easiest thing in the world to die; the hardest is to live. I had work to do; I had others to serve. I began to fight.”

After-life is NOT our goal; our goal is to Lift our Consciousness so that on this side or Beyond, we know ourselves as Immortal Soul.

Soul is of the same essence as Spirit except that it has been separated IN OUR CONSCIOUSNESS when we acquired individual Form. It is often forgotten while concentrating on the container!

Ocean water inside a container can merge with the ocean if the cork is removed. The Cork of Ignorance keeps us confined when the Self thinks of itself as the body, with specific form, nationality, possessions, name and address and all connected with life on earth, and is COMPLETELY IDENTIFIED with its role in the drama of life. Soul becomes limited by identity with these encasements that surround it.

Paramhansa Yogananda outlined 3 BONDAGES that have CONFINED the soul. The first: Attachment to Possessions. He said: “We own nothing. We have bartered a Kingdom for a little piece of earth and a few perishable pieces of furniture. Our Consciousness has become lodged in our possessions. It is all right to possess if we can use things without being attached to them. There must be conviction that you do not want things; you want God. As you grow in God you have that Divine Assurance. You must think: God has given everything to me. And share with others.

“The second bondage that we have to outgrow is the social and family one. To think “this” is my family, and all the rest of the world are strangers, is delusion. All peoples in the universe must someday know that you cannot absorb yourself in one small family. Nature will stop you. Nature grows that love in us, then takes them away. Why do people reincarnate? That they will come to know and feel that love, that same love, in different families, in many families. When we reincarnate many times we begin to recognize people, and know.

“Attachment draws a circle around the family and excludes the whole world. Family attachment of that kind is wrong. It produces sorrow and it prevents expansion. Those you are given are God's Children. When you part, you should say: I love them dearly, and wherever they are sent I will still be there because I love them. My love will go everywhere they go.

“Love is greater than attachment. Love is undying, but attachment dies with the death of the body. Invest in that love in your heart that is open for all - not limited to one family, but is the same for all. That is Divine Love.

“The third attachment is for the physical self. No matter what you may do the body reminds you of itself. How comfortable the chair; how nice the flattering words. This consciousness of bones and flesh is a delusion. Don't think of yourself in terms of body. Don't be proud of the eyes and form. Behind this dream body you are much more beautiful. Why not see the imperishable Soul inside; the Life behind the body; that Consciousness that is YOU.”

Sri Yukteswar said, “Man IS a soul and HAS a body, and needs to properly place his sense of IDENTITY.”

Krishna reminded us: “This, the Indweller in the bodies of all is ever indestructible. Weapons can not cut; fire can not burn; water can not wet; wind can not dry. The Self is Eternal.”

In meditation this is realized. Our Guru has said, “Fear of death is due to an attachment to the physical wave of the body, just as the bird hesitates to leave the open cage. Its confinement in the cage has made it forgetful of the joy of free Flights in the Open Skies.”

Rudyard Kipling described this joy of soul-flight in Cosmic Skies in his book “Kim.” With wonderful perception he tells about an Abbot of a Lamasery who sought Enlightenment and after a lifetime of seeking, it came to him! He passed beyond this earth into realms of Spirit. Then at that sublime moment he remembered his beloved friend and disciple, Kim. He could not go on to remain in that Bliss! Not yet! He must return. He comes back, and is now sitting beside Kim, telling him:

“When we came out of the hills I was troubled for thee, and for other matters which I held in my heart. The boat of my soul lacked direction. I could not see into the Cause of things, so I took no food; I drank no water; still I saw not the Way. So I removed myself and sat in

meditation two days and two nights, abstracting my mind, inbreathing and outbreathing in the required manner. Upon the second night, so great was my reward, the wise soul loosed itself from the silly body and went free. This I have never before attained, though I have stood on the threshold of it. Consider, for it is a marvel!

“My soul went FREE and wheeling like an eagle, saw indeed that there was no Lama nor any other soul. As a drop falls into water, so my soul drew near to the GREAT SOUL which is beyond all things. At that point I saw all places from the hills to the sea. I saw every camp and village where we have ever rested. I saw them at one time and in one place, for they were WITHIN my soul.

“By this time I knew that the soul had passed beyond the ILLUSION of TIME and SPACE and of THINGS. By this I knew that I was FREE!

“I saw thee lying on thy cot, and I saw thee falling down the hill, at one time and in one place - in my soul, which as I say, had Touched the great Soul. And I saw the body of this Lama lying down, and one knelt shouting in its ear.

“And then my soul was ALL ALONE. And I saw nothing. For I WAS ALL THINGS, having reached the Great Soul. And I meditated a thousand, thousand years, passionless, well aware of the Cause of All Things.

“And then a voice cried: “What shall come to the boy if thou art dead?” And I was shaken back and forth in myself with pity for thee. I said, “I will return to my chela, lest he miss the Way.”

“Upon this, my soul, which is the soul of the Lama, withdrew itself from the Great Soul, with strivings, and yearnings and wrenchings and of agonies not to be told.

“As the egg from the fish; the fish from the water; as the water from the clouds; as the clouds from the thick air; so put forth and leaped out and drew away, the soul of the Lama from the Great Soul.

“I have wrenched my soul back from the threshold of FREEDOM to free thee as I am free.” The Lama crossed his hands on his lap and smile as a man may who has won Salvation for himself and his beloved.

This moving account of the Lama's experience tells of the Samadhi bliss state where the soul is withdrawn into the Infinite Beyond Creation.

Avatars also engage actively IN Creation yet remain in this Divine Consciousness, which Sri Yukteswar described, "conscientiously engaging in earthly work yet immersed in an inward Beatitude," and exemplified in Paramhansaji's life. "In the bower of Infinitude he had Eternal Communion with the Beloved of the Universe."

The Master spoke to disciples, telling them:

"We are moving in the Ocean of Life, all heading for the Shore of God. The Great Fisherman gets some good fish, but those who are not watchful get caught in the nets of delusion. What really matters is that we get to the Shores of God. Nothing will prevent us if we have made up our minds to go. Your work is not more important than God because when death comes all work ceases instantly. Some day you are going to wake up and feel that you have wasted your time. Instead, when everybody is sleeping, remain watchful with a burning zeal in your heart. Zeal is very important. Don't go to sleep at night until your heart becomes saturated with devotion for God. Tell God: Night and day the door of my heart I keep open for Thee. Then the Divine will come. When you feel that Joy just for one second you will never want anything else."

TRANSITION

The veil of death is a very tangible barrier. One of the greatest mysteries that exists for us, and for all mankind, is what transpires when we leave the body-cloak and go on.

“A man has Changed his Climate” is the way some American Indians describe this journey. It was just before transition that Edison glimpsed the realm beyond, and he commented: “It is very beautiful over there.”

Colonel David Marcus has compared one who has gone on, to a ship sailing in the distance. “Gone! Gone where? Gone from my sight, that is all. She is just as able to bear her living cargo as she ever was. Her diminished size is in me, not in her.”

Paramhansa Yogananda imparted truths that give us knowledge of the fabric of our being and these bring to us an understanding of what happens at the time of Transition.

In the building of a house the architect has the THOUGHT: an IDEA of the house. Next he gives it FORM in a Blueprint, so that his idea becomes visible. Then he uses various materials: wood, stone, plaster, glass, and he builds the house which resembles his original Idea and the Blueprint. It now becomes a dwelling place.

So it was when God created us. God thought of us in His Consciousness, and thus a part of God entered into His Idea, which formed what we call a CAUSAL IDEA BODY.

When a part of God's Consciousness resided in His Idea Form, it was like a portion of the Ocean Water being put in a CONTAINER. It is the same water as the Vast Ocean, but nevertheless it has become individual. The God-Consciousness within the Causal Body, which is now individualized, we call SOUL.

Thus it is evident that all souls are of the same Essence as God, and therefore capable of re-inheriting their lost estate of spiritual Oneness with God.

God next gave this Idea more definite expression by condensing his Thought Forces into a fine Vibratory Form called the ASTRAL BODY. This ENCASED the CAUSAL one.

Soul functions through the Astral Body made up of component parts including thought, feeling, and pranic energy. God has endowed this energy with Intelligence within itself to empower cells to form a physical body by utilizing food, sunshine, air and water for its growth. And thus, through God, the soul received a third body: a PHYSICAL one.

This material Body is composed of chemical elements equipped to function in this material world. With sensory nerves of feeling, and motor nerves of action, it uses the astral component of prana for its vital force, in a way comparable to the electric current in house-wiring, which activates appliances for their manifold functions.

Our CAUSAL and ASTRAL Forms are tied to the PHYSICAL BODY as the Lining and Inter-lining are each a part of an Overcoat. Each made separately but functioning together.

Physical death is the severing of the many threads which have held the Coat to the Lining and Inter-lining.

The Astral Form survives at the shedding of the Physical one. We don't enter into, or acquire an Astral Body. We have one. We have used it during our lifetime. As the coat-lining has been a part of the coat, although not outwardly visible.

What does actually transpire when there is a separation from the physical form?

It is in the brain and 6 plexuses that the 3 bodies are tied together. Paramhansaji has explained that at such a time, "Every soul hears the Cosmic Vibration of Om as the Electrical Astral Body withdraws from the Spinal Centers.

"The ordinary man, during death, feels every part of his body going to sleep but he can't do anything about it. He can see the body, or recall it, but he can't create any motion in it, as when your leg goes to sleep. You may see it but cannot feel it as belonging to you. First to go, of our 5 senses, is Touch; then Vision, then Taste, and Smell. Hearing is the last to leave.

"You shake off the physical body but you are still yourself. The astral form is the exact counterpart of the last physical form; usually the appearance the person possessed in youth."

Sri Yukteswar said, "Friends of other lives easily recognize each other in the astral world and rejoice at the indestructibility of love - often doubted at the time of the sad, delusive partings of earthly life."

Transition is experienced differently depending upon the individual: his state of realization and mode of living on earth. Paramhansaji said, "The good, hard-working man goes to sleep for a short while, to wake up in some other region of life here on earth. The man who neglects his duties in life often has nightmares, or terrible dreams, chaos and darkness. Moral man has delightful dreams. The wise man finds the Astral world a better place than this world. There are gross places and finer places. Wicked men can not go into the vibrations of saints. Those who are calm do not like to associate with those who make noise all the time."

Once when Paramhansaji stepped outdoors on a veranda with some disciples, and the evening was dark and foggy, someone remarked how gloomy and cold it was. Our Preceptor said: "This is what death is like to the worldly man. He steps from this world into what seems like a heavy mist. Things are not clear to him and he feels afraid; he feels lost. But the spiritual man who is attuned to God goes consciously into His Light."

"There is such beauty in the other world! I have many times experienced death. We must attain the state of Conscious Samadhi while IN the Body to have the Freedom to remain in the Astral realm if we so wish. We are only visitors if at death our strong desires draw us back to earth."

"When death comes to the ordinary man, suffocation ensues, but the Yogi becomes suffused with ecstasy." This is because the Yogi has experienced the breathless state in meditation.

If leaving the body helped one to realize the Bliss of God, then all who have gone beyond would be God-Realized automatically, but Paramhansaji said that we will wake up just the same person when we go on. We have to make our spiritual effort now.

"The various events in life show you that this is not your place where you can make your permanent lodging," our Guru has said. Lahiri Mahasaya told devotees: "Reflect that some day you will suddenly have to leave everything in this world, so make the acquaintance of God now."

Paramhansaji has spoken of Transition in this way: "Births and deaths are only the rising and falling of the waves on the surface of the Ocean of God. When a Wave rises from the bosom of the Ocean, it is born; but when the Wave sinks down into the Ocean, it is not dead; it has simply gone back to the Ocean depths - from whence it came."

SAINTLINESS

The holy influence of a Saint was described by Paramhansa Yogananda following a visit to the home of a revered teacher. He tells us, "Like a peaceful flood, he swept away the mental debris of his listeners, floating them Godward."

When a man brings God into his Consciousness he is like the leaven in bread which lifts the whole. His influence is a blessing upon all.

There have been saints through the centuries: some known; others unheard of. Some have lived in seclusion; others have dwelt in the midst of people and activity. Each has his own individual uniqueness. They are not plaster figures residing in a niche. A few have known mystical rapture; all have felt the Presence of God in their lives.

Paramhansaji described a Saint to be "like a diamond which reflects God's Light. Other mentalities are like the charcoal which will some day be a diamond but does not reflect much of God's sunlight yet, even though just as much shines upon it."

"Some think a Saint should suffer all of the time, and others think he should have a perfect body," he said. "But Saints manifest what GOD WILLS. They don't conform to public opinion!" They are able to be instruments of God's Will because they have forsaken their own egos. Attuned to God, they serve in the way He directs.

When we see Divine qualities expressed in the lives of men and women we are deeply moved. Precepts of men of spiritual wisdom help to influence people to express these attributes.

Ramakrishna advised a devotee who sought to reform others with invectives, "Let it be said of you: he did not humble us with criticisms; he heightened us with God." The man understood. "Ah, only God in us can bring out the God that is in others!" The Sage approved: "Real improvements are wrought by blessings. BE so that they will say: he dwelt among us like a tiger of truth."

By word and example, Paramhansaji taught that kindness shown with courtesy sweetens life in our daily relationships. To express this with loved ones and with all, he said, "Keep your words kind and use not only the mind but the heart."

It has been said of Abraham Lincoln that kindness was the dominating facet of his character. He showed the divine qualities of compassion, tenderness and brotherhood for those on Both sides of the great conflict of war that tore across our country; and he possessed complete humbleness. Paramhansaji has said:

"HUMBLENESS is the INNER COSTUME of SAINTS."

Men and women of spiritual stature, like glowing embers, radiate warmth: serving and blessing others in varied ways. Of the many, to name a few:

George Washington Carver was a saintly man who used his scientific knowledge to better the lives of people. They were able to find work because of his valuable discoveries. His gentleness, born of inner stature, his forgiveness and humbleness made him one of the most endearing of men.

Albert Schweitzer chose to relieve misery in an obscure location in Africa, serving as a Doctor. He believed and followed a Precept for Holiness which he called: "REVERENCE FOR LIFE."

When we have Reverence for Life, we know it is for GOD in man; and for GOD in all living things. To see nothing apart from God, and treat all that lives with reverence, means that what is pain for another has become our own pain, whether in man, or in any living creature. A Divine compassion.

Saintly hearts feel identity and oneness with all; a true empathy. "When one applies to everyone the same standard as he judges for himself, of pleasure and pain," Krishna said, "that Yogi is regarded as the highest."

Mahatma Gandhi led his country to freedom by non-violence. This unassuming statesman-lawyer was a man of simplicity. His stature, a thing of spirit, towered over the body confines, as may be glimpsed in this incident. One day he was called at the home of Prime Minister Nehru. Nehru's little sister drew near him saying, "You know I thought you would be very tall and strong, and that your eyes would flash fire." He laughed gleefully and said to her, "I must be very disappointing!"

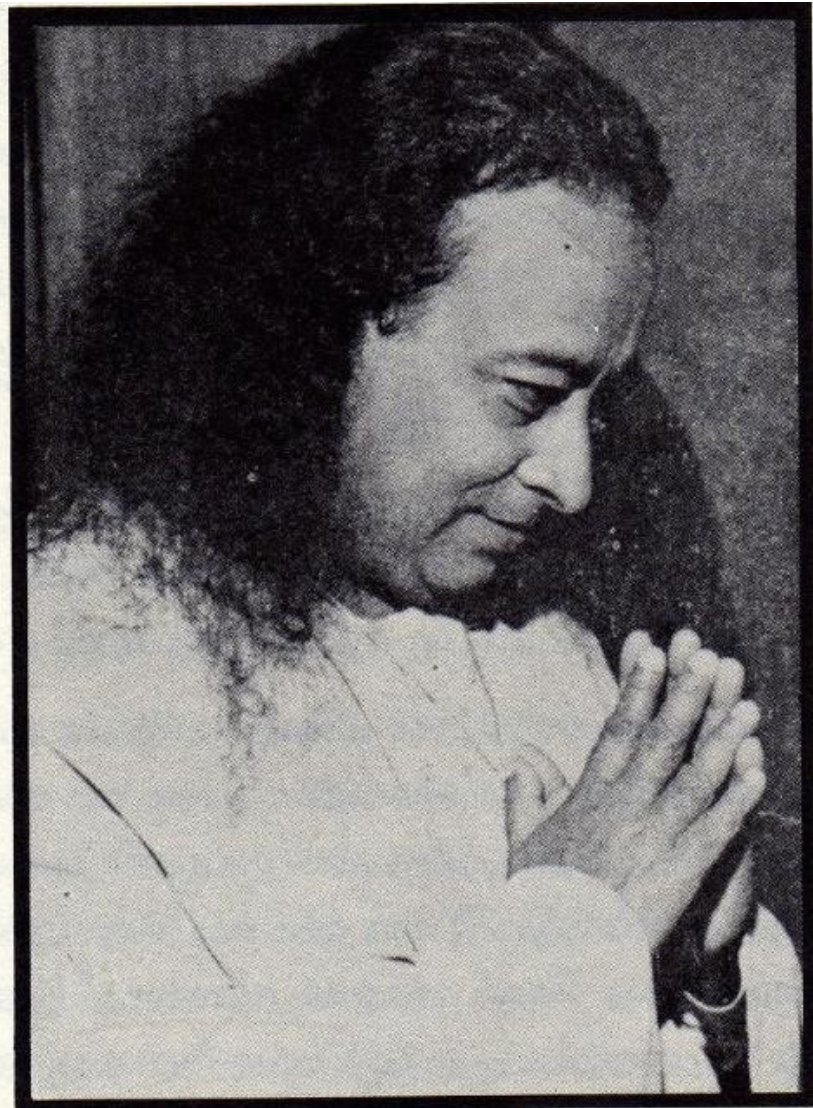
Ralph Waldo Emerson conveyed Spiritual Laws in his Essays. In them the devotee finds Precepts of ancient Wisdom known to the Sages.

Leo Baeck, great scholar and religious leader shared the plight of his people through years of tragic suffering in his country. He was offered safe haven in America, but he refused to leave. At risk of his life he gave lectures to those in the death camp where so many were to die, giving them comfort and courage. He served as a "horse" to draw the garbage, yet he reminisced that he had some fine philosophical discussions at that time, because the "other horse" was a renowned philosopher! Later he persuaded the liberated men not to do acts of revenge. He had lost his brothers and four sisters. He taught a living faith in God: to fill the mind with grandeur and forgiveness.

Such men seek a better life for man; each has served to make it better: a physician who loved CHRIST, a Rabbi who was devoted to MOSES, a lawyer who was a follower of KRISHNA; and the many others. Saintliness is not confined to any particular faith, or way of service, country or profession.

Wherever we turn in life, or in the history of man, we find saintliness. Our 17th president, Ulysses Grant, faced trials, poverty and cancer. The John Hancock Insurance Company has written: "His life is a story which should hearten every American when the way is hard and the night is long. He showed us the glory of Quiet Courage."

In our live we know people, often very near and dear ones, who emit the fragrant incense of their courage, goodness, selflessness, and the many ways by which God is seen in human conduct.



*Blessings with pranam greeting.
Paramhansa Yogananda's life
exemplified the qualities of
saint and sage.*

RENUNCIATION

Is renunciation necessary on the spiritual path? Must we renounce to find God?

Many people wonder: "What must I give up if I follow a truly spiritual life? In "The Hound of Heaven" Francis Thompson wrote, "I was sore adread lest having Him, I must have nought beside."

Can we possess our earthly treasures and still find God? What did Jesus mean when he said: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven?"

Have no rich men realized God? If poverty makes Saints, beggars would all be holy. But as this is not so, Jesus meant something else.

There are many kinds of renunciation. There was a boy from a ranch who entered a department store for the first time. After looking around he remarked he never before had seen "so many thing he could live without!"

It recalls Thoreau's comment: "Man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to let alone." Should we, then, renounce everything as Gandhi did? Or St. Francis, or Buddha? But men of worldly possessions have also realized God. What is the answer?

The story of a Holy Guru who was also a King gives understanding to this subject. King Janaka and a new disciple were discussing God when a fire blazed in the kingdom. As the flames drew closer the disciple began to feel concerned for his few books. His mind was not fully occupied with the words about God that his Guru was saying. Then he observed that the King, his Preceptor, was not concerned over loss of his kingdom. The disciple had previously been critical of the King for the wealth surrounding him, yet now he knew that he was more attached to his books than the King for all of his possessions.

The King's treasure was in his love for the Infinite. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be, also," Jesus reminded us.

We know that everything in the world is just loaned to us for a little while. Even so, how may we be sure that we have placed God first on the altar of our heart?

An answer is given in the Bhagavad-Gita when Krishna tells us, "Thinking of objects, attachment to them is formed." Then, reading further we are told: "Occupy thy mind with Me, then thou shalt reach Myself." Thus it follows, in this wise counsel, that if we think of God, then ATTACHMENT TO GOD is formed. It is where we place our attention. Do we plan our lives so that we spend time in thought of God?

Our Guru's advice to some disciples is meaningful to all devotees regarding the ACTIVITIES that fill All of one's Time. He said to be careful of too many distractions: of always seeking diversion. "Has going places brought you contact with the Infinite?" he asked. Of material things: "Fulfill your needs but simplify your wants."

The householder who seeks God has special need to make CHOICES each day to arrange time for meditation. Many of the Activities of the world seem imposed upon us. But we can not let them monopolize our life. Our Preceptor said:

"If you allow Other Interests to TAKE PRECEDENT in your life, they form a sort of crust over the soul that prevents you from realizing God. Right action and meditation will gradually dissolve that crust until you can communicate with God."

Celia Caroline Cole once wrote that there is a Star in the Well of every heart that indicates what we are following at this time. She said that there is room for only one Star at a time to shine brightly there, and we may be surprised when we look! We may wish to change it! Have we made GOD the POLESTAR of our lives?

Inner renunciation is assured when the devotee's thought of God grows until God becomes the Star in the Well of his heart.

Lahiri Mahasaya was one of the great examples of a householder who achieved Illumination. This came through Kriya Yoga practice, and the Blessings of his Guru, Babaji, who assured him, "The highest Yogic attainments are not barred to the family man." Thus he encouraged men and women, in the world as well as in hermitages, to strive until they reach the Goal.

The holy Avatar told his disciple Lahiri Mahasaya that he would continue on with his office duties, and commented: "From your

balanced life people will understand that Liberation is dependent upon Inner rather than outer Renunciations."

Paramhansa Yogananda said: "Make your HEART a HERMITAGE and your Robe the Love of God."

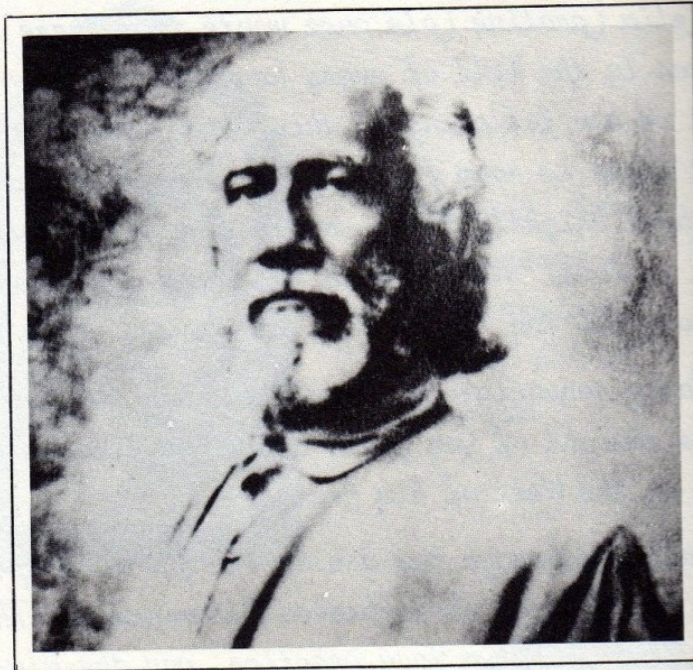


*Mahavatar Babaji
Title means =
great avatar,
Guru of Lahiri
Mahasaya.*

*Lahiri Mahasaya
Mahasaya means =
great master,
Guru of Sri Yuk-
teswar and of the
parents of Param-
hansa Yogananda.*

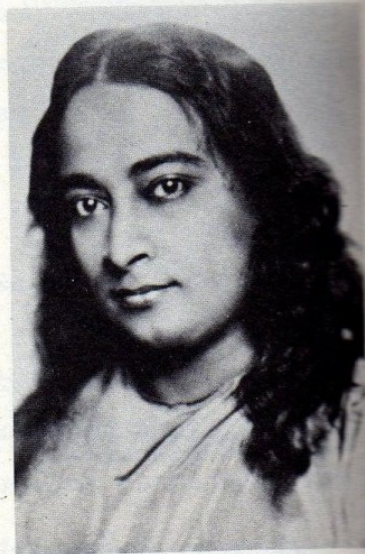


*Titles are a designation of respect. Our Guru
said all God-Realized Masters are "One in God."*



*Sri Yukteswar Guru of
Paramhansa Yogananda.
He taught a scientific
approach to God and the
basic unity between the
Bible and Bhagavad-Gita.*

*Paramhansa Yogananda
brought methods of Yoga
to the West.*



*Guru and Param-Guru were both Renunciates of the
ancient monastic Swami Order of Shankaracharya.*

YOGA

YOGA signifies EVENNESS OF MIND.

If man does not want to be tossed about continually like a little boat on the waves of the ocean, buffeted according to outer circumstances, then he must achieve this Evenness of Mind.

Yoga is found in the oldest of the four Vedas. It was first used in the sense of yoking or harnessing of horses - the control of wild or untamed horses, and later applied to man's own control of the 5 senses and restless thoughts. Yoga, therefore, is a Science of Control, or Mastery.

YOGA means UNION - of the individual Soul with the Infinite.

Paramhansa Yogananda has said: "Like any other science, Yoga is applicable to people of every clime and time. Yoga is a method for restraining the natural turbulence of thoughts, which otherwise impartially prevent all men of all lands from glimpsing their true nature of Spirit. As long as man possess a mind with its restless thoughts, so long will there be a universal need for Yoga, or control."

Raja Yoga is the most profound of the ways of Yoga. Our Guru's Precepts include the Yoga of devotion, activity and wisdom but primarily are based upon the application of Raja Yoga. The essential techniques that he has given lead one the most direct way to God-Realization.

Yoga instruction, anciently imparted by Krishna to his disciple Arjuna gives a balance in life, placing emphasis upon both the active performance of duty, and meditation. Man learns to withdraw, but does not remain withdrawn.

In the absolute withdrawal from all but God, in Emerson's words, "The soul gives itself, alone, original and pure, to the Lonely, Original and Pure, Who on that condition gladly inhabits it."

For the One to inhabit the soul, Krishna enjoined "whole-souled devotion," as Christ gave in his first commandment. "Deepen your love for God; have devotion above all," our Guru said. To know God, the devotee seeks to give all of his heart, mind and soul. The ways of Yoga help one achieve that Union.

CONCENTRATION

Concentration is an age-old problem. Hundreds of years B.C. Arjuna was asking Krishna about it. He declared:

“The mind, O Krishna, is restless, turbulent, strong and unyielding; I regard it quite as hard to control as that of the wind.”

KRISHNA, the Avatar of ancient India, replied: “Without doubt the mind is restless and difficult to control, but through practice may be governed.”

Paramhansa Yogananda said, “Most attempts at silence or prayer help to still many bodily movements but the thoughts go on with their dance of restlessness.”

The heart longs to think solely of God but we find that distractions interfere, and we need to learn HOW to prepare the mind for meditation and prayer - not only surface stillness but true inner silence.

An ancient Hindu illustration portrays for us the difference between concentration as we know it, and concentration as practiced by the YOGI.

Picture before us a CARRIAGE drawn by 5 HORSES with a DRIVER holding the reins. The OWNER is inside the carriage. Think of this as symbolizing:

The Carriage = our BODY

The 5 Horses = our 5 SENSES

The Driver = our MIND

The Owner = our SOUL

Unless the owner gives directions, and is in complete command, the horses follow their separate desires and appetites along the road. The driver must guess the way, or let them pull wherever distractions lead them. The owner is joggled constantly, reaching no special destination.

This compares with the way the Senses pull at the reins of the Mind, and keep it restless, and keep the Body-carriage IN CONSTANT MOVEMENT. It is the Soul (Self) that is affected by this.

When the driver has good control of the reins and keeps the horses going along the right road that has been chosen by the owner; not distracted by other roads, or diverted even momentarily by anything, then we can compare this to a state of concentration. All of the senses and the mind are cooperating, moving smoothly along the road in the direction chosen. As when concentrating on a car, we may think of the motor, upholstery, body, accessories, price, color. The sounds and motion around us does not distract us; our body is in movement; we are using the senses: seeing, touching, hearing and speaking; thought is upon one or several subjects yet we are concentrated.

If, however, the driver is able to quiet the horses until they STAND STILL, then the carriage is AUTOMATICALLY STILLED. Then, instead of the owner being forced to remain in constant motion, he is able to commune with God in peace, within the stilled vehicle, undisturbed by movement.

This is the difference between concentration as we know it, and the state of concentration which the Yogi seeks. In the one we concentrate with many thoughts. In YOGA we seek to STOP the influx of ALL THOUGHTS, for the devotee to have deep, undisturbed meditation.

Our Guru told us: "One of the reasons why people get so little result in their seeking is because only in stillness is the soul bathed in that PROFOUND PEACE."

The scientific Method of Concentration taught by Paramhansaji enables one to achieve the relaxed state essential for interiorization of consciousness. It is reached through the Breath way since the breath, mind and prana are indissolubly connected. Breath is never held. It becomes quiet through this effective exercise.

Inhalation brings needed oxygen for body repair and maintenance; exhalation removes carbon dioxide from the lungs formed by waste in the body in movement, thought and emotion. When the breath increases, it shows greater need for oxygen; more waste. When breath slows of itself it indicates less waste and a correspondingly lesser need for breath. The concentration technique*

*The relationship between breath and activity in pigeons show they take 450 breaths per minute while in flights/ 180 while walking; 29 each minute while resting. A scientist at U.C. reported oxygen consumption of humming birds is 66 times that of man per body weight, yet breath slows to almost zero during a hibernation period.

increases in a natural way, the intervals when breath does not flow. Our Guru said, "As soon as breath is quiet, your plane of consciousness is lifted. The breathless state is one of Divine Equilibrium. It is in this state that we establish an altar of Bliss where Cosmic Consciousness will come."

In the beginning, efforts to quiet the mind may find a comparison with spokes on the wheels of early-fashioned trains which appeared to be solid when the trains were going at full speed. As they slowed down the spokes began to emerge as individual but they moved so fast they seemed to fly around the hub. When the trains moved at snail-pace the spokes were clearly seen. Then as the train came to a halt, they became MOTIONLESS and were fewer in number than they had appeared when in movement.

In this way, if the mind appears over-active when beginning concentration practice this is due to slowing, not increasing, our busy mind. Now we SEE the restlessness that before was not noticed.

We need to keep on with this practice in order to slow down our thoughts so they do not resemble spokes on the fast-moving train wheels; so they will come to a halt, for deep meditation. One unused to such practice may ask what happens when breath quiets and thoughts cease. There is Awareness of great peacefulness, and at this time one is most receptive to spiritual communion with God.

Krishna said: "Supreme bliss comes to that Yogi of perfectly tranquil mind."

COSMIC SOUND

When we travel to a destination we need to know the way, but once we go there with guidance, then we can return at will. When we meditate we need DIRECTION to reach our goal of God-Realization.

Paramhansa Yogananda has given specific directions to reach the Divine Home the most direct way, without side tracks.

We may concentrate on any subject, but when it is upon God, it is called Meditation. In Meditation we reverse the searchlight of our attention FROM the 5 senses and the outer world around us, to the Inner.

We learn that within us we have INNER FACULTIES to correspond to our outer ones but we have to DEVELOP or AWAKEN them.

Our Guru has given Meditation Techniques which include the hearing of the Cosmic Om Sound.

There are sounds roaming through the ethers which we may receive by turning the dial of the radio or television set. Sounds are present in the room yet remain silent to us unless we tune in to hear them.

We also have the privilege to TUNE IN on the Cosmic Vibration of God through an inner faculty of hearing.

Everything we see has vibration or we could not see it. Everything that moves produces a sound vibration. If we move a finger, a sound is made even though we can not hear it. Before Creation, God existed in a vibrationless state of Bliss, but when He began Creation there was MOTION, MOVEMENT - hence SOUND.

Like a Symphony this Sound goes through all Creation.

“In the beginning was the Word,” St. John said. “The Word was with God, and the Word was God.” A word is a sound vibration; thus in the beginning of Creation there was a Cosmic Sound. St. John calls this the “AMEN, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the Creation of God.”

The Bible mentions this vibration in Acts 2:2-4, when the disciples of Jesus were together.

“Suddenly there came a SOUND FROM HEAVEN and it filled all the house where they were sitting and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.”

Holy Spirit, Holy Ghost and Cosmic Vibration are all ways of describing the “Word,” which is called Om by the Hindus, spelled Om or Aum. The Mohammedins call it Amin; St. John, the Amen.

All Creation came forth through this Cosmic Vibration. We can compare it to the Alphabet. All of our language which produces libraries of writings on seemingly infinite varieties of subjects is composed of One Alphabet. All manifestation was created from One Vibratory Force.

What is the way the devotee is benefitted by hearing the Om Sound?

If a child's Mother calls out to the child, and he says to his playmate: “That is my Mother,” he may not see her; she may be in another room; but he KNOWS HER by her Voice. Her voice emanates from her. The SOUND Vibration IDENTIFIES the Mother. If the child then FOLLOWS the sound, will he not FIND the Mother?

This is true of the Cosmic Om Sound. Hearing this Emanation from the Infinite, one may draw close to the Father. Patanjali, sage of ancient India, said:

“Meditate on Om to ACTUALLY CONTACT GOD.”

After one receives the technique for hearing the Om, and the other important details that accompany the instruction, then one desires to know with certainty that he is hearing the Om, and not some other sound. No one else can identify it for us because it is our inner hearing. But each one may recognize it by comparisons to earthly sounds.

The Cosmic Vibration is described in many instances in Scripture, and other writings:

Revelations 1:10 and 4:1. “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great Voice, as of a TRUMPET.”

“A door was opened in Heaven: and the first Voice which I heard as it were of a Trumpet, Talking with me.”

These descriptions of “voice” and “talking” convey INTELLIGENCE within the Sound. It is always with deep reverence, therefore, that the devotee regards this Manifestation of God.

Ezekiel 43:2. “His Voice was like a noise of MANY WATERS, and the earth shined with His Glory.”

Francis Thompson, in “The Hound of Heaven:”

“That Voice is round me like a Bursting Sea.”

In Revelations 3:14: “These things Saith the Amen,” which again tells us that God Communes through the Cosmic Sound.

Christ called the Holy Ghost a Comforter that “shall teach you all things.” Hence WISDOM is contained in it.

The Vedas describe it thus: “The great gong-bell sound flowing continuously into the soul.”

This touches upon one of the characteristics of the Om Vibration: it is continuous. It does not pulsate like surging waves but is a steady sound. It increases in volume as our consciousness of it deepens, and it may come unexpectedly in great volume, filling the room. At first it is usually heard in meditation; later it may be heard during times of activity, anywhere.

A steady hum of a Motor in a Power Plant is another comparison. Paramhansa Yogananda called it “A SOUNDLESS ROAR.” Soundless, in that it is inaudible to others, unless their inner faculty is attuned to it.

When standing under a great Waterfall we can hear the sound that compares to the Om, when it is described as a “roar” and “of many waters.”

The Bible spoke of this as a “RUSHING MIGHTY WIND,” which filled the disciples of Christ.

Paramhansaji has described this sound as one that corresponds in PITCH to the note of B below middle C on the piano. Thus it is a low sound.

In his Autobiography he said: “Even the Yoga beginner soon inwardly hears the wondrous sound of Aum,” and that this spiritual encouragement “assures the devotee he is in actual touch with Divine realms.”

Before Paramhansaji came to teach the specific way to become attuned to this Omnipresent Vibration described in Scriptures, this holy wisdom was remote from the world's knowledge. If it was heard, one did not know how to recall it.

This incident relates the fulfillment that it brought one woman who heard the sound on a day that her faculties were momentarily receptive. She wrote of it in "The Lost Chord," a poem and song found in many hymn and song books.

Adelaide Proctor was playing the organ when she struck a chord which she described was like "the sound of a great AMEN." Her feeling of its holiness is thus evident. She says it was like "the close of an Angel's Psalm," and she speaks of the Blessings it brought to her:

*"It lay on my fevered spirit
With a touch of Infinite calm.
It quieted pain and sorrow
Like love overcoming strife.
It linked all perplexed meanings
Into one Perfect Peace..."*

She relates seeking in vain to again find this "last Chord Divine that came from the Soul of the organ and entered into mine." She concludes: "It may be that only in Heaven I shall hear that Grand Amen."

Of all inner sound vibrations, none other will lead the devotee to the Divine. It has been described by our Guru in this way:

"OM is the BRIDGE between HUMAN and COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS."

This tells of its supreme importance in one's spiritual life; the bridge to the Shores of God. Our Preceptor gave these words of guidance:

"Let the church cathedral remind you of your own cathedral within, where you should go in the dead of night and in the dawn. There you can listen to the mighty Organ Music of Om, and hear in it the sermon of Divine WISDOM."

SPIRITUAL LIGHT

Why is it difficult for us to realize Cosmic UNITY back of all of the diversity of Creation?

Science is breaking down solid-appearing matter into electrons, protons, neutrons, atoms; and proving it is not as it appears. However, the ultimate Essence out of which Creation is formed is Light. Light is the Tissue of the Universe. It was the first Creation of God: "Let there be Light."

Paramhansa Yogananda said, "Light is just behind the dancing atoms of the physical world."

When we try to reconcile the solidity of all matter as being of the same essence as Light we find there is an illustration that can help us understand this. If we think of ICE CUBES in a pitcher of water, we note that they look delusively SOLID: they appear as individual, in various shapes; and they can be chipped. Yet they are of the SAME ESSENCE as the FLUID WATER in which they float. In time, or with heat, they melt into ONE.

Duality and differences vanish in this way when the LIGHT OF GOD becomes a REALITY to us.

Jesus spoke of the SINGLE EYE by which the whole body can be full of Light. This Single Eye is also called the 3rd Eye, Spherical Eye, Cave of Wisdom, Tunnel to Eternity, and other names. Within it shines the Star of the East.

Paramhansaji said: "In time you will see the Spherical Eye. THROUGH IT you will sail into Omnipresence."

He explained: "The SOUL uses the Spherical Eye of Intuition to perceive Cosmic Consciousness and Cosmic Light." In the forehead this radiant star appears. It is the Star that the 3 Wise Men followed to find Jesus. In it they had pre-vision of his birth and place of birth.

The SRF symbol portrays this Single 3rd Eye. When Lahiri Mahasaya gave his wife spiritual instruction, she related: "He touched my forehead. Masses of whirling light appeared: the radiance

gradually formed itself into the opal-blue spiritual eye, ringed with gold, and centered with a five-pointed Star.”

Saints and sages of all times have spoken of Light as part of their realization of God. Our Preceptor has written: “Long concentration on the liberating spiritual eye has enabled the Yogi to destroy all delusions concerning matter and its gravitational weight.” In his Autobiography, he has given explanations of the spiritual Laws pertaining to Light.

Light may manifest to one or many at the same time. It may appear in or out of doors; in day light or darkness, with open or closed eyes. But if it is a spiritual radiance, it is perceived by inner sight even though physically visible.

Healing has often been found through manifestations of Light. When Paramhansaji was ill with Asiatic cholera during his childhood, his mother asked him to pray to her Guru, Lahiri Mahasaya. “I gazed at his photograph,” he said, “and I saw there a blinding Light. It enveloped my body and the entire room. My symptoms disappeared. I was well.” His mother and he both saw the Light.

INNER VISION can be compared to a moving-picture Screen. It is on this Screen that the Spiritual Light is seen. But while the Single Eye appears in this viewing-place, it need be separated in our awareness from all else that is seen on this Inner-Screen Viewer. It is here that our thoughts, emotions, desires, imagination, visualizations, things seen and heard, and anything we know, may be reflected. This is where dreams are seen; where visions come that may be imagined or be true. We may see earthly settings, or astral.

This Inner Screen MIRRORS OUR CONSCIOUSNESS. Sometimes this includes our environment, associates, or far-distant memories. In expanded vision one may enter distant scenes, or have a panoramic vision not possible by ordinary sight. But it is here, hidden behind all of these moving pictures, that the Inner Light is seen.

When we pull up a shade at the window, do we see things strewn on the ground or do we see the sun in the sky? It is what we are looking for. If we seek God's LIGHT, then we will DISREGARD ALL ELSE until we are bathed in that Radiance.

When our Consciousness is Lifted into Light, nothing compares to the peace and joy of these sacred times of communion. Blessings often come to the devotee while meditating upon the Light long before that

brightness is seen. God's Grace reaches to us, unexpectedly, and in fuller measure than we can visualize. He may Touch one with many kinds of Holy Grace.

Thus, it is not opening the faculty of inner sight, but DIRECTING our ATTENTION to the Light, that lifts us into Sacred Joy.

Learning to SEE and to PENETRATE the Light in Guru-given meditation, guides the devotee to God. Paramhansaji's description tells us:

"The LIGHT is the DOORWAY to the INFINITE."

The way to enter this Cosmic state is first by stilling thought and breath. Our Preceptor observed: "Breath and the restless mind, I saw, were like storms which lashed the Ocean of Light into waves of material forms: earth, sky, human beings, birds, animals, trees. No perception of the Infinite as One Light could be had except by calming these storms.

"As often as I silenced these two natural tumults, I beheld the waves of Creation melt into One lucent Sea and serenely dissolve into Unity."

This gives understanding of the value of the concentration practice as a necessary pre-requisite for meditation. After the mind and breath are quieted, the devotee may find the Light and within it perceive the UNITY in all Creation.

PRANA

In his discourses on Yoga, Krishna speaks of the important part that control and direction of Prana plays in spiritual attainment. Life Force, Life Energy and Vitality are other names for the same Prana which functions in our mental, physical and spiritual life.

Man is refreshed with new energy during sleep. What takes place that changes tiredness into vitality? The basic Laws of Prana are used in the Recharging Exercises of Paramhansa Yogananda to re-energize the body.

We direct Life Energy in our motor nerves of action, consciously, but we also use Prana with unawareness, to think, move, speak, listen, digest food; for circulation, metabolism; everything. The best comparison of the manifold ways that Prana is used in the body is ELECTRICITY.

We use Electricity to light a house, to iron, make toast; to run a clock, and for the refrigerator. The same Electric CURRENT that helps an iron to become fiery hot keeps the refrigerator icy cold. It also moves the hands of the clock.

Electrical equipment needs adequate wiring but all appliances and wiring are USELESS without the Current. They must be CONNECTED with the Electric Power Supply. In the same way the body would be lifeless without PRANA which is the Life-CURRENT of the body.

“Prana is inherently Intelligent,” Paramhansaji has written. It enables the cells to grow and to utilize food and liquids for all body needs. In physical healing the body processes change in emergencies from their regular activities. No mechanical act could so intelligently cognize the diverse needs. It heals everything from a cut to the cementing of broken bones, and into the more serious illnesses. Food digests without direction from us. Life Force, given by God, functions in all that lives: animals, plants, trees, grass, enabling everything to exist in these forms. When Prana is withdrawn from body or form, body-

forms do not survive; soul is independent of it, but it is the life of the body.

When the follower of Jesus touched him and was made well, Jesus said: "The VIRTUE has gone out of me." The Pranic Life Force stored within him was taken into the body of another to heal, leaving Jesus drained of energy for the moment, until he could draw it again from the Cosmic Source.

This Energy comes into our bodies during sleep unconsciously, through the medulla, and goes into the brain and spine to be used for our many needs. We also draw added supplies through Will. Paramhansaji has explained that WILL serves to bridge the gulf existing between the Body and the Cosmic Energy surrounding it.

In a state of happiness there is a continuous inpouring of it. Happiness and serenity open the channel for it to flow. It is easy to work when happy; the body is light! When sad, everything seems heavy; we are tired. Sadness, worry, fear, moods and uncertainties all cause, to some degree, a closing of the channel. In this way Vitality in our bodies is affected by our emotions. Our Guru emphasized positive attitudes; not dwelling on negative thoughts, because when we are happy the energy flows in abundance, adding strength to fulfill duties and solve our problems.

Soul and body, or spirit and matter, are ways we designate these two. But there are THREE as Paramhansaji explained: "PRANA is the missing link between Consciousness and Matter." There is Consciousness, Prana and Matter; or we may refer to them as Soul, Vitality and Body. Our Preceptor said: "God's Omnipresent Electric Energy is flowing into your body all the time, but you are not conscious of it. It is the Conscious Cosmic Energy that directly supports the body."

Life Energy resides wherever attention is consciously or unconsciously placed. Thought conveys it instantly to any part of the body. When a hot stove is touched the sensory response is flashed to the brain and evaluated into warning; then it directs energy to the motor nerves to move the hand. This message and the force to activate it has gone by the Pranic Current, as a telegram is sent over wires. The heart, like a switchboard, is one of the distributing centers for Prana, relaying the currents to and from the brain. Sense activities, thoughts and emotions keep the heart in incessant activity. Scientific Yoga

practice gives rest to it because the switchboard is not alerted with messages during complete stillness.

The Bhagavad-Gita refers to its spiritual import: "Full of devotion, with mind unmoving, and also by the power of Yoga, fixing the WHOLE PRANA between the eyebrows, he goes to the Supreme."



Paramhansa Yogananda imparted to the Western World the spiritual teaching of Kriya Yoga.

KRIYA

Paramhansa Yogananda said: "The mystery of breath holds the solution to the secret of human existence." Kriya Yoga "teaches man to UNTIE the CORD of BREATH which binds the soul to the body."

Kri means "to do, to act and react."

Yoga means "union."

Kriya Yoga, therefore, is union with the Infinite through a certain rite or act.

Kriya permits an ever-increasing identity with Cosmic Consciousness.

This is an advanced technique that is called a "spiritual accelerator." It may be received with or without accompanying ceremony. Paramhansa Yogananda used ceremony because it helps to impress the holy significance of this spiritual Initiation upon the disciple. The Guru's Blessings are given with the holy technique of Kriya, and the devotee is spiritually linked with his Guru and his direct line of Paramgurus.

Kriya Initiation is given after one has received and practiced the other basic techniques. They are pre-requisites of Kriya and continue in regular practice after Kriya is received. These specific Yoga methods can expand our capacity for Cosmic Experience in God.

Kriya practice can untie the cord of breath through the wisdom-gained knowledge governing life forces in man known to the ancient Rishis.

There are two CURRENTS flowing in the body. One current flows downward; the other flows upward. Both are of prana just as warm and cold water flowing in separate taps are both water, even though designated as hot or cold.

The down-flowing current distributes energy into the sensory nerves and keeps man tied to the body. It keeps man restless; engrossed in sensory experiences.

The up-flowing current is calm. This draws the attention inward, and unites soul with God.

The up and down flow of the currents cause a tug-of-war; to take the soul's attention up or down. The opposite pull of these two CAUSE BREATH to be born: inhalation and exhalation.

As breath is life, the function of these two currents is essential to life in the body as man knows it. As the one current goes down, it pushes breath out to expel carbon dioxide. As the other current goes up, it draws breath in to pull in oxygen. The function of Kriya Yoga is to neutralize these two currents.

Both currents are drawn through direction and will into One Sphere of Light. This is called PRANAYAM. Prana meaning "life" and ayam meaning "control." Or: Control of Life. Patanjali gives the definition of Pranayam as:

"The gradual, unforced Cessation of breath."

Kriya Yoga is the greatest scientific method of neutralizing the currents to effect Pranayam.

The Bhagavad-Gita refers to the incoming and outgoing breaths: "The Yogi neutralizes both these breaths; he thus releases the Life Force from the heart and brings it under his control."

When one has felt a tingling in the spine at a time of strong emotion; stirred by some great event, beauty of nature, deep joy; then one has been aware of this energy moving in the spine.

After Kriya has been practiced over a period of time the prana in the spine is lifted. This magnetizes the spine into a dynamo. Of this our Guru said: "The torrential bliss is overwhelming but the Yogi learns to control its outward manifestations. Kriya is the sure and gradual way to bring the Bliss of God."

In the "Autobiography of a Yogi," the chapter on "The Science of Kriya Yoga" gives a detailed explanation of this holy science. Its use is not dependent on theological beliefs. In that book a spiritually-realized disciple of Lahiri Mahasaya is quoted: "I consider Kriya the most effective device of salvation through self-effort ever to be evolved in man's search for the Infinite."

Kriya was inaccessible to the world until 1861 when Lahiri Mahasaya obtained permission from the Mahavatar Babaji to teach the Kriya method to all sincere-seeking devotees, as well as renunciates. Babaji later chose Paramhansa Yogananda to be the one to bring Kriya to the Western World.

Our Preceptor wrote of its blessings for all:

“Kriya is the SACRED PASSWORD that opens the Doors of the Palace and secures the longed-for audience.”

7 MANIFESTATIONS OF GOD

It is of great benefit to us to consider the words of Paramhansa Yogananda when he said, "Many devotees are bewildered about the Manifestations of God, not realizing that there are 7 distinct Manifestations." He added, "It would be well for all devotees to remember about these seven which can be felt in meditation."

Before we reach the Supreme Attainment of Cosmic Consciousness, we can find God, tangibly within our being, through each of these 7 ways.

The most easily experienced by the devotee is the COSMIC SOUND called the OM Vibration. It is called the Holy Ghost in the bible. Jesus told his disciples that it would bring all things to their remembrance that he had said to them.

The COSMIC LIGHT is a Divine Manifestation of God that is a spiritual blessing to perceive. It may be seen with inner vision by those who meditate deeply, persevering in this holy practice.

Later one feels the COSMIC VIBRATION. This is called Cosmic Feeling. Whenever a radio is turned on, or a piano is played, there is a vibration which can be felt in the wood. The same is true of an electric motor which makes a humming sound yet has, also, a vibration through the metal. This same way the Cosmic Om Vibration is present through our Being as Feeling in addition to hearing the Sound.

COSMIC JOY is found when one is so filled with Joy that there is a sense of floating, of walking on air, and which does not come from any reason or event in daily life. It permeates whatever one does. This means the devotee is in tune with God as Joy. The inner radiance is transmitted to others, and may be reflected in the eyes. Children often express this in their exuberance of spirit, with their desire to run, jump and dance. Their joy comes from within and is a spiritual happiness.

COSMIC WISDOM is realized by Intuition. It has SURENESS without any dependence upon the 5 senses for testimony. It is received as

insight in “instant perception” when the soul is receptive. The guidance and truth received directs one to the highest good. Greater attunement to God increases the devotee's receptivity.

COSMIC LOVE brings a great welling in the heart which includes everything in creation. It is felt intensely for ALL, with the Oneness wherein all division of “yours and mine” has vanished. When we know this deep and expanding love, we are filled with GOD'S COSMIC LOVE.

COSMIC DEVOTION concludes the seven. This is WORSHIP for God. It is realized when we become so immersed in God, through deep devotion, that we forget all else. Prayer and chanting help to increase devotion. Its power to take us to the One Father is described by Paramhansaji when he prayed: “Saturated with devotion, I shall enter the Heaven of Thy Presence. The urge of my Devotion suddenly flings open the Soul's secret door.”

Each of the 7 Manifestations are within the One Bliss of God. God is INHERENT in each. His Intelligence is within the seven, cognizant of us and responsive to our yearnings.

Devotees realize God tangibly in the Cosmic Manifestations of Light, Sound, Feeling, Love, Joy, Devotion and Wisdom. We touch the LIVING PRESENCE OF GOD in each of His Manifestations.

MENU VALUES

Paramhansa Yogananda said that every food has certain inherent qualities. He has listed those characteristic of the following:

Cherries have the vibration of joy. Bananas a very spiritual food, impart calmness; humbleness. The strawberry is attuned to dignity; grapes have special vibrations of Divine love.

Enthusiasm and fresh energy are derived from eggs and milk. Oranges and lemons banish melancholia, and are a brain stimulant. Almonds and honey each reflect self-control. Berries aid in clearness of thought.

Peaches= selflessness; thinking of the good of others. Avocado= memory. Unpolished rice= mildness. Pineapple= self-assurance; good for inferiority complex. Wheat= obstinate in principles; fine when principles are good. Cereal= strength of character. Beets= martial courage. Maple syrup= mental freshness. Sweet corn= mental vitality. Tomatoes= mental strength. Figs= will soften too strict a sense of discipline. Raspberry= kindheartedness. Spinach= simplicity. Pears= peacefulness. Dates= tenderness and sweetness. Lettuce= calmness.

OM SONG

The inner significance in each line of the Om Poem by Paramhansa Yogananda pertains to deep Yoga meditation. Music added in "Cosmic Chants."

Our Guru first speaks of the outer sounds of matter that are silenced to hear the Om. All Creation reverberates with this blissful sound.

*"Whence, O that Soundless Roar doth come,
When drowseth matter's dreary drum?
The booming Om on Bliss shore breaks;
All heaven, all earth, all body shakes."*

The cords of the 5 senses no longer bind soul to the body when the heart and breath are quieted.

*"Cords bound to flesh are broken all,
Vibrations harsh do fly and fall;
The hustling heart, the bursting breath
No more disturb the Yogi's health."*

In the darkness behind closed eyes, the Light of the spiritual eye is seen aloft in the forehead. Our memory thoughts and dreams no longer impose themselves upon us. Our attention is turned inward.

*"The house is lulled in darkness soft,
Bright shiney light is seen aloft.
Sub-conscious dreams have gone to bed,
'Tis then that one doth hear Om's tread."*

Characteristic sounds accompany the functioning of Pranic Energy at the spinal centers. From the coccyx at the base of the spine, a

Bumble Bee sound is heard. It is called "Baby Om" because of its resemblance to the Cosmic Om. The sacral center governs the fluid content in the body and it emits a Flute-like sound.

*"The bumble bee now hums along;
Baby Om, now hark ye, sings his song.
Krishna's flute is sounding sweet:
'Tis time the Wat'ry God to meet!"*

The pranic activity at the lumbar plexus produces a Harp sound while governing the heart in the body. The dorsal center is responsible for the air in the body make-up, and a gong-Bell is the sound that emanates from this heart center.

*"The God of Fire with fervor sings,
Om, Om, his mystic harp now rings,
God of Prana sweetly sounds
The wondrous bells; the soul resounds!"*

The Living Tree refers to the spine. The Sea sound, which is like the surging ocean, is produced at the cervical center and relates us to ether, and to space. When our consciousness is lifted to the Christ Center in the forehead, the Cosmic OM Vibration resounds from the medulla center and one becomes attuned to CHRIST in the SYMPHONY of GOD.

*"O Upward climb the Living Tree
Hear now the sound of ethereal sea.
Marching mind doth homeward hie
To join the Christmas Symphony."*

HOMAGE TO GOD

The poet Lamertine has compared the Universe to a Living Altar at which Nature worships. At certain times of the day a stillness falls over the earth; the humming, buzzing, chirping, and moving of all creatures large and small, ceases. All remain silent. In "The Prayer" he wrote:

"It is the hour when Nature seems to offer to God, in its brilliant language, the MAGNIFICENT HOMAGE of CREATION.

"Here is the SERVICE! Immense! Universal!"

"The Universe is the TEMPLE: the earth is the ALTAR. The skies are the Dome, and the stars are the Sacred Torches to light this Temple. The pure clouds are the waves of Incense which rise to the THRONE of GOD Whom Nature is worshipping."

At this Altar, Lamertine communes with the Heavenly Father, saying: "Enveloped in calm and silence, my soul adores Thy Presence, which is very near. Spirit of the Universe, God, Father, Creator: under these diverse Names I think of Thee. The vastness reveals Thy Grandeur; the earth Thy Bounty, and the stars Thy Splendor."

"I found my Temple under the Canopy of Heaven," Luther Burbank said. Wherever we may be when we approach God: at a shrine in a home, in some great edifice of religion, or the outdoor beauty of nature, all surroundings vanish to our closed eyes as we worship within our souls.

Paramhansa Yogananda said, "Our own One Father dwells impartially on Altars everywhere. ALL prayers of all temples, tabernacles, mosques and churches, are chanting to God's Sacred Presence with the one universal language of love."

On a remembered walk in the woods, passing a humble church, Archibald Rutledge recalled that he had paused to lament that the steeple on it had never been completed. His old friend Anthony had listened. Then he said gently, touching his ragged shirt over his heart, "Cap'n, here is the temple." Rutledge asked, "Was there ever a sermon

more eloquent? Anthony was thinking of the only true Altar: the Shrine of the Heart, builded by the Almighty, and visited by Him.”

Our Guru asked the Heavenly Father in prayer:

“Make our souls Thy Temple,
Make our hearts Thy Altar,
Make our love Thy Home.”

The following devotional talk was given as the holy days of Christmas drew near and devotees had gathered to be with their loved Guru. He said to them that evening:

“Just behind your closed eyes, just behind your thoughts, just behind your feelings, is God. If you would realize God, spend more of your time in solitude. Get used to the consciousness that God is within the Temple of Silence and you will enjoy it more than anything else in the world. You will see such Happiness come into your life that it goes beyond all understanding.

“People seek a little human love, but this love for God is so great that you can have it all the time. All lovers are tributaries to the Ocean of God's Love. How could the streams be greater than the Ocean? When you are in that Ocean, you see the slender streamlets of human hearts. Find that vast Ocean of Divine Happiness.

“It doesn't come by waiting. You have to convince the Divine Beloved that you want Him. He slips away if you look for Him anywhere but right here, living in the ETERNAL PRESENT.

“Begin to practice. That is the surest way. You must make the effort but the effort will be worth while. We must learn to create the Honey of God in our hearts. Do not be satisfied with a little Silence; go straight to the Love of God. Do not be diverted. You can not walk on five paths at the same time. Or be in several automobiles at once. You have a very good desire when you seek but don't keep on with all this seeking all your life. Take the best car, then start the engine and go. If you keep trying all the cars all the time, you will never reach your destination.

“Every one of you God loves. Say to God: Thou dost come first on the altar of my actions. When you realize that, the Divine Spirit will come. We are His Children. We are not made outside of Him; we are made out of His Bosom and Being. We must realize that.

“Jesus Christ is One with the Heavenly Father. Meditate so deeply and strongly this day that you feel and know that Christ is Real. He is Real. That you will attain this Happiness, this unending JOY in CHRIST, is my Christmas wish for you.”

COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

“His longing ceases who sees the Supreme.”

KRISHNA - from the Bhagavad Gita

SOUL has need to be free of all sense of confining limitations that tend to turn attention from its vast Omnipresent Home in Spirit to the temporary dwelling place of the body.

Efforts to travel at great speed in air, land and water are often expressions of a longing to be free of restrictions. Yet whatever speed is achieved, there will always be limitations that leave the need unfulfilled.

In expansion of Consciousness through meditation is found the realization of true freedom. This is why Saints have said that every longing of the heart and mind is satisfied by God. It includes limitless dimensions of Infinity, and Bliss, which contents the Soul.

There have been stirring words throughout the centuries about this. Thomas Aquinas found his holy sojourn so tremendous and revealing that for him, afterward, all his writings seemed as so much “straw.” Realization of God transcends all intellectual concepts. Men have written of it variously:

Tennyson said he frequently entered a state where “Individuality dissolved into Boundless Being; and this state: the clearest, the surest, utterly beyond words - where death is an almost laughable impossibility - no extinction but the only true life; a state of transcendent wonder, associated with absolute clearness of mind.”

After dwelling upon the Presence of God with deepest devotion, in all waking moments, Frank Laubach wrote that he had found: “The Universe is vibrant with the electric Ecstasy of God. I felt that I saw a little of that marvelous pull that Jesus had as he walked along the road day after day ‘God-intoxicated,’ and radiant with the endless communion of his soul with God.”

Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch, daughter of Mark Twain, noted: "In the silence the Yogi discovers the Source of Spirit; the sensation of serenity, and with it a Joy so strong that it can truly be called Ecstasy."

Emerson stated that man has taken narcotics and intoxicants "as mechanical substitutes for the True Nectar ... to escape the custody of the body, into free space, and from the individual relations in which he is enclosed." He said it is "a Spurious mode of attaining freedom as it leads Not into the Heavens. Nature can never be taken advantage of by such a trick to enter Divine realms, with counterfeit coin." He wrote: "The great calm Presence of the Creator comes not forth to the sorceries of opium or of wine."

True Nectar of God is found by "deeper longer, Guru-given meditation," Paramhansaji said. One devotee called this state "an ecstasy suspension within the very breath of Divinity," and hours of deepest meditation always preceded the re-entering of it. One may attain this state of Bliss. All who have known this inner Happiness long to realize it again, and others search for it with equal longing. The path may be followed to the Divine Abode.

"There, no word can enter, nor the chatter of human thought. Only your soul, clad in silence, can lift the veil that separated Him from your embrace," Ramakrishna has said. "Your mind and intellect, swift though they are, cannot overtake the lightning-steed of God-Consciousness."

"I behold Thee in Samadhi, in Thy Light of mellow joy," Paramhansa Yogananda wrote in a song to the Infinite. Excerpts from his poem SAMADHI describe Cosmic Consciousness and its freedom: "Not an unconscious state, or mental chloroform without wilful return." He said:

*"Samadhi but extends my realm of consciousness
Beyond the limits of my mortal frame
To the boundaries of Eternity,
Where I, the Cosmic Sea
Watch the little ego floating in Me.
All space floats like an iceberg in my mental sea.
Eternity and I, one united ray.
Knowing, Knower, Known, as One!"*

“A man of highest Realization can at any moment shake himself clear of all impression of the sense-world, and go into Samadhi with the natural ease of a tortoise drawing within itself.” This commentary on Krishna's words, by Swarupananda in his Bhagavad Gita translation, speaks of the holy ones of supreme Illumination who are One with the truths they speak.

Plotinus said: “You apprehend the Infinite by a faculty superior to reason; by entering into a state in which you are your finite self no longer. It is the liberation of your mind from its finite consciousness. You cease to be finite; you become ONE with the infinite. I myself have realized it but three times as yet.

“Thought cannot attain to this for thought is, in itself a kind of Motion. It is a mere preliminary to communion with God. It is only in a state of perfect passivity and repose that the soul can recognize and touch the Primeval Being.

“In silence and the utter forgetfulness of all things one may see God, the Fountain of Life, the Source of Being, the Origin of all Good. At that moment it enjoys the highest indescribable BLISS. It is, as it were, swallowed up in Divinity, and bathed in the Light of Eternity.”

The varieties of Divine Perceptions are manifold but the INNER HIGHWAY to the Infinite is the same for all. The soul's journey leads to Realization of God where all speak of that one Divine Bliss. PRECEPTS of wisdom, like a compass, give direction to that Sacred Realm. The practice of Guru-given Yoga meditation hastens our journey.

THE LIFE OF PRINCE SIDDARTHA

Certain men touch the depths of the Shining Sea of Spirit. Their words become as lights illumining the dark places for humanity. We tend to forget that these men, drenched in God's Light, were human beings who lived among men. To know their life story is to bring them nearer to us and make them dearer. Such a man was Prince Siddartha who was better known as the BUDDHA.

This is a story infinitely rich in detail. It will enable one to know this great man, first as a youth, and later as the Illumined Buddha.

He was destined to influence millions of the peoples of the world, not only in the centuries following his lifetime, but also today.

THE BOOK

In 1824 an Englishman, a government official residing in Nepal discovered in the local monasteries, and made known to the Western world for the first time, the whole and original accounts of Prince Siddartha. This was hailed as one of the great discoveries. A Frenchman translated it from the Sanscrit and published it in a very scholarly manner. But this book did not circulate widely, except among scholars.

So it was that few in the West knew of the life of this Prince until the year of 1879 when a new and vast storehouse of knowledge came to us with the advent of a book entitled THE LIGHT OF ASIA.

When this was published in England it sold with immediate success. It was eagerly sought and was read there and in Europe, and soon after in America. It was translated into all of the languages of Europe. There have been over SIXTY EDITIONS in England alone, and more than EIGHTY in America.

THE AUTHOR

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD, the author, was born in England and educated at Oxford College. Shortly after he graduated he became a College Principal at Poona, India. It was there that he absorbed the atmosphere and understanding of the Orient that enabled him to write this book. When he returned to England he became Chief Editor of one of the great daily newspapers. This man was also a poet. He has written this narrative in blank verse that is exquisite throughout. Its colorful beauty gives a truer feeling for the setting than any other form of writing could have done. I use his own imagery as often as possible in telling this story.

THE TIMES

India, during Siddhartha's lifetime was ruled by various Kings, each supreme in his province. Sometimes they warred with one-another. Generally the kingdoms were peaceful.

Warfare was carried on with sword, or bow and arrow. Hence skill in these things, and in fine horsemanship, constituted the important things in which young men sought to excel.

And it is well to remember that there was no machinery to lighten labor under the hot India sun, and few remedies to help suffering, or cure certain maladies which discoveries of this present century have brought.

Communications were limited to slow modes of travel: by elephant, horseback and on foot, and word did not often reach beyond the nearby provinces. These things have bearing on incidents in this unusual biography.

BIRTH

A son was born into the happy household of King Suddhodana and Queen Maya in Nepal. It was near the year 620 B.C. There was great rejoicing, and the young prince was called SIDDARTHA.

His horoscope was cast, as was customary, and great prophecies were made by the wise men. They declared that he would choose the path of renunciation and self denial, gaining wondrous wisdom to

deliver men from ignorance; or, he would rule the world, if he would deign to rule, a King of Kings.

These prophecies stayed in the mind of the King and caused him to direct the rearing of his son in special ways in order to insure the certainty of his coming reign. Queen Maya, Mother of Siddartha, died a few days after his birth.

STUDIES

When the boy was of age for studies, the King called a council of his Ministers. He asked of them, "Who is the wisest man, great sirs, to teach my son that which a Prince should know?" The teacher was selected and he came to give instruction to Siddartha, who had a wisdom far beyond his years that astounded the learned teacher.

THE WILD SWAN

An incident occurred in the youth of Siddartha that tells us much of the nature of the boy living his very secluded life in the palace grounds with his other princely companions.

One day in spring a flock of Wild Swans passed overhead, voyaging north. Devadatta, cousin of the Prince, pointed his bow, and loosed the arrow which found its way into the wing of the foremost swan, and it fell with bright scarlet blood staining the white plumes.

Seeing it, Siddartha took the bird up tenderly and soothed it, and stopped the fright of the wild thing, and caressed it to peace. He pulled the cruel steel from its wing and then laid cool leaves and healing honey on the wound. And yet so little he knew of pain that with curiosity he pressed the arrow's barb into his own wrist and winced to feel the sting, and with tears of sympathy in his eyes, he turned to soothe the bird again.

Then one came, saying, "My Prince, Devadatta hath shot a swan which fell among the roses here, and he bids me pray you send it. Will you send?" Siddartha replied, "If the bird were dead I would, but the swan lives. My cousin hath but killed the god-like speed of its wing."

His cousin then came, saying, "The wild thing, living or dead, is his who fetched it down. 'Twas no man's in the clouds, but fall'n tis mine. Give me my prize, cousin."

Siddhartha held the swan close to his cheek and then spoke gravely. "The bird is mine, the first of myriad things which shall be mine by right of Mercy and Love. If my cousin dispute it, let the matter be submitted to the Wise Men and we will wait their word."

So it was done. There was much debate and many thought this and that. Then there arose an unknown priest who said: "If life be worth anything, then the savior of a life owns more the living, than he who sought to slay. Give the swan to Siddhartha." This judgment all found just.

Yet not more of grief did he know than that one bird, which being healed, went joyous on its way.

THE PLOWMAN'S BURDEN

One day when Siddhartha was grown to manhood his father said, "Come my Son, and see the beauties of the spring, and how the fruitful earth yields its riches to the reaper; and how my realm which will be thine when the funeral pile flames for me, now feeds the many and keeps the King's chests full."

Fair was the day and season, with new leaves, bright blooms, green grass and tiny buds. They rode into a land of wells and gardens, where all up and down the rich red loam the oxen strained their strong shoulders, dragging the plough, and the fat soil rose and rolled in smooth long waves. Lizards, birds, bees, beetles, striped squirrels, purple butterflies, buffaloes, peacocks and doves were there.

All things spoke of peace and plenty, and the Prince saw and rejoiced.

But looking deeper, he saw, for the first time, the thorns which grow upon this rose of life: how the peasant sweated for his wage, toiling; how he urged the great-eyed oxen through flaming hours, goading them; he noted how lizard fed on ant; and snake on him, and hawk on both; the fish-bird on the fish, the large fish on smaller, until everything was slayer and in turn slain.

And the Prince asked, "Is this the happy earth I came to see?" And to his charioteer said, "Go aside a space and let me muse on what I have seen." Then in his thoughts and being there came a vast pity and love for all living things, and such desire to heal their pain that he

forgot all else, and long he pondered, and the men sent from the King found him musing thus, and all this was reported to the King.

PLANS FOR A BRIDE

The King called a council with his Ministers. "Remember," he asked, "The words of the wise men who said my son would be a King of Kings - which is my heart's wish; or, that he would tread upon the sad and lowly path of pious self-denial?"

A renunciate in India traveled with only his begging bowl, accepting what was given him while he taught and pondered on the deeper things. As with a monk, it meant renouncing all possessions and departing from his home.

This is what the Good King feared might come. So he sought counsel. The Eldest said, "Maharaja, Love will cure him of these pensive thoughts, so let us weave the spell of woman's wiles about his heart."

All thought this advice good, but the King answered, "If we seek him a wife, love chooseth oftentimes with other eyes. If we bid range round him all the beauties for his choice to pluck the blossom that he pleases, he will smile sweetly and refuse."

Then another declared: "Do this, my King! Command a Festival where all the maids of the realm shall be competitors in Youth and Grace in the sports. Let the Prince give the prizes to these fair ones. And then when the lovely victors pass his place, there will be those to note if one or two change the fixed sadness in his tender cheek; so that we Choose Love with Love's own eyes, and bring His Highness happiness."

This seemed good, and thus it was planned.

THE FESTIVAL OF MAIDENS

The Festival was held, and the many contests viewed by the happy gathering. Then each maiden, with hair newly smoothed and bound, and all in brightest and gayest of dress, slowly went past the throne to receive her award from the Prince. But he sat so quietly, and with so much majesty, that each one dropped her eyes, for he seemed so aloof - tender, yet so far away. And even the loveliest received her favor quickly, and flew to join her companions.

And all this was ending, and all the prizes given, when last came young YASODHARA, and they that stood nearest Siddartha saw the princely boy start as the lovely girl approached. And she alone gazed full upon the boy's face, and smile and asked, "Is there a gift for me?"

The Prince replied, "The gifts are gone, yet take this, fair sister, for amends; you of whose grace our happy city boasts." He loosed the emerald necklace from his throat and then clasped it round her waist.

And they who watched the Prince at the prize-giving saw and heard this, and told the King of how Siddartha sat heedless till there passed the daughter of his great neighbor King, and how at sudden sight of her he changed, and how she had gazed on him, and he on her; of the jewel-gift, and what glances passed between them of love.

The fond King smiled: "Look, we have found a lure. Let the messengers be sent to ask the maid in marriage for my son."

The messengers went at once.

But it was the LAW in her father's land when any asked a maid of noble house, fair and desirable, that he must make good his skill in the martial arts against all suitors who should challenge it, nor might this custom break itself for Kings. Therefore, King Suprabuddha, her father, said, "Go to the King and tell him that the child is sought by Princes far and near. If his most gentle son can bend a bow, sway the sword, and ride a horse better than they, best would he be to us. But how shall this be with his cloistered ways?"

The secluded life that Siddartha's father arranged for him was known by others, since young men of his age had already tested their strength in contests, and some had gone out to fight in wars.

The King's heart was grieved when he heard, for now the Prince begged that sweet Yasodhara be his bride. And in vain! With Devadatta foremost at the bow, and Arjuna master of all fiery steeds, and Nanda chief in swordplay!

But when the Prince heard, he laughed low and said, "Make proclamation that thy son will MEET ALL COMERS at THEIR CHOSEN GAMES."

THE CONTEST

The day of the Contest all the lords and all the country folk were gathered round. There was music and flowers. Yasodhara, too, was

there. She was so lovely that all felt that only he who proved to be the worthiest should win her.

Siddartha came, riding upon his horse Kantaka. He joined the contestants, for the hour had come to meet his challengers - the victor's crown to the lovely Yasodhara.

First came the ARROW TEST. Each set his mark some distance away, with Devadatta's farthest - and each made his mark. Then the Prince placed his beyond all others, and his aim was accurate ALL marveled at this show of skill. Yasodhara, who had hid her eyes for fear to see him fail, rejoiced.

Next came the SKILL OF SWORDS. Devadatta cut through a tree six fingers thick; Arjuna seven, and Nanda nine. Siddartha chose a tree nearby which grew with two trunks - a double tree, and with one cut and stroke the blade went through. But still the tree stood upright! And through the crowds they murmured, "The edge of his sword has turned!" But a faint breeze at that moment toppled down the tree, which being cut across so straight had stood.

With the RACES, though Arjuna was famed, it was the Prince who outdistanced all, riding on his own Kantaka. One said, "Yet any could win with such a horse." So Siddartha asked for the grooms to bring a horse that was unriden. This they did, leading by chains a horse as black as night; fierce-eyed, unshod and unsaddled for no rider yet had crossed him. The first two: Nanda and Devadatta, could not stay upon him a moment but were flung in dust. The skilled Arjuna remained some little time, until the savage stallion turned with naked teeth and gripped Arjuna's foot and tore him down and the fiery horse would have trampled him to pieces had not the grooms rushed in.

All through the crowds they cried: "Let not Siddartha touch that horse; let him not meddle with that beast." But the Prince said, "Let go the chains, and give him to me by the forelock." This he took with quiet grasp, spoke some low word, and laid his palm across the stallion's eyes and drew it gently down the angry face and all along the neck and panting flanks, till men astonished saw the night-black horse stand subdued and meek, as though he knew the Prince and worshiped him. Nor stirred he while the Prince mounted and rode him, and all the people cried: "Strive no more, for SIDDARTHA is the BEST!" And all the suitors agreed, "He is best."

The father of Yasodhara said, "It was in our hearts to find thee best, being dearest. Yet what magic taught thee more of manhood mid thy rose-bowers and thy dreams, than wars and all the contests have brought to others?"

Yasodhara left her place to reach Siddhartha's side. The crowds all rejoiced to see them hand in hand. And the Marriage Feast was held.

THE KING'S DREAM

About this time the King had a strange dream that neither he nor his wise dream-readers were able to interpret. Finally an aged man in hermit garb said he could read the dream. He was taken to the King and to him explained that the dream concerned the Prince and foretold: "The fortune of my Lord the Prince is more than Kingdoms, and his HERMIT RAGS will be beyond fine cloths of gold. And in a certain number of days and nights this thing shall come to pass."

The King saddened, hearing this, and again he planned that which he hoped would SHUT FATE OUT.

THE PLEASURE PALACE

The King built for the Prince and his young bride a Pleasure Palace. This was placed in vies of tall snow-capped Himalayan mountains, where eagles soared and wild goats climbed. Within the Palace were cedar-lined rooms, for cool winter; veined marble for summer, and pools for swimming. There were lacy networks of jade and beautiful carvings everywhere. The gardens held all that one could wish in beauty of flower and tree and shrub. There were tame deer, and doves, parrots, monkeys, colorful fish in the fountains, lotus flowers in pools, and meandering streams.

Within the Palace they were served with sherbits cooled with the snows of the Himalayas, and milk held in ivory cups, and sweets. Music from delicate instruments; dancing girls and those to tell stories to entertain them. And there, happy with sweet Yasodhara, lived the Prince.

Within these walls the King commanded that no mention ever be made of death, disease, age, pain or sorrow. Everything was to be

made beautiful and happy so there could be no cause for thought upon deep and philosophical things; so the Prince might grow older TO RULE, a KING, and be the glory of his time.

Said the King: "If he shall pass his youth far from such things as move to wistfulness, then the shadow of this fate - too vast for man - may fade." So he had great WALLS built around these grounds, yet far removed from sight; and massive Gates to be kept locked and guarded with the King's orders: "No man shall pass the Gates EVEN THOUGH HE BE THE PRINCE."

HIS TOUR OF THE CITY

Before many months had passed the Prince had a desire to ride through the city and see the town and people. The King approved and commanded that the town be decked with flowers, and that no one blind, maimed, sick or with leprosy should be near the road where he would pass. All burning of the dead on funeral piles should wait until evening, for the Prince would ride at noon.

He found the town joyous and smiling, and the Prince said, "Fair is the world. Let us ride further, on beyond the gates of the city." And he continued on, with his charioteer, pleased with all, until there came from one house an old man. He was near death, toothless, with palsy and eyes reddened; ugly and pitiful, begging for alms.

Siddartha commanded Channa pause, and he asked amazed, "Is this a man? Are sometimes men thus?"

"Sometimes, my Prince," was his reply.

"If I live to be aged, will I be thus? Can this come to any?"

"When many years pass," Channa answered.

"Comes such ills as he suffers, unobserved?"

Channa said, "Like the sly snake they come, that stings unseen. Like the lightning, striking these and sparing those, as chance may send."

"None can say: I sleep happy and whole tonight and so shall wake?"

"None may say it, my Lord."

Siddartha then beheld a funeral pyre. "Is this the end that comes to all that live?"

"This is the end that comes to all."

The Prince cried, "Take me back! I have seen what I did not think to see." And deep were his thoughts. He cried: "THE VEIL IS RENT which has blinded me. I am as all these men who cry upon their gods and are not heard. Yet there must be aid: for them and me. I would not let one cry whom I could save!"

That night he would not taste of the sweet foods, nor heard he the music. Even the fair Yasodhara could not comfort him. "I think," he told her, "how you and I, and all, must change; be bowed, and lose desire for life. I ask: How can love save men from the slayer Time who will come to all?"

That night the King set DOUBLE GUARDS at the GATES for the days were not yet up of his dream.

YASODHARA'S DREAM

That very night Yasodhara had a dream. She awoke in terror, crying out, "O Prince, awake and comfort me. I dreamed that here beside me was your pearl belt, but you were not here! A great cry then rang in my ears: "THE TIME IS COME!" And I awoke! What can it mean except that I should die? Or what is worse than any death, that you be taken from me?"

He comforted her, and said, "What is to be, will. But always know how great my love is for you, my dearest, if the griefs of others cause me to feel so for them. You know I have thought this long time how I can help the sad earth. I seek all this for thee as well."

She slept again, though there were tears upon her cheeks.

THE GREAT RENUNCIATION

TONIGHT is the night, the Prince thought, to choose whether I will reign a King, or wander, alone and homeless, that the world be helped.

THE HOUR IS COME! If complete renouncing and utmost strife will find Healing for this world, then I should find.

If one can save, the whole world would share in this. There must be one who CARES ENOUGH!

He thought: "Man perished in the bitter winds of winter until one smote fire from flint-stones which gave red flame that was treasured

for all to use. Man ate raw meat until one grew corn, and from it man can live. Man babbled till some tongue struck speech and patient fingers framed the lettered words.”

He reasoned: “Whatever good gifts my brothers have, it came from SEARCH and loving SACRIFICE.

“If then - one Not tired of live, but glad with every morning; if one Not ill, but filled with health; if one from birth designed to rule; one not tired of either life or love but hungry still; if one as I, who ache not, lack not, and grieve not except with griefs not mine: if then such a one, giving all, for love of men alone, setting aside his youth, to SEARCH FOR TRUTH, surely, at last, far off, sometime, somewhere, the VEIL WILL LIFT for his deep-searching eyes.

“I will depart, never to come again until I find, if fervent search and strife avail.”

He looked at his wife who was dearest in all the world to him, and turned to go. But three times he returned before he could take his gaze from her. Then he went forth into the darkness.

“Channa, awake, and bring out Kantaka.”

“What is it, my Lord, to ride out when all is dark?”

“Speak low, and bring my horse. The hour is come when I should go and find the Truth.”

“Ah,” said Channa, “then the wise men saw what was to come! Will you ride out and let the rich world slip from thy grasp, and carry a beggar bowl, when there is PARADISE HERE?”

“The Kingdom that I seek is more than these that pass, and change and die.”

“But think, my Lord, of thy father's grief. You are his life, his happiness.”

“Because I love him, I must go. Bring now my horse, without delay.”

Channa said mournfully, “Yes, Master, I go.”

When Kantaka saw his master he neighed loudly and legend says that all the court would have wakened had not the angels put their soft unseen wings upon the ears of the sleepers.

As if by magic all the guards lay asleep, and through the gates he passed. He rode until morning. Then he dismounted, parting from his faithful horse. To the sorrowing Channa he bade farewell, and returned his pearl belt for his loved Princess, and his sword for his

father, with the message that "Siddartha goes forth not to return until he can come back ten times a Prince, with royal wisdom won."

He said: "There is HOPE for man if man can find, and none hath sought for this as I shall seek."

Then he went INTO THE MORNING on HIS QUEST.

COMPASSION

Through long scorching summers; in driving rains, chilly dawns and evenings Siddartha meditated. Near the town of King Bimbisara he dwelt in a cave which gave him shelter. Sometimes he walked along the nearby road while he continued his contemplations.

One day, walking and pondering, he came upon a lamb that was lame. Its worried mother kept trying to help it on and in his pity for it and for the mother, he picked it up and carried it, musing: "To ease one beast of grief is better than to sit in a cave away from the sorrows of the world."

Seeing herdsmen at that moment, he asked, "Why do you drive the flocks down at high noon instead of evening?" The man replied: "We are sent to get five-score goats for sacrifice which the King will have slain this night at the Temple, in worship of the gods." Siddartha said, "I will go with you".

When he entered the city, carrying the lamb on his shoulders, it is said that he moved with such quiet majesty that buyers and sellers forgot to speak as he passed, gazing on his calm face, and money counters forgot their count, and a village smithy paused with hammer lifted in mid-air. All asked one-another, Who is he? What is his caste, and where does he come from? All this was lost on Siddartha for he was deep in thought, contemplating: "How like these animals are all people, going blindly toward the knife of death with no one to guide them."

When they neared the altar place, the King stood there already, with priests on either side of him muttering prayers and putting wood on the fire; butter and spices were also added to the flame for the gods. One priest held in his hand a knife he placed at the throat of a goat tied at his feet. He said, "This sacrifice comes from our King and all of

his sins we lay in this goat so that the fire will consume them. Be pleased, O Gods, for now I strike.”

Siddartha spoke most softly: “Let him not strike, Great King.” He loosed the bonds of the animal and none stayed his act, even the powerful priests. Then, asking permission of the King, he spoke.

He told them how man prays for Mercy from the gods, who are above him, whereas he is merciless to those below him, to whom he is a god. “In meek tribute they give to us of their wool, of their milk, and show trust to the hands that murder them. If the gods are good, the sight of blood would not gladden them; nor is it possible to lay a single sin of one upon any other, or upon any beast. Each man must answer for himself for his acts. None but he can reap the results of his deeds, thoughts and words.”

The priests stood reverently while the Prince continued to teach. His gentleness so conquered them that they cast aside their implements of sacrifice. The King declared, “In all this land there will be no more shedding of blood in sacrifice, for Mercy cometh to the Merciful.” This edict ran through all the land.

The King learned of the royalty of the Prince and bade him stay at his Palace to teach his wisdom to all his Kingdom, and having no son, asked him to rule when he died and remain there with a beautiful bride. He pointed out, “Your health may not survive such fasts. Your hands were made for scepters instead of begging bowl.” Siddartha answered, “The things I had, most noble King, and if the very doors of the gods now opened for me, I could not linger until my search has been completed and I have found that Truth for which I seek. But dear friend, if I find, I promise I surely will return your kindness and your love with what I find.”

THE WOMAN'S GRIEF

At a later time in his search, a woman came up to him and said, “Lord, yesterday my babe was bitten by a cruel snake and each in the village said, “He will die,” and so I came to ask of thee a cure for my tiny son. Thou didst not spurn me but answered, “Yea, little sister, there is that which might heal thee first, and him if you could find it. Get a mustard seed, but it must come from a house where neither father, mother, child nor slave has died.” So I went and all the people

were kind and gave to me, but each said, "What is this you ask? Our good man died." Another said, "Sister, the dead are many, and the living few." "Here is the seed," said one, "but he that sowed it died." So I thanked them, and gave them back the seeds. Ah, sir! I could not find a single house! Not any place to find this mustard seed."

With exceeding tenderness, he replied, "Little sister, you have found that bitter balm I had to give you. Yesterday, had I told you what I knew, that your child lay dead in your arms, your grief would have been past bearing. But today you know you suffer with a grief the whole world shares, and griefs which all share grow less for one. I would give my life's blood if I could stop your tears, and win the secret which makes our greatest love become our greatest grief. I seek that secret."

THE SHEPHERD BOY

He traveled on into the north-west, until he reached a village inhabited with peaceful, simple folk. Nearby were woodlands, and in sylvan solitudes he continued to ponder, on:

The truths of life,
The secrets of the Silence
Life's sorrows, its meaning.

Meditating thus, he oftentimes forgot to eat. When he came out of his deep reveries he would eat wild fruit fallen from the boughs overhead, shaken to earth by chattering monkeys, or purple parakeet. Day by day his body, worn from stress of soul, and lack of food, bore more likeness to the dry fluttering leaf at his feet than to his former self. On one such day he fell in fainting spell, all spent, wan and motionless. There came that way a Shepherd Boy who saw him there, with the noonday sun beating upon his head.

He knitted boughs together, and from the wild rose-apple tree made shade for the sacred face. He poured drops of warm milk upon the Master's lips, pressed from the she-goat's bag, lest being low caste, he wrong one so high and holy by touching him.

Our Lord gained strength, and then arose and asked more milk from the Shepherd's lota. "Ah, my Lord, I cannot give thee," the lad said, "as thou seest, I am a Sudra and my touch defiles."

Siddhartha said: "There is no caste in blood which runneth of one hue; nor caste in tears which trickle salt with all; neither comes man at birth stamped in the brow with special mark, nor sacred thread on neck. Who doeth right deed is twice-born, and who doeth ill is wrong. Give me to drink, my brother, and when I come into my quest it shall be to bless thee for it." The boy's heart was glad, and he gave.

THE NAUTCH SINGER

On another day he was lost in contemplation when some Nautch Dancers from the Temple passed nearby, playing music as they went up the path. The musicians were accompanied by a girl singing. She sang about how fair the dancing will be when the sitar is tuned neither low nor high and the words of the song came clearly to him:

The string o'er-stretched breaks, and the music flies;
The string o'er-slack is dumb, and the music dies.
Tune us the sitar neither low nor high.

She little dreamed that her words echoed on the ears of a holy man sitting rapt under a tree. He mused upon them, thinking, "The foolish oft-times teach the wise: I strain too much this string of life, meaning to make such music as shall save. My eyes are dim now that I see the Truth is near; my strength is waned now that my need is most."

He was at this time nearing the end of the seventh year of his Search.

HIS ATTAINMENT

He was like a scientist in a laboratory; one who puts his mind with one steady flame on the thing at hand. Only he worked on things less tangible: on the SECRETS of the SILENCE: on the meaning of life and the cause of sorrow.

Moon after moon he sat thus, without moving, lost in deepest contemplation; forgetting sleep. But these days and years bore fruit, and One Morning, meditating under a GREAT BANYAN TREE he became ENLIGHTENED.

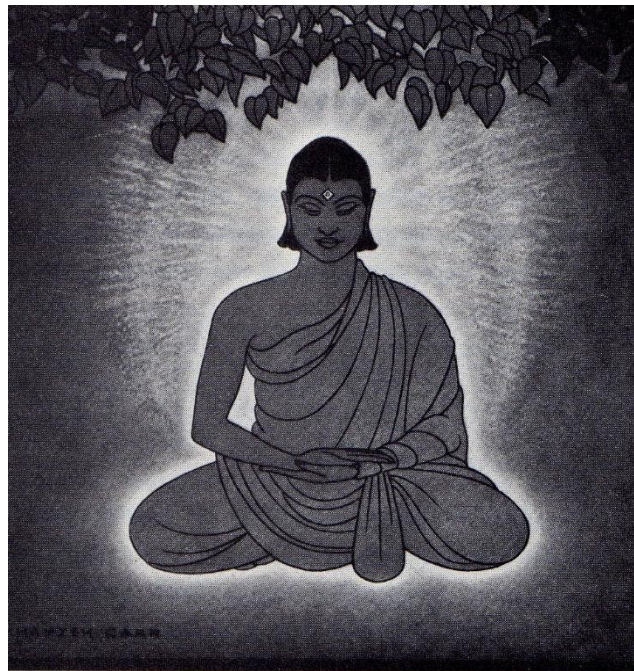
Yet Illumination did not come without opposition from all the Powers of Evil. Temptations came to keep him from his goal: ambition, false pride, lure of the senses, and doubts. They all battled with him, and told him of the indifference of man, whom he sought to help. They took the form of his lovely wife and pleaded with him to leave his search and come to her. They caused wild winds to blow, cloudbursts, lightning and earthquake. Never did the Demons of Darkness strive so hard! But in time these Forces found that his steadfastness and serenity were too great a Stronghold to invade. They finally left.

Then - the Mysteries of the Ages opened to him, as an Open Book. He penetrated the veil of Life and Death. With UNSEALED VISION he went into Spheres Beyond, learning the Secrets of All Creation. The meaning of sorrow was revealed to him, and the Wisdom of the Silence. He attained BLESSED NIRVANA - ONENESS with GOD.

It is said that on this morning, over all the earth, there was a gladness all men felt, though they knew not why, and a Peace spread into the homes of men.

HOLY was the INFLUENCE of that BLESSED VICTORY, when our Prince became the BUDDHA.

He arose radiant, rejoicing, strong, his face bathed in glory, to go among men to teach.



He had become the BUDDHA: the ENLIGHTENED ONE.

NEWS AT THE PALACE

At the Palace during these long years, sorrowful dwelt the King. He had made search with many messengers in many lands, but none had found word or trace of his son.

Yasodhara lived as a widow, without jewel or rich clothing, or sound of music. Often her eyes were dimmed with tears while she roamed in the gardens that had been their playground. Sorrowing, she longed for her lord. With her, full of bubbling spirits and interest in all things, was their son, born soon after Siddartha's departure, and now almost seven years old.

As the little boy played in the garden one day with his mother, two women of the court came to her in great excitement, saying that some wealthy merchants had come into the city bringing ivories and bowl of brass, birds unknown to their kingdom, and many treasures from distant lands. But they also bring news that makes all else seem as nothing. They have seen him, her lord, Prince Siddartha!

The Princess rose and clapped her hands and laughed, her eyes brimming with happy tears. She cried, "Oh, quick send those merchants to me. My ears are like parched throats to drink in their blessed news. Go bring them! I will fill their girdles with gold and gems."

Outside the purdah curtains they came, and she spoke to them, "Good men, you have seen my lord? Tell me if this be." They answered, "Yes, we have seen him, and he is honored more than Kings. We have heard him, and know that men follow him, as the leaves follow in the wake of the wind. He cometh here before the first rains."

They told how he had gained that which he had sought; and how from his words, peace and wisdom sprang up as flowers when water sparkles on sandy plain. They told how he had returned to the King who once had graciously welcomed him to stay, and how that King had carved his words and teachings in caves, and on stones, throughout his Kingdom. From there alone 900 men had followed his way of life, teaching what he had taught them.

These merchants received the happy thanks of the Princess, and they were richly rewarded in jewels and gold yet no gifts compared with what their words had brought to her.

WORD SENT FROM THE KING

When the King, his father, heard this news he sent nobles of the court to tell his son to come back to his own, for he was nearer to the funeral pyre by seven years. Yasodhara, too, conveyed word by nine horsemen to say the Princess of his house, Rahula's mother, waits for him, and longs to see his face again.

As these messengers came to the bamboo gardens where Siddhartha was teaching, they paused to hear him. He spoke with such compassion and power that each forgot the reason he had come. More messengers were sent, and one by one forgot his purpose and followed him. Then the King send a playmate of Siddhartha's, of old days; one most faithful, a true friend. As he neared the gardens he plucked some cotton from a bush and sealing his ears thus safely passed on to the Master, and gave him the messages.

Siddhartha replied, "It has been my wish to go. Tell the King, and the Princess, that I come at once."

HIS RETURN

The King had flowers strewn along the way and there were great elephants at the gates. It was arranged that the moment he passed the gates, drums would beat and the cry: "Siddhartha cometh" be made. Flowers were to be thrown and music to be played. All ears listened to hear the first beats of the drum.

Yasodhara, so eager and happy, rode on to the palace walls, to a nearby garden. But yet no drums sounded to tell of his coming. Listening and watching, the Princess then beheld one dressed in hermit clothes, with begging bowl, who stopped at each hut door, as was the custom with hermits. His face shone so brightly that many followed after, asking, "How is he?" Thus he quietly came by the park.

Yasodhara stepped forward in his path, and cried, "Siddhartha! Lord!" and fell sobbing at his feet, eyes brimmed with happy tears.

GREETING HIS FATHER

When the King heard how Siddartha came shorn, with mendicant's sad-colored cloth, stretching out a bowl to gather leavings from all the lowly, wrathful sorrow drove love from his heart!

Thrice he spat upon the ground, plucked at his silvered beard, and strode straight forth, lackeyed by trembling lords. Then frowning he climbed upon his war-horse, drove the spurs and dashed angered through the streets where folk scarce found breath to say, "The King, bow down," ere the loud calvacade had clattered by. At the south gate he encountered a mighty crowd, who followed close to the Buddha, whose LOOK SERENE met the old King's.

Nor lived the father's wrath longer than while the gentle eyes of Siddartha lingered in worship on his troubled brows. Then the King knelt to earth in proud humility, so dear it seemed to see his son; to know him well.

Yet, when he rose, he cried out, "Ends it thus, that great Siddartha steals into his realm, shorn, sandaled, craving food of low-born? He whose life was as a god's? My Son! Heir of Kings! Who did but clap their palms to have what earth could give and eager service bring! Thou should'st have come apparelled in thy rank! All my city waited at the gates!

"Where hast thou sojourned through these years whilst thy crowned father mourned? She, too, has lived as widows do, foregoing joys, nor wearing once the festive robe till now, when in her cloth of gold she welcomes home - a beggar spouse! In yellow remnants clad. Son! Why is this?"

"My Father, it is the custom of my race."

"Thy race counteth a hundred thrones from Maha Sammat, but no deed like this," answered the King.

"Not of mortal line, but of descent invisible. And now, with love, I proffer the treasure that I bring, where it is owed for tender debts."

The King inquired amazed, "What treasure?" The Buddha took his royal hand, and while they walked through the worshipping streets with the Princess and King on either side, he told of those things which make for peace; the truths which hold all wisdom.

Thus they came unto the Palace; the King now with brows unknit, drinking the mighty words, and in his own hand carrying Siddartha's

bowl. Whilst a new light brightened the lovely eyes of Yasodhara and sunned her tears.

THE TEACHER

Later, upon an eve of gold and blue, at sinking sun, Lord Buddha set himself to TEACH the LAW in hearing of his own. Upon the King's right hand he sat and round were ranged the lords: Ananda, Devadatta, and all the court, and nearby were the calm brethren in yellow garb; a goodly company. Town and country people came, and all strangers in the land were welcomed. Between his knees Rahula sat and smiled with wondering eyes upon his face. Beside him was Yasodhara, her heartaches gone. She folded over her shoulder-cloth of silver, his own yellow robe; nearest in all the world to him whose Words the world had waited for.

All that night he spoke, teaching the Law, and on no eyes fell sleep, for they who heard rejoiced with tireless joy. When morning came the King rose from his throne, bowed low before his son, kissing his hem, and he said, "Take me, O Son, lowest and least of all thy company."

Yasodhara, most happy, cried, "Give to Rahula, thou Blessed One, the Treasure of the Kingdom of thy Word for his inheritance."

Thus passed these three into the Path.

For forty-five years thereafter he taught, and proud Emperors carved his words upon the rocks and caves. And all has been written in holy books in many lands. And in all of these books and records known, all show no single act or word mars the PERFECT PURITY and TENDERNESS of this ILLUMINED Teacher of Wisdom and Compassion.

PARAMHANSA YOGANANDA wrote of the BUDDHA:

"Bless us, like thee, to seek remedy for the sorrows of others as we seek it for ourselves, thou Symbol of Sympathy, Incarnation of Mercy."
-- "Whispers from Eternity."



A drawing of the SRF Lotus Symbol
The star of the spiritual eye seen in the forehead is shown above the dark wings of eyebrows, centered in blue against a golden disk.

Wisdom for daily contemplation is found in the “Autobiography of a Yogi” by Paramhansa Yogananda; devotional inspiration in the prayers and guiding thoughts of “Whispers from Eternity,” and counseling on spiritual ways of life in “The Master Said.”

The quotations within this volume of Precepts are from the books mentioned and from the Guru's lectures.

His writings also include: “Metaphysical Meditations,” “Cosmic Chants,” “Science of Religion,” and sermons in the SRF Magazine. His meditation and concentration techniques and recharging exercises taught by SRF ministers, are also given in correspondence lessons and in classes, announced by the Self-Realization Fellowship Headquarters, Los Angeles, California.

“The Flawless Mirror” and “Priceless Precepts.” Books by Kamala, disciple of Paramhansa Yogananda.

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