

Zen: The Mystery and The Poetry of the Beyond

Talks given from 08/01/89 pm to 12/01/89 pm

English Discourse series

CHAPTER 1

Leaving the mind far behind

8 January 1989 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

BANSHO GYOSHU STUDIED MEDITATION FIRST WITH MASTER SHOMOKU. HE TOLD BANSHO, "STUDYING THIS PATH IS LIKE REFINING GOLD. WHEN IT IS IMPURE, THE PURE GOLD DOES NOT SHOW.

"AS I LOOK BETWEEN YOUR EYEBROWS, THERE IS VERY MUCH SOMETHING THERE. IF YOU DON'T PIERCE THROUGH COLD BONES, ONCE, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO CAST THIS THING OFF. HEREAFTER, SEE FOR YOURSELF – IT IS NOT A MATTER OF MY SPEAKING MUCH."

THEN BANSHO WAS GIVEN THE SAYING OF CHOSHA'S TO CONTEMPLATE ON: "TURN YOURSELF BACK INTO MOUNTAINS, RIVERS AND EARTH."

FOR SIX MONTHS BANSHO MET WITH NO SUCCESS AND SHOMOKU MADE THE COMMENT, "I ONLY HOPE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND LATER."

FINALLY, AFTER A LONG TIME, BANSHO DID SUDDENLY HAVE AN INSIGHT.

My Friends,

I have been telling my people for almost thirty years, on and off, that psychoanalysis is dead, as dead as Sigmund Freud. But no psychoanalyst ever answered. The reality is that psychoanalysis has never been alive, but it was a great method of exploitation of the sick people.

Nobody has ever been cured by psychoanalysis. There are people who have been under psychoanalysis for ten years, fifteen years, twenty years, but there is not a single human being who has gained any insight through psychoanalysis, or any wholeness, any depth, any peak.

People terminate psychoanalysis not because they have succeeded, but because their bank account is finished. Psychoanalysts are the most highly paid people in the world – for nothing. It was going to happen sooner or later, because nobody can be cheated forever.

My standpoint was that unless psychoanalysis has a soul... It is digging into dreams – which is an absolutely futile, meaningless effort, because dreams are just on the surface of the mind. You close your eyes and they start floating. Analyzing these dreams, you can never come to a conclusion; they go on and on. Psychoanalysis is just concerned with the dreams and the mind. It does not believe that there is something beyond the mind that is going to be its suicide, because your real source of life is beyond the mind.

Mind is just a computer. You can program it, you can reprogram it, deprogram it, you can do anything with it; it is a mechanism. It is not your being. And unless somebody reaches to his being, he is wandering and wasting his life, he is simply vegetating. He has no depth, no peak experiences.

From my university days I have been fighting, first, with my professors of psychology and psychoanalysis. Then, when I became a teacher in the university, I was fighting with my colleagues who were in the same department. But man's blindness, deafness, dumbness, seems to be infinite....

The materialist believes only in the body. The psychoanalyst believes in the mind as a by-product of the body: when the body dies the mind disappears also. So what are you doing? – torturing people unnecessarily. Neither the mind is going to be your eternal friend, nor the body. Just use them, but don't forget there is a witness within you.

Hence, I have been fighting for meditation. I have been telling people that unless psychoanalysis is based in meditation, unless it helps people to discover the no-mind, the beyond, it is an absolutely futile exercise of exploiting people. But no psychoanalyst agreed with me.

Just today I have received a confirmation from one of the most well-known psychoanalysts of America: Dr. Brian Weiss, Yale Medical School graduate, nationally recognized expert in psychopharmacology, brain chemistry, substance abuse, and Alzheimer's Disease, and Chief of Psychiatry at Mount Sinai Hospital, San Francisco.

He has been for years thinking to tell the world that psychoanalysis is dead, but could not gather the courage to go against the whole profession. But finally he decided to declare what has been his experience – his lifelong experience. In his book, *MANY LIVES, MANY MASTERS*, Weiss wrote that psychoanalysis is in its death throes, that it is no longer practical, and the reason is that it has no spirituality in it.

Perhaps now psychoanalysts will pay attention.

I am not a psychoanalyst, but I am a postgraduate in psychoanalysis, in religion, in philosophy. I have never practiced psychoanalysis because I have never believed that Sigmund Freud had revealed a new path to man's intrinsic spirituality.

I have heard: a man sold his donkey to another farmer, his neighbor, and he said in praise of the donkey that he was very wise, very intelligent, very hard-working. The neighbor who had purchased it tried hard, but it wouldn't move at all. He said, "Strange..."

He called the man from whom he had purchased it. The man took a big staff and hit the donkey exactly on his forehead. The donkey moved.

The man who had purchased it asked, "You were telling me to be kind and be compassionate to this animal, it is a rare species – and you are hitting it so brutally."

He said, "It is not hitting, it is just getting his attention!"

Perhaps Dr. Brian Weiss will have the attention – but I want to remind him that his approach is negative. He has found that psychoanalysis is missing something, but he does not know what. Just the word 'spirituality' doesn't mean anything. He has not yet found the positive element of meditation, of going inwards and remaining just a witness. Psychoanalysis may be dying, perhaps is dead; just the people who have invested their whole life in it and are exploiting millions of dollars out of it, are hiding the fact of its death.

But even Dr. Brian Weiss... although he has come to a right conclusion, his conclusion is still negative. He does not mention about meditation, he does not mention about witnessing, he does not mention anything about no-mind – which are the doors of spirituality.

His words, that psychoanalysis is missing spirituality, are bound to be misunderstood. That's why I am saying these words. People will think spirituality means to join the Catholic church, become a Hindu, become a Buddhist, and you have become spiritual.

It is not so cheap.

To become spiritual you have to go into your own depth, leaving mind far behind. Let it dream, let it think, you simply watch. And just watching is the greatest alchemy for transforming your being. The more you become rooted in watching and witnessing... the thoughts disappear, the dreams disappear, the mind is miles away and you are left alone in utter silence, in peace. All the tensions, anxieties, angst, are completely transformed into bliss, into ecstasy, into blessings.

My emphasis here is on therapies which DON'T go on for years and years: just a few days of therapy to prepare the ground for meditation. We are running here almost one hundred therapy groups, for every possible human being. But therapy is not the end; therapy is a preparation, clearing the ground for meditation. This is the only place in the whole world where therapy is being used as clearing the ground for a tremendous transformation from mind to no-mind.

Meditation is the only thing that can be called spiritual, because it is rooted in your very spirit. It is the only thing that is not going to die. Your body will be dying, your mind will be dying; only your witness has an eternity.

And without having eternity... how can you be joyous when death is coming every day closer?

Stop calling your birthdays birth days! These are the days when death has come one year closer. Those are the days of death!

You have been dying since the very moment you were born! Every moment death is taking its territory. It may take seventy years, or ninety years – it does not matter; death is following you like a shadow. Wherever you go, whichever direction you choose, you will end up in a grave, remember!

The only thing that will not end up in a grave is the experience of your mirrorlike witnessing being, your very life source. And just the experience of your own life source heals you immediately; nothing else needs to be added.

Dr. Brian Weiss writes his book, entitled MANY LIVES, MANY MASTERS. I would like to remind him that he has not found any master yet – many lives perhaps, but not a single master!

To find a master is to find someone who has already reached to the highest peak of being, who can show you the path. Of course, you will have to walk it yourself, but just indicating the path is a tremendous compassion.

The days of therapy plus meditation are going to come. As psychoanalysis dies, there will be a vacuum. That vacuum can be filled only by therapies which are not an end in themselves, but just a preparation, a device to indicate to you your innermost being.

The days of meditation are going to come.

I would like Dr. Brian Weiss to know perfectly well that he has come to a right conclusion, but the conclusion is half. The death of psychoanalysis will leave a vacuum which will create tremendous anxiety in people, because psychoanalysis – although a futile exercise – keeps people hoping: "Perhaps one year of analysis more, and I will come back perfectly sane and healthy and joyous."

Psychoanalysis is exploiting the hope.

By the way, I have to remind you that all the religions have been doing the same: exploiting the hope that tomorrow will be good, just be patient today. The next life is going to be good, just be patient in this life. Nobody knows about tomorrow. And we have known many tomorrows turning into today's; they don't fulfill the hope and the promise. Then the hope is shifted to another life.

All these religions have done the same.

Psychoanalysis is a modern cult; Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, are ancient cults. None of them is a religion.

A religion gives you freedom.

A religion gives you yourself.

To me, therapy plus meditation is equal to religion.

I would invite Dr. Brian Weiss to see this great experiment. Perhaps, because he is now absolutely disappointed with psychoanalysis, he may be able to see some possibility in therapy and meditation.

And this is not only an invitation to Dr. Brian Weiss, this is an invitation to all psychoanalysts, because you are going to lose your profession soon. Before you are drowned, we are preparing here a Noah's Ark.

Today begins a new series of talks. The title of the new series is: ZEN: THE MYSTERY AND THE POETRY OF THE BEYOND.

Before I discuss the sutras brought by Maneesha, on behalf of all of you, a few words about the title of the new series, Zen: The Mystery and the Poetry of the Beyond.

I don't consider Zen a philosophy or a theology but closer to poetry, to music, to painting, to dancing, to singing. It is not renunciation of life, it is rejoicing in life with your whole heart. And as you become deeply involved in creative lifestyles, the beyond opens its doors. I will simply call it 'beyond', because all other words that have been used have become contaminated by the old religions, but 'the beyond' is still pure; and because it is a poetry, a creative act, which in its peak transforms you and brings you to the doors of the mystery.

This whole existence is a mystery; only for blind people there is no mystery. If you have eyes, then everything is mysterious, and there is no solution for it. The deeper you go into it, the more mysterious it becomes. And there is no bottom to the depth, it is abyssmal. You can go on and on and on; the mystery becomes more mysterious, more colorful, more fragrant, but you don't come to the end where you can find an explanation for the mystery.

Unless a man settles with existence as mystery, he will not be able to live his life as ecstasy.

The sutras:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

BANSHO GYOSHU STUDIED MEDITATION FIRST WITH MASTER SHOMOKU. HE TOLD BANSHO, "STUDYING THIS PATH IS LIKE REFINING GOLD. WHEN IT IS IMPURE, THE PURE GOLD DOES NOT SHOW."

Have you ever thought how gold is purified? Only through fire. When the gold passes through fire, all that was not gold is burnt, and it comes out as pure gold, utterly refined.

Meditation is a fire, a very cool fire. You will not be burnt, but all that is false will disappear. And when you will come out of those flames, you will not be able even to recognize yourself, because now you will be having your original face, not the mask that the society has given to you. Now your personality will be gone – that was the contaminating factor – your individuality will come as sharp as a sword.

Shomoku also said to Bansho,

"AS I LOOK BETWEEN YOUR EYEBROWS, THERE IS VERY MUCH SOMETHING THERE."

It is one of the most important findings of the mystics that just between your eyebrows there opens a door; in India it has been called the third eye. These two eyes look outside. Just between the eyebrows, exactly in the middle there is an eye, a perceptivity, a sensitivity. When it opens, your inner world becomes absolutely clear to you. You know that you are not the body, not the mind. For the first time you recognize your being as a witness. This takes you to the beyond, and to the mysterious, and to the miraculous.

Onwards, life is a sheer joy, a sheer dance, a great music. You are overflowing, radiating pure gold. You have found the treasure of treasures. This has been the search of the whole East, of the whole Eastern genius.

Shomoku says to Bansho,

"AS I LOOK BETWEEN YOUR EYEBROWS, THERE IS VERY MUCH SOMETHING THERE. IF YOU DON'T PIERCE THROUGH COLD BONES, ONCE, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO CAST THIS THING OFF. HEREAFTER, SEE FOR YOURSELF – IT IS NOT A MATTER OF MY SPEAKING MUCH."

In such a small passage, Shomoku has said everything that is necessary for a seeker.

THEN BANSHO WAS GIVEN THE SAYING OF CHOSHA'S TO CONTEMPLATE ON: "TURN YOURSELF BACK INTO MOUNTAINS, RIVERS AND EARTH."

It is a very strange statement of Chosha's.

"TURN YOURSELF BACK INTO MOUNTAINS, RIVERS AND EARTH." What does it mean?

It means, remember you are carrying five elements in your body: the earth, the air, the fire, the sky, the water. These are the five elements that make your body. Chosha is saying, "Return these elements back to their sources, and then see whether something is left behind."

Yes, something is left behind. That something is your consciousness. It is not a by-product of your body, it is a totally different phenomenon than the material world. Once you have tasted something of consciousness, awareness, alertness, you will not be afraid of death; you know it can happen only to the dead body, it cannot happen to your living sources of consciousness. They are in the body, but they don't belong to the body.

Chosha's statement was given to Bansho to meditate on:

"TURN YOURSELF BACK INTO MOUNTAINS, RIVERS AND EARTH."

FOR SIX MONTHS BANSHO MET WITH NO SUCCESS AND SHOMOKU MADE THE COMMENT, "I ONLY HOPE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND LATER."

What went wrong?

He was too much in a hurry, he became too tense about the matter, too serious about the matter, and realizing your being is not a serious matter at all. It comes to you in utter relaxation, a non-tense state of being, in a playfulness.

Never make your meditation a serious affair, otherwise you are going to miss it. Be playful about it.

I am the first person who is saying that.

All the religions have been telling you to be serious. That's why they have killed millions of people, destroyed their spirituality, made them tense, anxiety-ridden, sick unto death. And in the effort to find their innermost being, people have been doing all kinds of unnecessary ascetic practices, which are nothing but masochistic torture.

I teach you playfulness.

It is your being.

Even if you want to lose it, you cannot lose it.

What is the hurry?

And what is the seriousness?

Just be playful, lightweight.

Bansho missed because of his great effort to find the innermost core of his being. Effort is a barrier. Effortlessness...

Just sitting silently, doing nothing, the spring comes, and the grass grows by itself.

That grass you should not misunderstand. Basho is saying: You just sit silently, unworried, effortlessly, doing nothing. When the time is ripe means when your tensions have all gone... the spring comes, and your being grows by itself. You don't have to do anything; it simply explodes into a tremendous revolution. All that was junk in you is burnt, and all that was truth in you, the pure twenty-four-karat gold, comes shining with a great splendor.

But it happens only in a relaxed state, in a let-go. This is one of the most difficult problems.

People who are seekers are in a hurry. They want it to happen just now. It can happen just now, but you are preventing it by desiring it to happen just now.

Forget all about when it happens. Whenever the right time comes, existence will take care. Enjoy the meditation; don't bother about any conclusion, about any enlightenment. These things are not within your hands, you cannot do anything about them!

The spring comes by itself... and suddenly you find your old personality has melted away, and something absolutely new and fresh is born within you, and it is growing on its own. You are just a watcher – watcher of the death of the old, and watcher of the birth of the new.

But there is no need to be serious. Any seriousness, any effort, any anxiety about being spiritual is the greatest barrier. Just be playful.

I have found myself without any seriousness. Hence, when I say this, I say it on my own authority.

FOR SIX MONTHS BANSHO MET WITH NO SUCCESS AND SHOMOKU MADE THE COMMENT, "I ONLY HOPE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND LATER."

FINALLY, AFTER A LONG TIME, BANSHO did SUDDENLY HAVE AN INSIGHT.

The anecdote does not say a few things; they have to be understood.

What must have happened that suddenly one day Bansho did have an insight?

Effort has a limitation: you get tired – that is the beauty of effort – otherwise you will never be enlightened. Any kind of effort, any anxiety has a limitation. A moment comes, you say, "Fuck it all!" That very moment is your enlightenment!

Basho wrote:

THE EVENING HAZE.

THINKING OF PAST THINGS –

HOW FAR OFF THEY ARE.

THE EVENING HAZE. THINKING OF PAST THINGS – HOW FAR OFF THEY ARE.

What does Basho mean by this haiku? He is one of the most insightful of Zen masters....

He is saying that what seems to be very important to you today, what is creating so much seriousness in you, so much anxiety in you, won't have any relevance after a few years. It will be far away, miles away, as though perhaps you have seen it in a dream. All the anxiety that it was giving you is lost.

Understanding this, just look backwards: at every point in the past you will find yourself ridden with anxiety, anguish, misery, failure. But now all that has become just writing on the sands. A breeze comes and the whole writing disappears, or a tidal wave comes and takes the whole writing away, leaves behind a fresh sand without any signature.

Basho's intention is that looking at the past you should understand that what is present will become past tomorrow. Don't be so serious. Tomorrow it will not matter at all. And the same is true about your future: never be serious, because everything is going to become past, just like a dream you had seen somewhere. Perhaps you may not even recognize that you were so much troubled.

Basho's statement is that your whole life is just a prolonged dream. Don't take it seriously. Be playful, enjoy it while it lasts. There is no need to renounce it, because those who renounce it take it seriously.

I have always wondered about so-called great philosophers, for example Adi Shankara, who has been thought by the Indians to be the greatest mind in the whole history of man. But that "greatest mind," Adi Shankara, looks so stupid on just a small scrutiny.

He talked about the world being illusory: it is just purely a dream, there is nothing outside, you are projecting it. Still, he could not touch an untouchable.

One morning he was getting ready for his prayer, taking a bath in the Ganges in Varanasi. It was still dark and he was coming back up the steps, and a man touched him and told him, "I am a sudra, an untouchable." Shankara was furious, he forgot all about peace, and "love your enemies."

I have always thought, Why unnecessarily...? First love yourself, then love your friends – because these friends will turn someday into your enemies. Continue loving. Nobody becomes an enemy before becoming a friend, so just go on loving friends and ex-friends, wives and ex-wives. But it is all a dream, your projection.

Shankara, freaking out, denies his own philosophy. The sudra was a strange fellow. He said, "Before you become enraged..."

Shankara said, "I will have to take another bath! It is a cold winter morning, and knowing perfectly well that you are a sudra, why did you touch me? There is no crowd" – and Varanasi has vast ghats with steps. "Only two men... there was no need to touch me."

The old man said, "There was: to make you aware that next time you say the world is illusory, remember me. It is not. You are freaking out at your own projections. You are going to take a bath in a dream river. Just think about your philosophy."

But Shankara is thought to be the greatest philosopher, at least in the Indian heritage. But his philosophy seems to be just mind-oriented. It has no actual experience of awakening. Otherwise, nobody is touchable and nobody is untouchable; just as you are made of bones and flesh, everybody is made of the same stuff. Everybody is made of the same elements.

And for a man like Adi Shankara – who says that everything outside is just a dream – behaving in such a way exposes him, that all his philosophy is just talk. He is articulate enough to talk about things, but it is not his life.

And unless something is your life, your very life, it makes no difference.

Another instance is still more idiotic.

Shankara traveled all over India, challenging other philosophers. One can ask, "Why are you challenging your own projections?" In this dreamlike world, if somebody thinks he is a philosopher, what is the harm? There is nobody, just a phantom, the Holy Ghost. But he went around the country with this philosophy that the world is maya, illusion, hallucination, a mirage.

He reached to Mandla, a small city in central India. It is named after a great thinker, Mandan Mishra. He was very famous in those parts, and he was the last one to be defeated. Shankara wanted a victory over all the philosophers of this country.

Strange... his philosophy says everything is illusory – and his victory over illusory phantoms is real?

He went there. Before entering the city there was a well, and women were drawing water from the well. He asked them, "Which way do I have to go to find Mandan Mishra's house?"

The women started giggling. They said, "We have heard much about you. You think everything is illusory; to whom are you asking the question? What do you mean by Mandan Mishra's house?"

"But if you want to meet another mirage, another illusion, a very learned illusion, you will not find any difficulty. You simply go into the town, and you will find Mandan Mishra's house without any difficulty, because just on the fence of his garden there are hanging many parrots, repeating, reciting the Vedas. They are all great pundits."

Shankara went, and he could not believe it: parrots were reciting Rigveda with such accuracy. He said, "My God! If parrots are doing this, I am getting into a lion's den." But he had to; the desire, the longing, which he was denying in his philosophy, was too heavy on him. He wanted to be victorious over all the philosophers.

It is the same desire as Alexander the Great had, in a different direction. He wanted to be the conqueror of the world, and Shankara wanted to be the conqueror of all the thinkers and philosophers. What is the difference? The desire, the longing is the same. The ego needs the same nourishment.

He entered into the house, a little nervous. And Mandan Mishra had thousands of disciples – he was very old. He received Shankara with great love, welcomed him, knowing perfectly well that he has come to challenge him.

Shankara said, "Do you understand my purpose in coming so far to meet you? You are the last person I have to conquer. I want to challenge you for a long discussion."

Mandan Mishra said, "It is perfectly okay. But do you have a judge who will decide who is the winner?"

Shankara had nobody with him, but he had heard much about Mandan Mishra's wife, Bharti. He had heard that she was as great a thinker as Mandan Mishra, so he said, "There is no problem. Your wife, Bharti, can preside and be the sole judge."

The discussion lasted for six months, and finally Bharti gave the judgment that Shankara had been the winner. And this was the tradition of those days: the one who is defeated becomes the disciple of the one who is the winner. So Mandan Mishra said, "If Bharti says that you are the winner, then I am ready to be your disciple."

But Bharti said, "Wait." In India it is a tradition that a man and a woman are only half and half of one whole – only together are they complete. Bharti said, "Wait. You have won only half of Mandan Mishra; half is still to be defeated. Then we will both become your disciples."

Shankara was amazed. The woman was really courageous: first to declare her husband defeated, and second to prevent Shankara from being victorious until she was defeated. And she was certainly a very clever woman.

Shankara was only thirty-three years of age, and a so-called celibate. I say "so-called" because nobody can be a celibate, it is against nature – unless you are impotent.

Bharti was very clever. She started the discussion, and she asked Mandan Mishra to preside and be the judge. Shankara agreed, but he was not aware what that woman had in her mind. She started talking about sex. Shankara had no notion... at least he pretended that he knew nothing about sex.

Bharti said, "I can give you a few months. You can go and learn about sex and come back again."

Shankara went to his disciples, who were residing in the mountains near Mandla, and he left his body in the care of his disciples.

A king had just died, and Shankara entered the dead king's body to know everything about sex, because the king had many queens. Unless you experience it, it won't be valid before that clever woman, Bharti.

My question is: Why could he not go in his own body? He believed in the body too much. He talked about that the body is just illusory; if it is illusory, then what difference does it make that you enter into a dead man's body and have love affairs with many women to understand the whole science of sex? Why had you not the courage to go in your own body? Why did you make the difference between two illusions, mine and yours?

But as far as I understand, this seems to be just to protect his celibacy. The whole story has been created by the disciples, and supported by him, because it took six months for him – too long really. Even six days are too much! Anybody who has been married knows: just six days – and Sunday is a holiday! Six months? – it seems he got too much interested!

But this whole story seems to be bogus. And how to protect a dead body, Shankara's body, for six months? There is no indication of any science that Shankara or his disciples knew. In six days the body will start stinking; in six months there will be no Shankara, just a pile of bones, and rotten... everything rotten ... and cockroaches... and rats, and all kinds of illusory things!

All these so-called great philosophers and thinkers are just clever, articulate, logical, but don't have an authentic experience of life.

Question 1

Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

WHEN YOU SPEAK SO VIGOROUSLY ABOUT THE STUPIDITY OF POLITICIANS AND OTHER PUBLIC FIGURES, I INWARDLY CHEER YOU ON. BUT SIMULTANEOUSLY I AM AWARE THAT YOU MAY PROVOKE HOSTILITY AND INTENT TO HARM YOU – FROM WHICH I WANT TO PROTECT YOU.

IS THERE ANY ANSWER – OR IS THIS SIMPLY A DILEMMA FOR YOUR DISCIPLES TO LIVE WITH?

Maneesha, it is my destiny to hit hard every untruth, every lie, every consolation, whatever the consequences, because, as far as I am concerned, I have arrived home. They can harm my body, but remember, it is not so easy, for the simple reason... I will remind you.

Ed Meese, attorney general of America, when they deported me illegally, unconstitutionally, without any evidence against me – he admitted in a press conference that "There is no evidence at all, but we could not tolerate the man in our country. He was attracting young Christians."

They go on sending missionaries all over the world to attract people to Christianity, and if I was attracting the intelligent... What was the problem? – the fundamentalist mind.

He said, "We could not jail him; there was no evidence. And we could not kill him, because killing him will make him a martyr, killing him will make him a founder of a religion."

That fear is a great protection. Don't be worried.

Nobody is going to take the risk they took in the case of Jesus. What was the result? Now Christianity is the biggest religion in the world as far as numbers are concerned – half of the world belongs to the Christians.

The Jews cannot forgive themselves that such a good boy, Jesus – if they had not killed him, he would have founded such a great firm, a Jewish firm. They did not do that again.

In the case of Marx, who was a Jew and propagated communism, the Jews did not crucify him or harass him. They did not do the same with Sigmund Freud; he was a Jew. These three Jews have created the biggest Jewish firms in the world.

Jews cannot forgive themselves: "That poor boy was creating such a beautiful exploitation, and you killed him." Now, everybody has to think twice to kill a man like me!

So don't be worried, Maneesha. I have invisible protection in their fear. And I can create fear in them only if I say the truth with a lion's roar! The more they are afraid of me, the less is the possibility of doing any harm to me.

And of course I can understand you and your problem. You have to live this dilemma. Those who followed Socrates, they had to live it; it purified them. For those who lived with Jesus, it was a tremendous transfiguration.

If anything happens to me, much will happen to you simultaneously.

You can go on taking me for granted and postponing the urgent, immediate penetration into your being. But if something is done to me, perhaps that will bring the urgency, because now you cannot take me for granted.

In fact, a very famous case can be considered...

Gautam Buddha had given initiation to his own cousin-brother, Ananda. Ananda was older than Gautam Buddha; before taking initiation he told Gautam Buddha, "Right now, I am your older brother;

I can dictate anything to you and you will have to follow it" – just the old obedience. "But I have come to be initiated by you. After initiation, I will be just a disciple amongst thousands of other disciples. So before initiation I want you to remember three conditions.

"First, I will always remain with you, you cannot send me away from you on any mission. I will take care of your body, of your food, of your medicine. Secondly, if I ask any question, you cannot say, 'Wait for the right time.' You cannot postpone it, you have to answer immediately. Thirdly, if I want somebody to meet you – even in the middle of the night – you cannot say no."

Buddha said, "There is no difficulty. I will remember your conditions."

And Ananda remained for forty-two years his disciple, continuously following him like a shadow, serving him, helping him in every possible way – but he did not become enlightened. Others who had come later on went on becoming enlightened. He was very much puzzled.

He asked Buddha, "What is going wrong? People who have come very late have become enlightened masters, and I have been with you for all these forty-two years, and I don't know even the abc of enlightenment."

Buddha said, "You will become enlightened the day I die, not before it."

Ananda was very much puzzled. He said, "Why?"

Buddha said, "Simple psychology. You trust that I am your brother, I will not leave you unenlightened, so you have not been doing what I have been saying. You have been just believing that 'My brother will not leave me unenlightened.' What can I do? I can only indicate, I cannot become enlightened on your behalf."

And exactly what Buddha said happened. The day he died, Ananda did not move from the place where he was sitting by the side of Buddha. His body was taken to the funeral pyre; Ananda did not move. He closed his eyes. For the first time, a tremendous urgency had arisen. If he misses this moment, then one never knows how many lives it will take to find another master of the caliber of Gautam Buddha. And Buddha had said, "After I die you will become enlightened."

"I will not move from this place. I will not open my eyes, I will not eat, I will not drink. I will do what he has been saying and I have been postponing." He became enlightened by the evening. In the morning Buddha died; by the evening Ananda became enlightened. The urgency had arisen.

So if something happens to me, it will be an urgency for you. If nothing happens to me, I am your urgency.

It is time for Sardar Gurudayal Singh.

Paddy finds an old tandem, a two-man bicycle, on the scrap heap, and fixes it up. Then he and Seamus decide to go out for a ride on it to the top of Heart Attack Hill.

After two hours of furious pedaling up the steep hill, they finally arrive at the top.

"Jeezus Christ!" gasps Paddy, on the front. "I did not think we would ever make it."

"Me either," pants Seamus, at the back, "and we would have slid all the way backwards if I had not kept the brakes on!"

Little Eggbert has a nasty habit of cursing and swearing, and his parents cannot seem to do anything with him. One day, Father Fungus comes for tea.

Little Eggbert comes up to the priest and says, "More fucking tea, Father?"

Father Fungus is shocked, so he suggests that his parents send Eggbert to see Doctor Feelgood, the psychiatrist.

"Tell me, Eggbert," says the shrink, "what would you like most in the world?"

"Wow! I would like a god-dammed rabbit!" cries Eggbert.

"Okay," says Feelgood, "your mom and dad will get you a rabbit if you promise not to swear again. Is it a deal?"

"Sure, Mr. Shrink, sir!" exclaims Eggbert. "I will do it!"

So Eggbert gets his rabbit, and for two weeks all is peaceful around the house. Then one day, Sunday morning, Father Fungus comes for tea.

"I hear you have a pet rabbit now, Eggbert," says the priest. "Can I see it?"

"Sure," says Eggbert, and runs out in the garden to get his pet. But just as he brings it into the room, the rabbit starts to give birth to an enormous bunch of baby rabbits.

Eggbert watches in horror for a moment, then puts the mother rabbit on the ground, looks at the priest and cries, "Holy Shit! The fucking thing is falling apart!"

Milton Trueheart is driving along in his Rolls Royce when he sees his old school friend, Etta Apple. He pulls over, lowers the electric window and says, "Hi, Etta! How are you?"

"Wow!" says Etta, "is that you, Milton? And in a Rolls Royce? How did you make so much money?"

"I am a fortune teller," replies Milton. "I can see the future."

"I would love to learn how to do that," says Etta.

"So jump in the car," says Milton, "and I will tell you all about it."

Etta gets into the car and they drive off to Milton's house.

"Okay," says Milton, when they arrive. "So you want to learn about fortune telling? Then take off your blouse."

"Take off my blouse?" says Etta. "Are you crazy?"

"Look," says Milton, "do you want to know? Then trust me."

So Etta takes off her blouse.

"Good," says Milton, "now take off your skirt."

"Take off my skirt?" cries Etta. "What is going on here?"

"Do you want to learn how to see the future?" asks Milton. "Then trust me."

So Etta takes off her skirt.

"Now," says Milton, "take off your panties and lie on the couch."

"What?" screams Etta. "Why should I take off my panties? What are you going to do? Fuck me?"

"Good," says Milton, "you are learning already!"

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

(gibberish)

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Be silent.

Close your eyes.

Feel your body to be completely frozen.

This is the right moment to look inwards with total consciousness, with total life energy, and with an urgency as if this is your last moment on the planet earth.

Deeper and deeper...

As you move deeper towards your center, you will start feeling a tremendous calm, a strange silence, a great peace. When you reach to the very center... a great joy, for no reason at all... a great explosion, in which you become just luminous... and a great ecstasy takes possession of you.

This center of your life, your being, is your connection with the cosmos. From this door you can enter into the cosmos and become one with existence. But even to be at the center... you will find great splendor and mystery.

This has been called the buddha, the awakened one. This moment you are all buddhas. You may forget, but that does not matter. You will remember again. Sooner or later your remembrance will become a constant heartbeat. That day will be the greatest day in your life, the day of enlightenment.

Remember one thing only: the buddha hidden at the center of your being has only one quality, the quality of a witness.

Witness the body – that it is not you.

Witness the mind – that it is not you.

What is left when the mind and body no more belong to you? – only a silent witnessing, a peaceful mirrorlike reflection.

This is your eternal being.

To make it clear, Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Relax, but remember your witness. As your witnessing deepens, your separation with existence will start disappearing. Soon Gautam the Buddha Auditorium will become a lake of consciousness without any ripples.

The evening was beautiful on its own, but ten thousand beings turning into buddhas make it one of the most splendid, the most majestic, the most mysterious evenings of all.

Collect whatever you are experiencing – the silence, the peace, the love, the compassion, the blissfulness – and persuade the buddha to come along with you. He has to become your everyday life, your actions, your words, your silences, your music, your dance. Unless a buddha can dance, and you disappear in that dance, the enlightenment has not happened yet.

It is within your reach. Just collect... and persuade the buddha.

Inch by inch, we are every day bringing the center and the circumference of your life closer. Any moment the spring comes, and the grass grows by itself.

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Come back. But come back as buddhas, awakened, silent, graceful.

Sit for a few moments just to recollect the golden path you have traveled back and forth.

Remember, whatever you have experienced at the center has to become part of your daily life. Don't think that meditation has to be set apart from your life, no; that kind of meditation is not the right kind. The right meditation is that which becomes your very life.

Okay, Maneesha?

Yes, Beloved Master.

CHAPTER 2

Spread the message

9 January 1989 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

A MONK ASKED KOYO SEIJO, "DAITSU SAT IN ZAZEN FOR TEN KALPAS AND COULD NOT ATTAIN BUDDHAHOOD; HE DID NOT BECOME A BUDDHA. HOW CAN THIS BE?"

SEIJO SAID, "YOUR QUESTION IS QUITE SELF-EXPLANATORY."

THE MONK ASKED, "HE MEDITATED SO LONG; WHY COULD HE NOT ATTAIN BUDDHAHOOD?"

SEIJO SAID, "BECAUSE HE DID NOT BECOME A BUDDHA."

AT ANOTHER TIME, A MONK ASKED ROSO, "WHAT IS MEANT BY 'IN FRONT OF YOUR NOSE'?"

ROSO RESPONDED, "SLENDER BAMBOOS CANNOT BE USED AS MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS; A GOURD CANNOT RETURN TO THE TRELLIS IT GREW ON."

SAIGUN ONCE ENTERED A TEMPLE AND NOTICED A SPARROW MAKING DROPPINGS ON THE HEAD OF AN IMAGE OF BUDDHA. SAIGUN SAID TO NYOE, A DISCIPLE OF MA TZU, "HAS THE SPARROW THE BUDDHA-NATURE OR NOT?"

NYOE ANSWERED, "YES!"

SAIGUN SAID, "THEN WHY DOES IT MAKE DROPPINGS ON THE HEAD OF BUDDHA?"

NYOE REPLIED, "DOES IT MAKE DROPPINGS ON THE HEAD OF A HAWK?"

Friends,

One friend has asked, "If Ronald Reagan and Mother Teresa both fall from a one hundred story building, who will reach to the earth first?"

In the first place, who cares?

In the second place, just by the way, it is good news; the sooner it happens, the better.

The Republican Party of India and the Dalit organization – both are organizations of the neo-Buddhists – have made a similar resolution to the government of India, that action should be taken against me because I have been comparing myself with Buddha.

In the first place, I have never compared myself with Buddha. I have always said definitively that he is life-negative, and I am absolutely life-affirmative. There is no possibility of any comparison.

He is a bullock cart, and you want it to be compared with my Rolls Royce? Of course, the basic principle of a bullock cart is the same – the four wheels – but still you cannot compare it with a Rolls Royce.

These organizations have told the government that their religious feelings are very much hurt.

In the first place, if you understand religion... it is in the transcendence of thoughts and feelings. There are no religious feelings at all! Only idiots have religious feelings.

I have loved Buddha, just as I would have loved the inventor of a bullock cart; it was a great revolution. Buddha is the beginning of a great revolution, but only the beginning, not the end. Looking backwards, I can see he managed a little bit to go against the tradition, but not wholeheartedly.

I am absolutely against the past.

Although Buddha tried in every way... but he was at the beginning point; you could not expect him to create the whole science of transcendence. He has my respect, my love – but I cannot tolerate to be compared with Gautam Buddha!

In fact, the government has to take action against these two organizations.

Gautam Buddha is an escapist, and it is Gautam Buddha who is responsible for the poverty of this country. If so many thousands of people renounce the world, they become parasites on the society.

I don't want you to renounce the world. My whole teaching is: Rejoice in the world. What comparison can there be between me and Gautam Buddha?

Gautam Buddha is twenty-five centuries behind me. And as far as the allegation is concerned, that I have compared myself, it is an absolute lie!

These organizations should understand that if even a little bit of Buddha's experience had been their experience, then this revengeful resolution asking the government to take action against me does not show compassion, does not show meditation.

I want the government not to take any action against these two organizations. I, with all my friends, forgive them. The blind need forgiveness, the ignorant need compassion.

One thing should be understood definitively: I am a buddha in my own self – and the word 'buddha' is not the monopoly of anybody. It simply means the awakened one. It was not Gautam Buddha's name; his name was Gautam Siddharth. When he became awakened, those who understood his enlightenment started calling him Gautam Buddha.

But the word buddha, according to Gautam Buddha too, is simply inherent in every human being, and not only in every human being, but every living being. It is the intrinsic quality of everybody.

Everybody has the birthright to become a buddha.

These poor Buddhists don't understand at all the message of Gautam Buddha. How can they understand me? I have gone far beyond Gautam Buddha.

I have been teaching you all to be buddhas, but nobody has to be a Buddhist. To be a Buddhist is again falling into another prison. They have escaped from the Hindu fold, and now they have fallen into another fold. The names of the prisons are different, but you are all the same a prisoner. You were a Hindu, you were a prisoner; you can be a Christian... The prison will change, but not your slavery, not your consciousness.

People go on changing their prisons. That does not help any transformation in your being. You don't achieve freedom by changing prisons.

I teach my people freedom as the ultimate value. You should not belong to any organization, to any organized religion. It does not matter whether it is Buddhism, or Christianity, or Hinduism – these are different names. Perhaps the architecture of the prisons is different, but you will be all the same a prisoner.

Hence, I want my people to remember it absolutely: not to belong to any organization. All organizations are against individual freedom.

And if there is no individual freedom, there is no possibility of spiritual growth.

You should stand on your own. You don't need any organization, any church, to transform you. You have all that is needed within you; you can be a buddha in your own right. That does not mean you are comparing yourself with Gautam Buddha. Gautam Buddha is too backward.

And I have consistently said that Gautam Buddha is not a complete being, because in renouncing the outer, he has dropped one of his wings. Now he is flopping with one wing.

I want my people to have both the wings healthy. They are not against each other, they support each other. You cannot fly with one wing. You need two wings – the outer and the inner, the material

and the spiritual, the visible and the invisible. Buddha is only half a man. I want you to be the whole man.

How can I compare myself with Gautam Buddha? I am a complete man! The outer world is my world, and the inner world is also my world, and I enjoy both, I love both. I love the flowers of the outer world, the rainbows, the dance of rains, the rivers, the mountains, the oceans. And at the same time, I know my inner treasures, my inner ecstasies. And I don't see in them any contradiction.

You don't have to renounce anything, you don't have to choose anything. You have to be choicelessly aware of both: the outer and the inner. Rejoice in both, and your enrichment will be far greater than any Gautam Buddha.

Just the other day I was talking to you about Brian Weiss and his book, MANY MASTERS, MANY LIVES. He has also come across... but he has been hiding it for years, just afraid of the society – particularly Christianity, because he lives in a Christian world. He has been practicing hypnosis and taking people to their past lives.

Now Christianity, Mohammedanism, Judaism – three great religions of the world don't believe in any past lives or future lives. They confine themselves only to one life. So for years he has been successfully working, but was not declaring it to his associates, to his colleagues.

Under hypnosis he took his patients into their past lives, and strangely enough whatever the patient was suffering psychologically, once he had found the source in the past life somewhere, immediately the symptom in this life disappeared. He has cured many people by just taking them to their past lives. Some wound, some hurt they have been carrying from past lives... You can go on psychoanalyzing their minds, but that won't help.

But I want Brian Weiss again to remember that the whole East has put its total genius into the revelation of past lives and reincarnation. We know much more about it than you can even dream of, for the simple reason that for almost ten thousand years this country is the only country in the world which has been working with different techniques and methods to reach to past lives.

But Brian Weiss' experiment is courageous. He will be disturbing the fundamentalist Christians, but he has come out. He says that what psychoanalysis cannot do in twenty years can be done in a few sessions of hypnosis. You just have to take the person to his past lives. He is carrying scars and wounds which are not of this life. Unless you reach to the sources, they will not disappear.

But there is a difficulty – perhaps he has not even taken account of it. The person may be simply imagining that he has reached the past life. How do you make the distinction? The man may be dreaming under hypnosis that he has reached the past life.

Even that imagination and hallucination and dreaming may be helpful to remove the symptoms, but you cannot be certain that he has reached really beyond the birth, beyond the death, to the past life. And as far as many lives are concerned, the greater possibility is that under hypnosis the person will imagine.

Brian Weiss has to understand, because what I am saying is that unless first you teach your patients meditation...

Meditation cuts the very roots of imagination, thoughts, dreaming, hallucination, illusion. Meditation cuts the mind completely out of the way. In hypnosis, only after meditation can it be certain that the person has reached to the past life. And the basic symptom will be, not remembering the past life, but re-living it. In deep hypnosis, after meditative practices, one does not remember past lives, one starts re-living the past lives.

There is a vast difference between remembering and re-living. If just mind remembering can help to heal psychological wounds, you can understand perfectly well that re-living the past life will not only remove your mental sickness, it will remove all the darkness around your being. It will not only give you mental health, it will give you spiritual growth – and the difference is tremendous.

But he has broken the ice. I respect the man, but he has to learn much more before he can be definite that the patient is not dreaming, but exactly has entered into a different time space.

We are doing therapies with all kinds of meditations, ending the day with me in the deepest meditation, where you start feeling, recognizing, rejoicing, in a space which is called no-mind, your intrinsic buddha dhamma – your intrinsic nature of being a buddha. After these meditations, if some wounds remain, if your psychology still remains sick, you can go through hypnotic sessions which are available here, move into rebirth, go beyond this life.

But remember, you are not making any effort to remember your past life, you just allow the past life to reveal itself to you. The feeling will not be of remembrance, the feeling will be of re-living it. Re-living the past lives cleans you completely.

It is not absolutely necessary; if you are doing meditations deeply, it is enough. If it is not enough, then perhaps re-living the past lives may be immensely helpful.

Dr. Brian Weiss is going to have tremendous trouble from Christianity, Judaism, Mohammedanism, and from his own colleagues who think that man is nothing more than one life. But he has taken a bold, a lion's step. I support him from the East. Ten thousand years' experimentation is in absolute accordance with his findings, although he is only a beginner.

That's why I have invited him to be here, so that he can understand the difference between remembering and re-living, and can understand that hypnosis directly is not definitive, because you have not cut all the rubbish of thinking, imagination, hallucination. They will arise, and if you insist that in hypnosis you have reached to past lives, the person is helpless; he will believe in his own mind projections. Even these projections will be helpful – more helpful than psychoanalysis – but these cannot bring a transformation in the person.

You will be only dealing with patients. Do you understand that healthy people also need tremendous help? You may be healthy mentally, physically, but that does not make you a perfect man. Unless you know the beyond, the mysterious, you know nothing. You can live a healthy life, and you can have a healthy heart attack.

It is a well-known fact that sick people rarely have heart attacks. One needs some energy to have a heart attack. Have you observed the fact that after eighty years of age, very few people die? After ninety, even less and after a hundred, you will very rarely find somebody dying, because dying needs some energy. After a hundred years of living, you will be so exhausted... you cannot die!

It will be good for him to have a deep contact with the East, because he will not get any support in the West. He will be suppressed, subdued, contradicted, and alone he will not be able to fight the vested interests of Christianity, Judaism, Mohammedanism, communism. Now almost three-fourths of the world believes that man is only a material phenomenon, there is no spirit; nobody can move from one body to another body.

This country still remains the only stronghold for the theory and practice of reincarnation. That's why I have invited him. Here he may flower, finding the right soil and the right atmosphere. It is not possible right now in the West.

I am trying my best to send my people around the globe, spreading something that they have experienced, something for which they are authoritative. The meditations will make you capable to have the courage to fight rotten conditions, rotten traditions, rotten scriptures.

We already have two million people around the world. We can create a worldwide fire so that this night, a long night, ends into a dawn, and a new man comes out of the fire of meditation – a new man with a soul, with a deep connection with the cosmos.

In the past, two kinds of fallacies have been perpetrated. One is from Christianity, Mohammedanism, Judaism, communism, and that is, accepting only the material part of man and rejecting anything inner. The second fallacy has been perpetrated by the East, by Buddha, by Mahavira, by Shankara: rejecting everything that is material, calling it illusory, and just confining themselves to the inner. Both are halfhearted.

I teach you the whole man, and I want you to be the whole man: Zorba The Buddha.

THE CONCEPT OF REINCARNATION, HITHERTO DISMISSED AS BEING WITHOUT SCIENTIFIC BASIS, IS BEING INCREASINGLY USED BY PSYCHIATRISTS TO CURE PHOBIAS AND OTHER MENTAL ILLNESSES – but they don't say it publicly.

IN HIS BOOK, *Many Lives, Many Masters*, BRIAN WEISS SAID IT TOOK HIM FOUR YEARS TO "GARNER THE COURAGE" TO WRITE ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES WITH PATIENTS REGRESSING INTO PAST LIVES UNDER HYPNOSIS.

HE SAID HE HAD BEEN AFRAID FOR HIS FLOURISHING CAREER IN A CONSERVATIVE PROFESSION. BUT THE RESPONSE HAS ASTONISHED HIM. HE HAS NOT BEEN RIDICULED.

Just wait a little more, Dr. Brian Weiss. You have not hit hard against the tradition; you are simply proposing a process of helping the psychologically sick. But the idea of reincarnation goes further. You will be again astonished – and ridiculed by your own people, because it puts their whole theology in the wrong.

Perhaps they have not understood it and its implications yet. Just wait a little. I am saying it on my own experience.

In the beginning I was traveling all over the country, and people were very much happy with me. Fifty thousand, sometimes one hundred thousand people would gather to listen to me, but they

could not understand the implications. They simply rejoiced that a man from this country is capable of rediscovering the forgotten language of spiritual revelation.

But as they became more and more acquainted with me, they started dispersing. They saw that I was not supporting their traditions – although I was commenting on Indian scriptures, so they were very happy. But as they became aware – it took some time for them – that although I was mentioning their scriptures, what I was interpreting was my own, immediately all the traditions of India, Hindu, Jaina, Buddhist, all became enemies to me. But it took almost fifteen years for their thick skulls to comprehend my meaning.

So you just wait. It will be good, before they start ridiculing you, if you come to the East to have some support and more material which has been gathered through ten thousand years of experimentation. You can become more sophisticated and more scientific, but you don't know anything about meditation yet.

Once you know meditation, then hypnosis can be of tremendous value. And once you start growing in the right soil, in the right atmosphere, you will have enough courage to go to the West, and you will not have to wait for four years to "garner courage" just to express a simple thing which has been accepted, recognized for thousands of years.

Perhaps he is not aware of the Eastern discoveries in the inner world....

He seems to be the right person to be welcomed here. We can help him to refine his theorization. It is absolutely a need that the West understands that there is not only one life; you have lived many more lives, and you will live many lives until you become a buddha. Once you become a buddha, wholeheartedly – inwards, outwards, in a synchronicity – you will disappear into the ultimate cosmos. You don't need an individual body; the whole existence becomes your body. But unless you become a buddha, you will have to go on from one body to another body.

It is a torture. It is imprisonment.

To attain ultimate freedom you have to be pure consciousness which can move into the blue skies and disappear. This disappearance is not annihilation; this disappearance into the blue skies is becoming one with the whole.

Just by the way... one yoga teacher, Iyengar, in Poona, has given an interview to some journalists, and they asked him about me because we are both in Poona. He used to come to listen to my lectures in those old days when they did not exactly understand my meaning.

He used to come to my meditation camps – there are here witnesses for it – and he wanted me to do some yoga exercises, because I was traveling continually, and that would have an adverse effect on my body.

I said, "I would rather have that adverse effect than learn some stupid distortions of the body. And moreover, I remember perfectly how you exploit people."

He was teaching J. Krishnamurti a few yoga postures to help him overcome his forty years' migraines. Now, a yoga teacher is a professional; all that he teaches you is certain exercises of

the body. But when he wrote his book on yoga, on the flap paper he wrote, "I am the guru of J. Krishnamurti."

I told him, "I don't want such exploitation. 'Guru of J. Krishnamurti' – just because you have taught him a few exercises? Then any idiot who can teach a few exercises, then any doctor who treats you with medicine, then any psychiatrist, any psychoanalyst, can claim to be your guru."

"I don't want to be included in your disciples. I am nobody's disciple. Hence, I have to refuse your offer for teaching me some exercises. I don't need them."

Instead of talking about me – he was asked to talk about me – he said, "Everybody is a part of God, but nobody can claim to be God himself." In his mind he thinks that I think myself God.

Just look around the world: if I were God there would not be such a mess. This mess is enough to prove that I am not God. But his statement is so stupid, that everybody is a part of God – which part? You are dissecting God into parts, and if the whole of God is dissected nothing remains behind, no God, because everybody has got a part and run away.

Such illogical, irrational statements people go on making, and nobody even objects. I am simply ashamed of the retarded minds that surround us.

You will be surprised to know that the University of Oregon has made a survey: how much intelligence the average Oregonian has, and how much intelligence my people in the commune had. And they were surprised, they were utterly disappointed. The average Oregonian has only seven percent of intelligence functioning – that is far below the retarded. And it is not my survey, it is the survey of Oregon's own university.

Unfortunately they surveyed the commune when we had invited the street people. Still, the average commune member was found to have fourteen percent functioning – double the amount of any Oregonian. My own understanding is that if we had not invited those street people, the average intelligence of the commune people must have been somewhere around twenty or twenty-five, not less than that.

This man Iyengar makes a laughingstock of himself when he talks about "We are all parts of God." I was wondering who is which part? and whether anything is left behind or everything has been divided?

I want to tell you, you are not parts of God; there is no God. You are a whole cosmos in yourself. The moment you reach to your peak, to your ultimate attainment of buddhahood, you ARE God, because you become part of the cosmos. Not part of God... you are the whole God. Only one man, P. D. Ouspensky, has gone to immense trouble to prove that.

In ordinary mathematics – he was a great mathematician of this century – a part is always smaller than the whole, obviously. But he was the chief disciple of George Gurdjieff. He wrote, "In the inner world of consciousness there is a higher mathematics where the part is equal to the whole, not smaller than the whole." He is the only man in the whole history who has asserted an absolute truth.

In the inner world you are not part of God, you are the whole. In the inner world the part is equal to the whole.

When Ouspensky showed his manuscript to his master, George Gurdjieff, Gurdjieff said to him, "You will have to make one more statement: that there are moments in the inner world when sometimes the part is bigger than the whole."

Ouspensky, being a mathematician, had already gone beyond mathematics, but this was too much – that the part can be bigger than the whole.

But I absolutely agree with George Gurdjieff.

Reluctantly Ouspensky noted it down, but made a statement in his introduction: "That piece – that the part can be bigger than the whole – is incomprehensible to me, but my master says so, so I have put it. But I cannot support it by any reasoning."

Reasoning is not at all the question.

The whole is unconscious: the trees, the mountains, the rivers, the oceans, are all unconscious. When a buddha comes to his fulfillment, he is not only equal to the whole, he is certainly bigger than the whole, because the whole is almost unconscious. In his consciousness, in the explosion of his consciousness, the part can become bigger than the whole.

But people like Iyengar simply repeat like parrots, because it is written in the Hindu scriptures that everybody is a part of God. It is not based in experience.

I say unto you: Everybody is equal to the whole, and there are moments of conscious explosion when the part is far bigger, far more expansive than the whole existence. The consciousness surrounds the whole existence like a tremendous mystery.

But to just go on repeating the scriptures, parrotlike, has been the way of all retarded people. Intelligence requires research; it requires research in the outer world, and in search in the inner world.

Another famous clinical psychologist, who directs a number of programs at St. Francis Hospital, Arlene Huysman, says of Dr. Brian Weiss, "If anyone else had written the book I would not have believed it."

But this is not belief, this is just trusting the man, who may be just roaming, through hypnosis, in the imaginations, in the dreams of his patients. He has yet no validity, no evidence to say that it is not imagination but a re-living of a past life.

Re-living of a past life is a vast phenomenon. You can use it as a clinical process, but that is not its purpose. Its purpose is to bring a reorientation to your being, a re-evaluation of your inner world. And seeing the fact that thousands of times you have been born again and again, and you have been doing the same thing... it is disgusting: the same desires, the same jealousies, the same greed, the same violence you have done so many times. If you can re-live all those lives again, the

very re-living is going to change you totally. You will not desire anything anymore, you have desired enough. Everything that you attained in your past life has proved only a soap bubble. Now there is no point in again running after soap bubbles.

It is time to stop all desiring, it is time to stop all greed, it is time to stop all jealousy. It is time to look inwards, and to see your original face.

In the East, we have called this cycle of birth and death... You just go on moving like a wheel, the same route again and again, the same spokes again and again. Sometimes it comes up, sometimes it goes down, but it is the same wheel. How to get rid of this wheel of birth and death has been the only focus of the whole Eastern consciousness. And certainly that helped so many people in India, in China, in Tibet, in Japan, to become enlightened, to become buddhas.

The whole earth has the same intrinsic birthright.

The sutra.

Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

A MONK ASKED KOYO SEIJO, "DAITSU SAT IN ZAZEN FOR TEN KALPAS – millions of lives – AND COULD NOT ATTAIN BUDDHAHOOD; HE DID NOT BECOME A BUDDHA. HOW CAN THIS BE?"

The reason for Koyo Seijo not becoming a buddha, although he practiced sitting meditation, zazen, for thousands of lives... Obviously, the question has meaning: what prevented him? Nobody has meditated so long. The reason is simple, because to become a buddha also is a desire – very subtle.

You cannot become a buddha even in one hundred kalpas, because you are a buddha right now. It is not a question of becoming, it is a question of entering into your being.

Remember the difference between 'being' and 'becoming'. Becoming is somewhere faraway in the future: you have to reach. Being is just now, here. You have only to close your eyes and see the buddha. You have always been a buddha.

This poor fellow Koyo Seijo was striving hard to become a buddha; that was what prevented him – because he was running, thinking that there, faraway, he would become a buddha, and all the time when he was seeking the buddha, he was the buddha. Just if he could have relaxed for a moment, dropped the desire to become a buddha... he would have laughed and asked for a cup of tea.

SEIJO SAID, "YOUR QUESTION IS QUITE SELF-EXPLANATORY."

Seijo is saying, "This means that nobody can become a buddha, because everybody is a buddha."

THE MONK ASKED, "HE MEDITATED SO LONG; WHY COULD HE NOT ATTAIN BUDDHAHOOD?"

He could not understand yet, he was still worried about the thing. "He meditated so long, and he did not attain buddhahood? Why?"

SEIJO SAID, "BECAUSE HE DID NOT BECOME A BUDDHA."

A strange answer. But Zen is full of strange answers, tremendously significant, but if you look only at the words you will miss the point.

Seijo said, "Because he was a buddha, and he was unnecessarily running after being a buddha. How he can attain it?"

A roseflower, if he tries to become a roseflower, do you think he will ever attain it? He is not looking at himself, he is already the roseflower; he is looking in all ten directions – where to go, where to find the secret of becoming a roseflower – and he is not looking at himself.

This is one of the most significant points to remember: that when you experience the buddha in you, remember you are not becoming a buddha. You have always been a buddha; just you were keeping your back towards him. Now you have taken a complete one-hundred-and-eighty-degree turn, and you are facing yourself.

How does one face oneself?

You do it every day. When you look in the mirror, whom do you encounter? Yourself – but yourself is not in the mirror, remember. Yourself is the one who is witnessing the mirror reflection. So when you go inside, I remind you continuously, "Remember only one quality: of witnessing." When your whole inner being becomes a mirror and you can see yourself reflected in all directions, but you remember that you are not the reflection, you are the witness. To find the witness is to find the ultimate secret of life and existence.

AT ANOTHER TIME, A MONK ASKED ROSO, "WHAT IS MEANT BY 'IN FRONT OF YOUR NOSE'?"

That is also a Zen expression. Whenever a disciple asks a master where to look for the buddha, the master will say, "Just in front of your nose."

What does it mean, "in front of your nose"?

It means, find your inner mirror and look in front of your nose. The buddha is not in the mirror. Remember to remain a witness. You are the buddha; the mirror has only helped you to see your face.

I have told you the story of Mulla Nasruddin.

In his old age he found a mirror by the side of the road. He looked into it – he had never looked into a mirror – and he said, "My God! This seems to be the photograph of my father. I never knew that the old fellow, who is dead now, was such a fashionable person as to have a photograph."

He came home, hiding the mirror in his clothes. He did not want to reveal the secret to his wife. He was afraid she would immediately freak out and say, "This is your photograph! You are wasting money and we are starving." So he simply went upstairs and tried to hide it in a suitcase full of clothes.

The wife had come just behind him without making any noise of footsteps. She was watching, she knew where it had been kept. She went away, and Mulla Nasruddin was not aware of her.

When he went out she immediately opened the suitcase. She looked in the mirror and she said "My God, in his old age he is running after this rotten woman, and he is keeping it a secret from me!"

For the first time when you encounter yourself in front of your nose, in your inner being as a mirror, there is a possibility to think that you are the fellow in the mirror. Hence, I repeat continuously, "Remain a witness. Whatsoever happens, you are only a witness, nothing else."

When everything drops away and only the witness remains in its uttermost purity, you have become a buddha, you have become one with the whole.

And perhaps – if you are not a half-buddha like Gautam Buddha, but a complete buddha with both the wings intact – perhaps you will understand George Gurdjieff's statement, that the part sometimes is bigger than the whole, because the whole is unconscious.

Unconsciousness, howsoever vast, is not even bigger than a dewdrop of consciousness. Darkness, however vast and ancient, is not bigger than a small flame of a candle. A small flame of a candle is far bigger than all the darkness of the world.

George Gurdjieff, howsoever irrational, is absolutely right.

WHEN THE MONK ASKED ROSO "WHAT IS MEANT BY 'IN FRONT OF YOUR NOSE'?" ROSO RESPONDED, "SLENDER BAMBOOS CANNOT BE USED AS MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS; A GOURD CANNOT RETURN TO THE TRELIS IT GREW ON."

He is saying, in a very metaphorical way –

"SLENDER BAMBOOS CANNOT BE USED AS MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, AND A GOURD CANNOT RETURN TO THE TRELIS IT GREW ON" –

he is saying that you have to move inwards, just watching that you are going directly and straightforward in front of your nose. Don't go zigzag. The inner world is vast; don't go here and there, you will be lost.

Hence, I have been telling you, "Go like an arrow, direct." Hit the source, and everything else becomes so clear that one who has hit his center never asks a question again. All questions are dead, all answers are dead; you have found the golden master key.

SAIGUN ONCE ENTERED A TEMPLE AND NOTICED A SPARROW MAKING DROPPINGS ON THE HEAD OF AN IMAGE OF BUDDHA.

This is the right place for the Republican Party of India, and the Dalit organization – that immediate action should be taken against the sparrows, because they are making droppings on the head of Gautam the Buddha!

SAIGUN SAID TO NYOE, A DISCIPLE OF MA TZU, "HAS THE SPARROW THE BUDDHA-NATURE OR NOT?"

Why are you worried that the sparrow is dropping shit over the head of Gautam Buddha? Why are you worried?

"HAS THE SPARROW THE BUDDHA-NATURE OR NOT?"

NYOE ANSWERED, "YES! The sparrow has also the buddha-nature."

SAIGUN SAID, "THEN WHY DOES IT MAKE DROPPINGS ON THE HEAD OF BUDDHA?"

NYOE REPLIED, "DOES IT MAKE DROPPINGS ON THE HEAD OF A HAWK?"

Buddha is sitting so silently; it is possible for the sparrow to shit on the Buddha. It is his silence, it is his utter immobility....

One of the great masters of the Jainas is Bahubali. His statue in South India is the biggest statue in the world, fifty-two yards high. The whole mountain has been cut into a statue. The smallest toe on his foot is as long as your whole body. To see the whole statue, you have to go along a ladder that goes from one end, covering the whole statue, and ends at the other. It is almost like climbing a mountain. The head is so big, you can have a good gathering there.

Bahubali... The name itself means: a very strong man. 'Bahu' means arms – a man who has arms of steel. He meditated standing near that mountain, and he was so deep in his meditations that birds made their nests in his ears, and he was so long standing there that creepers started moving up his body.

It is a beautiful statue, perhaps the most beautiful in the world. Thousands of artists worked together in tremendous harmony to create that big a statue.

Although Bahubali is not one of the tirthankaras of the Jainas – he is not counted in the twenty-four – he is respected almost like a tirthankara. He was a great master, a great meditator, so deep in his meditation; these are just symbols that birds have made nests in his ears, that creepers have grown around his legs, thighs, and are reaching to his chest, flowering. The man is completely covered with flowers and foliage. But he has forgotten everything of the outside; he has gone so deep, miles deep.

It is possible for a sparrow to mount on the head of a buddha, but it is not possible to make droppings on the head of a hawk. The hawk moves the fastest of all the birds.

I have heard about Paddy and Seamus, walking outside, and a hawk shit over Paddy. His whole face was covered. Seamus said, "Wait, it will take a little time; I will have to go back to find some tissue paper."

Paddy said, "You idiot! By the time you come here, the hawk will be gone miles away!"

A haiku:

A FALLEN LEAF

RETURNING TO THE BRANCH?

BUTTERFLY.

The Zen poet is saying, "What is this butterfly? It must be a fallen leaf which is returning to the source."

In these word-paintings, Zen poets have said so much.

A FALLEN LEAF RETURNING TO THE BRANCH? BUTTERFLY.

A fallen leaf becomes a butterfly and returns again to the branch.

Everything returns to the source: that is the meaning of the haiku. You may take your time, but one has to return to the source. At the source you are the buddha. At the source you are one with the cosmos, and perhaps bigger than the cosmos.

Question 1

Maneesha has asked a question:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

FROM THE SCHOOLROOM, WHERE LAUGHTER IS THOUGHT TO UNDERMINE AUTHORITY,
TO THE LOCAL FIVE STAR HOTEL, WHERE IT IS CONSIDERED AN EMBARRASSMENT, A
SENSE OF HUMOR IS NO JOKE.

IF, FROM BIRTH, WE WERE ALLOWED TO LAUGH WITHOUT RESTRAINT, WOULD WE NOT
SUCCESSFULLY SUBVERT OUR CONDITIONING, AND SAVE OUR NATURAL INTELLIGENCE?

Yes, Maneesha. Laughter is therapy. And if you are allowed from the very beginning to enjoy a belly laughter without restraint, without inhibition, to find out your buddha will be the easiest job, because you will be free of all seriousness. You will be free of all tensions, inhibitions, suppressions, and in this freedom only one finds the buddha.

Hence, before your meditation I have kept a special time for Sardar Gurudayal Singh. I want you to laugh as deeply as possible, so you are unburdened. Then meditation is very easy, nothing inhibits you.

My contribution to the world is: making sense of humor a part of spiritual growth. A man who cannot laugh is sick, sick unto death.

Bernie Baloney comes racing into the emergency room of the Hamchop Hospital. "Excuse me, miss," he pants, as he reaches the receptionist, "but can you tell me which ward Miss Fitz is in?"

"Miss Fitz? You mean Miss Fannie Fitz?" asks the receptionist. "The woman who got run over by a steamroller this morning?"

"Right!" says Bernie. "Which ward is she in?"

"Well," explains the receptionist, "you will find her in wards eight, nine, and ten!"

This is what Iyengar is trying to do with God – chop him into pieces. These butcher-type people!

Cherrie Chubbs is concerned about her husband Buster's impotence, but she also realizes that he will never admit it as a problem. So one day she goes to see her family physician, Doctor Hardong, who prescribes some medicine to raise Buster's spirits.

Cherrie takes the prescription to the drugstore but unfortunately the pharmacist misreads Doctor Hardong's handwriting. Instead of typing "FOUR TEASPOONS" on the label, he types "FORTY TEASPOONS."

Early the next morning, Cherrie Chubbs races into Doctor Hardong's office.

"What is the matter?" asks the doctor, looking up at the frantic Cherrie. "Did not the medicine work?"

"It certainly did," smiles Cherrie, "but now I need the antidote so that they can close his coffin!"

Fritz Frankfurter, the German tourist, runs into his old friend, Helmut Hamburger – both of them vacationing on Miami Beach. They go to the outdoor beach-bar for a gossip and a few beers.

Suddenly, Fritz chokes on his beer. "My God!" he splutters. "Look at that fat, frumpy woman in the green bikini – the one jumping up and down in the sand and waving. That must be the most disgusting sight on the whole beach. Do you think that with all that jumping up and down and waving and leering towards me, she is trying to proposition me?"

"I don't know," says Helmut, drinking his beer. "But if you like, I will go down there and ask her – she is my wife!"

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

(gibberish)

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes and feel your body to be completely frozen.

This is the right moment to look inwards with your total life force, with your whole consciousness and with an urgency as if this is the last moment of your life.

Go directly like a spear, piercing into the very center of your being – deeper and deeper. The deeper you go, the closer you are to yourself. The deeper you go, the more you are a buddha.

This moment remember only one thing, because that is the very spirit of the awakened one. Be a witness. Just watch and don't get identified with anything. You are not the body, you are not the mind, you are not any spiritual experiences either. You are just a witness. Witnessing is the greatest science for inward revolution.

To make it more clear, Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Relax, let go, but remain a witness, watching whatever happens.

A great silence descends over you, a deep peace arises in your being. Your separation from the universe disappears; you start melting and merging. Gautam the Buddha Auditorium starts looking like a lake of consciousness without any ripples.

The evening was beautiful on its own, but the presence of ten thousand buddhas has made it a splendor. Everything around you, the bamboos, the stars, all are rejoicing and dancing. Even a single buddha and the whole universe goes on a festival – and when ten thousand people are centered the whole universe becomes a celebration.

Collect as much joy, peace, silence, blissfulness, ecstasy, to bring with you, and persuade the buddha to come along. It is your very nature.

He has to express into your actions, into your gestures, into your words, into your silences.

He has to become your whole being, your poetry, your song, your dance.

Nivedano...

Come back, but remember, you are coming back as buddhas – with the same grace, with the same beauty, with the same splendor. Sit down for a few moments just to recollect, to remember the golden path that you have traveled, the tremendous peace in the innermost shrine of your being – the grace that is your nature, the awareness that is your birthright.

Now, sitting like a buddha, you are the most fortunate, the most blessed beings on the earth at this moment.

You have to spread this ecstasy around the world.

This benediction you have to share with all and sundry, with friends and strangers.

We have to make this whole earth aflame with a new passion – the passion of your innermost being – with a new fire which only burns the false and brings out the pure gold.

Mankind has forgotten the language of being a buddha. We have to spread the message to the furthest corners of the earth.

Okay, Maneesha?

Yes, Beloved Master.

CHAPTER 3

Our responsibility is tremendous

10 January 1989 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

EMPEROR SHUKUSO ASKED CHU KOKUSHI, "WHAT IS THE TEN-BODIED HERDSMAN?"

KOKUSHI REPLIED, "GO AND TRAMPLE ON VAIROCANA'S HEAD!"

THE EMPEROR SAID, "I CANNOT FOLLOW YOU."

KOKUSHI SAID, "DON'T TAKE THE SELF FOR THE PURE DHARMA BODY."

A MONK ONCE ASKED KOKUSHI, "WHAT IS THE TRUE BODY OF THE DHARMAKAYA BUDDHA?"

"FETCH ME THE WATER BOTTLE," RESPONDED KOKUSHI.

WHEN THE MONK BROUGHT IT TO HIM, KOKUSHI SAID, "PUT IT BACK WHERE IT WAS." THE MONK, HAVING DONE WHAT HE WAS ASKED TO DO, REPEATED HIS FORMER QUESTION.

KOKUSHI SAID, "ALAS! THE OLD BUDDHA HAS LONG GONE!"

Friends,

Nani Palkhiwala, one of India's foremost taxation experts, is reported to have said that in forty-two years of independence, India has not gained anything, but it has at least saved its democracy.

With great respect to Nani Palkhiwala – he is a man of intelligence and courage – I want to disagree with him on both the points.

In the first place, in the forty-two years of independence, India has defeated the whole world as far as population is concerned. When it became independent in 1947, its population was only four hundred million. Now its population is more than nine hundred million, and by the end of this century it will go beyond one billion. For the first time in the whole history of mankind, India will be the greatest nation in the world. Up to now China has been the most populated country. In this great productivity India has been victorious.

And, Nani Palkhiwala, you say India has not done anything? It has produced just like rats!

I have heard... a man was reading a newspaper in which it was said that amongst every five people there is one Chinaman. His wife heard it, and she said, "My God! That means now no more children, because four I have already produced, and I don't want any Chinaman among my children."

This is no longer true. Amongst five people in the world, one is an Indian.

This explosion of population is not a small achievement. It has doubled India's poverty; it is more poor than ever.

And, Nani Palkhiwala, you say India has done nothing in these forty-two years? It has topped the whole world.

Secondly, just after the hanging of an innocent poor man, Kehar Singh, without any evidence at all, you still say India has saved its democracy? When justice dies, democracy cannot live.

You must be fully aware of the fact that the government has created a separate law in the name of national security, which is not under the common law of the country. You can be simply put in jail forever; there is no appeal, there is no court.... From the lowest court to the Supreme Court, you cannot do anything; it is beyond law. And whenever, in any country, something like this exists, you cannot call that country democratic.

What kind of democracy is this?

And you are perfectly aware that "National Security" is nothing but another name for Emergency. Just by changing names, who does the government want to deceive? They don't even pronounce the whole name, National Security Act, they call it only "N.S.A." – not to make people aware that side by side with the common law of the country there exists a higher power which is beyond the scope of the common law.

Just in this case of Kehar Singh's hanging... His son was absolutely certain that he was innocent, and the government had failed to provide any evidence. The son was working in the secretariat of the government itself, in the Central Government in New Delhi. He asked for leave to help the attorneys who were trying to save his innocent father. Rather than giving him leave, they put him – under National Security – into jail. He could not support the attorneys in saving his father – and there is no recourse, no appeal, nothing can be done; it is beyond law.

And, Nani Palkhiwala, you still call this country a democracy? What was wrong in asking for leave when his father was being hanged? In what way was he going against national security? To protect one's father who is innocent, to help the attorneys in the courts is going against national security? Then anything can be called "against national security."

Unless the National Security Act is dissolved, this country is no more a democracy.

But a man in every way intelligent seems to be completely ignoring the facts, talking in beautiful words.

With the death of Kehar Singh, a great darkness has descended over the country. One does not know whether this darkness will ever end.

I want Nani Palkhiwala to come forward. He is one of the men who can challenge the government: that there is no need of any other law in the hands of the government when the common law is sufficient. For what do all these courts exist?

A democracy has some meaning. It is based in the freedom of the individual, in the freedom of speech. But when there exists a power in the hands of the government which is beyond law, it should be called by its proper name. It becomes a dictatorship, it is no more a democracy.

And if persons like Nani Palkhiwala cannot come out with the truth before the public, then who is going to do this job?

Kehar Singh's son was released, because they had to release him. He had not committed any crime, he had just asked for leave – which is everybody's right, and particularly in a situation where his innocent father was going to be hanged. The young man has been running with the chief attorney, Ram Jethmalani, carrying all his files from court to court – absolutely certain.

Whenever he was asked by any journalist, he said, "My father is absolutely innocent. Somewhere, someone will have the courage to say that he is innocent. I am absolutely certain. If not in the high court, then in the Supreme Court; if not in the Supreme Court, at least the president will have the courage."

To the last moment, the Supreme Court of India played an ugly game. They said, "At one o'clock the decision about the appeal will be declared." Then they changed it to two-thirty, then they it changed to four-thirty. Finally they came out at six o'clock, because after that there is no way to have other recourse to some source; in the morning poor Kehar Singh would be hanged.

And the statement was a simple statement – it took the Supreme Court the whole day – that the appeal was rejected. A simple sentence... without giving any reason why the appeal was rejected.

The president was asked for a mercy appeal; even the mercy appeal was rejected. The World Court was contacted. They said, "Put us in contact with the president." And when Ram Jethmalani phoned the president, the secretary said, "It is too late" – it was only eight-thirty in the evening – "I cannot disturb the president at this late hour."

These are the public servants! Eight-thirty in the evening is a late hour... and one man's life is at stake, and the president cannot be disturbed! And still, Nani Palkhiwala, you call this country a democracy?

I hope you will come out with the truth, and say exactly what is the situation. If the intelligentsia of the country remain silent, then this dark night will become darker and darker, and there will be no dawn.

I hope that not only Nani Palkhiwala, but all other intelligent people – poets, professors, vice-chancellors, authors, musicians, painters – should come out and say, "Unless National Security is removed..."

"Everything should be settled in the court according to the common law of the country; only then is this country a democracy. Otherwise it is better to call it a dictatorship."

At least people should know that they are slaves, no longer free. They should know that they have been fighting for freedom for almost one hundred years, and this bogus freedom has been given to them.

It always happens. One has to go to the roots.

India has not been successful in getting freedom. Its last attempt was in 1942, when thousands of people were forced into jails. But it did not last long, only nine days. One feels ashamed to say that this was a revolution!

China had been fighting for thirty years continuously. A freedom struggle which ends in nine days, with no conclusion, and then suddenly after five years... This is a very strange phenomenon.

If a revolution succeeds, immediately the country is free. But the revolution did not succeed and after five years the freedom was given by the British Empire. A given freedom cannot be a real freedom.

The British Empire was getting tired. Seeing the situation, that India will be getting worse and worse, the British prime minister, Attlee, sent Mountbatten with an urgent message: "Give the freedom as quickly as possible, because we don't want to take the responsibility for India's poverty" – which is going to grow every day, and by the end of this century almost half a billion people are bound to die of starvation.

This is not a freedom that is achieved; this is a freedom which has been given. It is a very poor freedom. It has been given to India as if India is a beggar. That is the root cause why there is no freedom, no democracy. Just the names go on being talked about, and nobody bothers to look at the reality.

Now the sutras:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

EMPEROR SHUKUSO ASKED CHU KOKUSHI, "WHAT IS THE TEN-BODIED HERDSMAN?"

KOKUSHI REPLIED, "GO AND TRAMPLE ON VAIROCANA'S HEAD!"

Vairocana is another name of Gautam the Buddha.

Zen has a tremendous courage....

KOKUSHI REPLIED, "GO AND TRAMPLE ON VAIROCANA'S HEAD!"

THE EMPEROR SAID, "I CANNOT FOLLOW YOU. I cannot do that... trampling on Vairocana's head."

KOKUSHI SAID, "DON'T TAKE THE SELF FOR THE PURE DHARMA BODY."

Why are you afraid of trampling on the body of Vairocana? It is only a statue. It is your self-consideration: What will people say if the emperor tramples on the Buddha's body?

KOKUSHI SAID, "DON'T TAKE THE SELF FOR THE PURE DHARMA BODY."

Your ego is not your real authentic self. Don't listen to it, just trample on Vairocana's body, because neither is there anyone there – just a wooden statue – nor is there anyone inside your ego. It is just a soap bubble. Then you will know what it means, "the ten-bodied herdsman."

A strange answer... but I have to tell you first what this ten-bodied herdsman is.

There are ten pictures in China – I have talked about those pictures – and they are called the Zen Bulls.

A man lost his bull. In the first picture he looks all around. He can see thick deep forest, but no sign of the bull. In the second picture he finds the footprints of the bull. In the third picture he looks, and the bull is hiding behind a tree, but he can see only the back part of the bull. Then he catches hold of the bull by his horns; he becomes victorious. Soon he is riding on the bull towards his home. Next the bull is put in its place in the stall, and in the last picture the man is sitting outside his house and playing on a flute.

When these ten pictures moved from China to Japan, the tenth picture was dropped, because the tenth picture is really outrageous.

To me, only the tenth picture means something. All these nine pictures are the preparation; in the tenth picture the man is so happy that he has found his bull that he is going to the pub – just to enjoy the evening.

The Buddhists of Japan must have been a little afraid; this tenth picture is too outrageous. But the tenth picture is only symbolic. He is not going to take the drug called "ecstasy"; this bottle of wine that he is carrying is simply a symbol. When one becomes absolutely centered, one is almost drunk, drunk with an inner ecstasy.

Many have reported to me that when you get up after your meditation, "We feel a little drunk." You start moving towards the canteen, but you can see people standing by the side; they are wobbly,

they don't know what is happening. Because everybody is going towards the canteen they join them, but not absolutely certain whether they want to go there or not. But because everybody else is going there, it is better to keep company....

It is dangerous to go out of the ashram. The police can get hold of you: "You are drunk!" You may say that, "I have been in ecstasy," and they will say, "Yes, that's what we are saying. You have taken the drug ecstasy. Just come along with us to the police station!"

I love the tenth picture, and I want Japanese Zen masters not to forget it, because that is the ultimate experience. That is a kind of drunkenness you never overcome. It becomes your very nature. You can dance, you can sing, you can rejoice. It is inexhaustible.

These ten pictures are called "the ten-bodied herdsman," because with every new experience you enter into a new layer of your body. The man whose bull has been lost in the first picture is just on the superficial body. As he finds the footprints, he has entered a little deeper. As he finds that the bull is hiding behind a tree, he has entered a little deeper still.

These are layers upon layers of body – just like an onion. You can peel it... a fresh layer. Peel it again... another fresh layer. Go on peeling. Finally you will find nothing in the end, but empty hands. All the layers have been taken away. The onion consists only of layers.

The body also consists only of layers. Ten layers of the body... and you enter into a space which can only be called ecstasy. Then you are drunk forever, for the whole eternity to come.

I teach you drunkenness. There is no need for a man who has tasted his own inner being to take any drugs or alcohol.

There is only one way to stop people from drugs and alcohol, and that is meditation – to pass through all the layers of the body and enter into a space which is no-body, no-mind. Then you are so full of contentment, so fulfilled that you don't need anything anymore.

Kokushi's reply is very important:

"GO AND TRAMPLE ON VAIROCANA'S HEAD!"

People become addicted even to wooden statues, they become addicted even to stone statues. The function of the master is to take away all these addictions, and to make you free from all kinds of so-called scriptures, statues, churches, to make you utterly and absolutely rooted in freedom.

This was the effort on the part of Kokushi. To tell the emperor, "Go and trample on Vairocana's head" ... the emperor must have been shocked. "To trample on the head of a buddha? I cannot follow you."

What is the problem? Does he think that the wooden statue of Buddha is a real buddha? Neither the buddha is real... Does he think his reputation, what people will think? – "I am the emperor, and trampling on the head of the Buddha...?"

This is your ego and nothing else. Neither does the statue have any reality in the sense of being alive, nor does your ego have any reality in the sense of being true. It is just a projection. You have

to drop both; only then you can find yourself behind the ten-bodied herdsman. He is referring to those ten pictures.

KOKUSHI SAID, "DON'T TAKE THE SELF FOR THE PURE DHARMA BODY."

You have an authentic being that is called "dharma body" – the body of religiousness, the body of awareness. But that is not your ego. Your ego is the barrier to knowing your authentic individuality. Your personality is the barrier, not a bridge.

Drop the personality and forget that you are an emperor, and forget that this statue represents Buddha. It is just a wooden toy, as false as your ego. Drop both and you will know the pure ecstasy, the pure truth, your authentic relationship with existence. At the center of your being, it is waiting for you.

A MONK ONCE ASKED KOKUSHI, "WHAT IS THE TRUE BODY OF THE DHARMAKAYA BUDDHA?"

"FETCH ME THE WATER BOTTLE," RESPONDED KOKUSHI.

WHEN THE MONK BROUGHT IT TO HIM, KOKUSHI SAID, "PUT IT BACK WHERE IT WAS." THE MONK, HAVING DONE WHAT HE WAS ASKED TO DO, REPEATED HIS FORMER QUESTION.

KOKUSHI SAID, "ALAS! THE OLD BUDDHA HAS GONE LONG BEFORE!"

What transpired in this small anecdote?

The monk was asking, "What is the true body, the authentic being, which is called by Buddha, dharmakaya?" Dharma means religiousness, and kaya means body. "What is your body of religiousness?"

The master Kokushi said, instead of answering... Zen does not believe in words. It believes in creating particular devices, situations, in which that which cannot be said at least can be indicated. To anyone in the world outside the Zen atmosphere, it will look absolutely absurd. The master says, "Fetch me the water bottle."

What kind of answer...?

WHEN THE MONK BROUGHT IT TO HIM, KOKUSHI SAID, "PUT IT BACK WHERE IT WAS."

What he has created as a situation... He asked him to bring the water bottle; when he brought it, Kokushi said, "Now put it back where it was." He is saying, "Return to the source. Go where you have come from. Just search within yourself. What is the space you have sprung out of? Go back to the same space and you will know what is the Dharmakaya Buddha."

THE MONK, HAVING DONE WHAT HE WAS ASKED TO DO, REPEATED HIS FORMER QUESTION.

He could not understand that this device has been the answer. He repeated his former question.

KOKUSHI SAID, "ALAS! THE OLD BUDDHA HAS LONG GONE!

I cannot do more than that. Perhaps the old Buddha may have been able to create another situation for you. Whatever I can do, I have done."

But he has done more than enough. He has shown the way, he has indicated that, "Reach to your original source from where you come. Go back there, and you will find the authentic being, the Dharmakaya of Buddha within you."

Rippo wrote on his death:

MOON AND BLOSSOMS SEEN

NOW I GO TO VIEW THE LOVELIEST –

THE SNOW.

As I have told you again and again, Zen poems are pictures in words – very colorful, very alive.

MOON AND BLOSSOMS SEEN –

I have seen the moon, I have seen the great flowers, NOW I GO TO VIEW THE LOVELIEST –

THE SNOW – the purity of white snow.

And when it has never melted... There are peaks in Japan where the snow has never melted, always a white line on the mountaintops. In the Himalayas it is on a far bigger scale, eternal snows which have never melted, and nobody has trodden on those snows. There are thousands of places in the Himalayas where no man has ever reached. The purity of those spaces, the silence of those spaces...

There is a valley in the Himalayas; you can see only from the very top down into the valley, thousands of feet down. There is no way to get to the valley, it is so steep. In that valley, perhaps, blossom the most colorful flowers known to man, but they have been known only from far away. That valley is called "The Valley of Gods" – a beautiful name. Those flowers nobody has ever touched; nobody has ever reached into that depth surrounded by eternal snow.

Rippo says, "I have seen the moon and its beauty; I have seen the blossoms and their colors and their fragrance. Now I am going to view the loveliest – the snow." The pure whiteness – symbolizing the eternal purity of your being.

Maneesha has asked two questions.

Question 1

First:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

IS THE CONCEPT OF GOD SIMPLY MAN'S INNER PATHOLOGY PROJECTED – AND NOTHING MORE?

Yes, Maneesha, absolutely yes! God is man's pathology, his sick mind, his helplessness, his fear, his paranoia. He needs somebody as a support in the clouds, because all supports here are temporary. Your father may die tomorrow; you need a father that never dies, hence God is called the Father.

Your business will go bankrupt. What consolation do you have? At least you can raise your eyes towards the sky, and your hands, and pray to God. Of course no answer ever comes, but at least you have a certain consolation, that somebody is protecting you, somebody is looking after you, somebody is there you can always call on in your difficulties – just a hope, because there is no incident when God has come to help man. There is no reference all through history that any answer has come from the skies – not even to people like Jesus.

Jesus was hoping, just like an ordinary, average human being, that if he was crucified God would come to help him immediately. He believed in himself and in his God almost madly; that is the reason he was not worried. He knew that if he entered Jerusalem, he would be caught and crucified. He could have escaped, but just because of God he did not bother about the rumor. He said, "God is with me, my Father is with me."

When he was crucified, he waited and waited. He looked away... white clouds moving... but no angels playing on their harps, singing "Alleluia!" Six hours passed, and he came to the end of his patience. Finally he shouted at God, "Why have you forsaken me?" Still there was no answer.

In fact, there is nobody to answer. I am not complaining against God; there is no God to complain against. All that can be done is to make more and more people fearless, more and more people so rooted in themselves that they don't want any help. Even if God comes to help they will refuse.

Unless humanity comes to such solid individuality, God is going to be there. It is our weakness, it is our helplessness, it is our fear of death, it is our fear of diseases. All kinds of fears surround us because we have not known the space in ourselves where no fear ever enters, where there is no death, no birth, where you are eternal, where you are one with the cosmos. Then, of course, God disappears from your vision, and all organized religions become futile exercises.

Question 2

The second question:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

IT APPEARS THAT, THROUGH HISTORY, AS MAN HAS MOVED INTO THE CONCEPT OF "GOD," HE HAS SIMULTANEOUSLY BECOME MORE DESTRUCTIVE – NOT JUST TOWARDS THE "NON-BELIEVERS" BUT TOWARDS HIS ENVIRONMENT, TOWARDS HIMSELF.

IS THERE A CONNECTION?

Yes, Maneesha, there is a connection – but it is not very obvious. The connection is a very hidden undercurrent.

When you start believing in a God which does not exist, you are also simultaneously believing that nothing evil can happen to you. You can do whatever you want; God is the savior and he is very compassionate. You can be destructive, you can be violent – and all religions have been violent.

In religious crusades millions of people have been killed in the name of God, because the believer always thinks he is killing in the name of God. His God is the only true God; all other gods are phony. And because he is destructive in the name of God, violent in the name of God, God is going to support him. On the Day of Judgment, God will take his real believers to paradise. Jesus will be the witness: "Yes, this man belongs to our herd."

I am reminded of Omar Khayyam, a Sufi mystic and poet. You may have read Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Khayyam's RUBAIYAT. Very beautiful poetry, tremendously beautiful – but if you go into it you can see the Mohammedan believer. He says in one of his poems, "Don't be worried. Drink alcohol as much as you can, enjoy women as much as you can, because God is the compassionate one. These small sins... do you think God will not forgive you? That means you are an unbeliever!"

Do you see the logic? He is saying, "Do whatsoever you want to do, God is with you" – and if you don't, that means you don't believe in God and in his compassion, and in his love.

Certainly, man has become more destructive because he can throw the whole responsibility on God. Man becomes creative if he has the whole responsibility on himself.

To me, meditation and responsibility come simultaneously. As you go deeper into yourself, you become more and more responsible. You know that there is no God. You know that everyone is suffering around you and you have found the space where no suffering is possible.

The only thing that remains for you is to share your space, to indicate the innermost being of everyone. This I consider to be the greatest creative act in existence. If you can make somebody aware of his being, his indestructible being, his immortality and eternity, you have done the greatest creative act possible.

And you have to do it, because there is no God who can do it! Only you can do it.

Meditation throws you upon yourself. It takes away all responsibility that you have put in the name of God. Obviously, if God has created the world, then he is responsible for everything that happens in the world. If God created man, then certainly he has created his destructiveness also, his violence, his greed, his anger, his tendency towards murder, rape, suicide. For everything God is responsible, because he has planted the seeds in you of all these things. You are free of responsibility.

Do you understand what I am saying?

If God has created you, and on the Judgment Day he asks you, "Why were you so much addicted to drugs?", you can hold him by the collar and ask him, "Why did you create the tendency in me? You are responsible, I am not."

A puppet is not responsible, but the puppeteer is, because all the threads are in his hands behind the curtain. The puppet dances if he moves his hands, the puppet fights if he moves his hands differently – but you cannot say that the puppet is responsible.

If God has created the world and man and everything, then nobody is responsible for his acts; the ultimate responsibility abides in God. You can do every licentious act without any fear.

God has not been a blessing to humanity; it has been the greatest curse. Freed from God, you alone are to be responsible, you alone are to be alert and aware that you don't hurt anybody, that you don't interfere into anybody's territory, that you don't start possessing people. To possess a person is to reduce the person into a thing. Only things can be possessed – not wives, nor husbands, nor children.

Once God is no more there in the skies, you are totally responsible for every breath, for every gesture, for every act. God has taken the place of the puppeteer. It is absolutely connected with the concept of God.

God has to disappear from the mind of man; only then will you have a tremendous feeling of responsibility, of sharing, of helping people on the path. There is nobody else; only we are here on the earth... ALONE.

Our responsibility is tremendous.

It is time for Sardar Gurudayal Singh – just to be a little irresponsible!

Paddy is sitting in the pub one afternoon when he gets a phone call from his friend, Sean.

"Hello," says Sean, "is that you, Paddy?"

"Hello," replies Paddy, "is that you, Sean. What's up?"

"Ah!" says Sean. "My car has broken down and I'm stuck near Belfast and I need a hundred dollars. Can you send it to me?"

"What is that?" cries Paddy. "It is so noisy in here I cannot hear a word you are saying!"

"I said I need a hundred dollars," Sean shouts.

"You have got a bad line," screams Paddy, "I cannot hear you!"

Suddenly, the operator comes on the line.

"Hello, this is the operator," she says. "I can hear him perfectly!"

"Okay," says Paddy, "then you send him the hundred dollars!"

Old Black Rufus is the railroad switchman for the Chicago Choo-Choo Line. One night there is a terrible accident at Rufus' crossing, involving the Mexico Midnight Express and Senator Dingbat's old Toyota car – which is totally destroyed, along with the "good old" senator.

Naturally, Old Rufus is the chief witness at the court hearing, and the entire case hinges upon whether Rufus has displayed his warning signal.

The lawyers give Rufus an intense series of questions, but Rufus sticks to his story.

"I was standing there, your honor," cries Rufus, "and I was waving my lamp around so hard my arm almost came off. But the senator just paid no damned attention!"

Later, Chicago Choo-Choo chairman, Chester Cheese, congratulates Rufus on his unwavering testimony.

"I thought for sure," says Chester, "that those darn lawyers would scare you, and make you change your story."

"No, sir! No, sir!" exclaims Rufus. "But I am glad they did not ask me if my lamp was switched on!"

Barry Bug eyes is talking to his friend, Mervyn Mildew, over a few drinks in the bar.

"How did you get on with your date last night?" asks Mervyn.

"Ah!" groans Barry, "it was terrible. It was a tragic case of mistaken identity."

"Really? Mistaken identity?" asks Mervyn. "What do you mean?"

"Well," explains Barry, "I took my date out to the most expensive restaurant in town. We went in and ordered a huge meal, but as soon as we started to eat, my date found a cockroach in her soup."

"How ghastly!" exclaims Mervyn. "What did she do?"

"She stood up," says Barry, "and shouted: 'Waiter! Remove this insect!' – and he threw me out in the street!"

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

(gibberish)

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes, and feel your body to be completely frozen.

This is the right moment to look inwards – with your total consciousness, with your absolute life energy, and with an urgency as if this is going to be your last moment on the earth.

Deeper and deeper...

The deeper you move, you will start feeling a new space, a new coolness, a new freshness, a great silence descending on you. And when you reach to the center of your being, you are the blessed one, the buddha.

This is your Dharmakaya, the body of religiousness. You have gone beyond the body and mind, and entered into a space where you can have only one quality, the quality of being a witness.

This is the most glorious phenomenon. This takes you beyond you, to the ultimate sources of existence.

Just be a witness of everything that is happening – the silence, the peace, the joy – and suddenly you feel invisible flowers showering on you. A new life force, utterly fresh...

But you remain just a witness. Don't get identified – just remain a watcher.

The body is not you, the mind is not you; you are only the witness. That is your eternity, that is your very nature.

To make it absolutely sure, Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Relax...

But go on keeping the witnessing.

The body is lying down, the head is there, but you are neither.

You have entered into the ultimate space of your being. From this very space you had come; now you are returning to the womb.

In this moment, Gautam the Buddha Auditorium has become a vast ocean without even a single ripple, an ocean of consciousness. Your separation from existence has melted away. You are one with the whole. You are the whole.

Collect as much blissfulness and ecstasy... and persuade the buddha that is your intrinsic nature to come with you, because the moment your center and your circumference of life become one, you are enlightened, you are the awakened one. You have fulfilled the mission of your life.

This moment you are the most blessed people on the earth.

The evening was very beautiful on its own, but your honest, intense effort to reach to the source of your being has made it a miracle, a miracle evening.

The greatest miracle I know of is to know your innermost being. All else is just street magic.

Persuade the buddha.

He has to become your day-to-day activities.

Chopping wood, carrying water from the well, you have to remain the buddha. In the marketplace or in your own house sitting silently, you have to remain the buddha.

The buddha simply means the one who is aware, the one who is awakened, the one who is just a pure witness.

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Call all the buddhas back.

Come back as silently, as peacefully, as gracefully as possible, remaining a witness all the time.

Sit down for a few moments just to remember the golden path you have gone through, the miraculous center that you have touched – the beauty, the blissfulness that you are carrying with your breathing and with your heartbeat, the dance that you have seen, the dance that you have become.

I call this the buddha: the ultimate dance of being.

Okay, Maneesha?

Yes, Beloved Master.

CHAPTER 4

Now it is my turn

11 January 1989 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

ONCE, A MONK ASKED MASTER NAN-YIN, "WHAT IS YOUR SPECIAL TEACHING?"

NAN-YIN REPLIED, "IN AUTUMN WE REAP; IN WINTER WE STORE."

ANOTHER MONK ASKED NAN-YIN, "WHAT IS THE WAY?"

NAN-YIN ANSWERED, "A KITE FLIES ACROSS THE GREAT SKY; NOTHING REMAINS THERE."

ON ANOTHER OCCASION, NAN-YIN ASCENDED THE ROSTRUM AND SAID, "ABOVE THE MASS OF RED FLESH STANDS ONE AT AN IMMEASURABLE HEIGHT."

A MONK THEN CAME OUT FROM THE ASSEMBLY AND SAID, "ISN'T THIS 'ABOVE THE MASS, AND SO ON,' THE MASTER'S WAY?"

NAN-YIN REPLIED, "THAT'S SO."

AT THAT, THE MONK THEN OVERTURNED THE ZEN SEAT.

NAN-YIN SAID, "LOOK WHAT A ROUGH, WILD FELLOW YOU ARE!"

THE MONK DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY OR DO AND NAN-YIN DROVE HIM OUT OF THE TEMPLE.

Friends,

I have been called for almost thirty years, a "so-called Bhagwan," a "self-styled Bhagwan." This was in condemnation of me. I patiently waited for the right moment. The right moment has come. Now it is my turn.

I call all the founders of all the religions, self-styled and so-called. The people who have been calling me so-called and self-styled did not realize that they were provoking me. Now I want to know what the conditions are that have to be fulfilled.

Jesus calls himself the only begotten son of God. What do you think? – is it self-styled, so-called, or was there some committee determining it? Was it an election? Was it a degree conferred by any university?

And if he was what he pretended to be – no Jewish scripture even mentions his name, and he was born a Jew, he lived a Jew, and he died a Jew. And if he was right, as the whole of Christianity considers him, then why did the Jews crucify him? Could not a single rabbi, learned in the ancient religion of the Jews, stand up and say that this man was innocent? He may have been imagining, hallucinating, but that is not a crime; he may have been dreaming that he was the son of God, but that too is not a crime to be punished by crucifixion.

It is absolutely clear that the Jews were angry at Jesus for the simple reason that he was a "self-styled" son of God.

God is a fiction, invented by the pathological mind of man, and fictions don't breed sons and daughters. And what happened to God after Jesus? Has he gone on birth control?

What is the criterion? ... Because Jesus was drinking wine, eating meat and fish, of course no Indian religion will accept him even as religious.

But the same is true about Indian religions and their founders. What was so great in Mahavira that he was thought to be the twenty-fourth and the last tirthankara of Jainism?

He was the contemporary of Gautam Buddha, and there were six others who were all competing vigorously to be the twenty-fourth tirthankara, because it was a tremendously respectable status, and the twenty-fourth is the last for this kalpa.

A kalpa means... millions of years are still left. A kalpa means when one existence – the whole universe – goes through the black holes and disappears. Then a second kalpa begins, when the second universe comes into being. Every kalpa lasts for millions of years, and in millions of years only twenty-four tirthankaras are allowed by Jainism. Twenty-three had already happened by the time of Gautam Buddha, obviously.

Eight persons were competitors – and I consider competition to be absolutely irreligious. The very idea of competition is violent; the very idea of competition is full of greed, full of ego. It is nothing but a hidden politics: you want a certain prestige, you are longing for respectability. All those eight philosophers and thinkers are guilty of being competitive – and they were all teaching against competition. Hence I call them all hypocrites.

To compete to be the president of a country or to compete to be the prime minister of a country is not different from competing to be the last tirthankara. Competition is simply competition: you want to overthrow somebody else and take his place.

All the seven were defeated, not by any great qualification in Mahavira. His only qualification was that he was more masochistic than any of the other seven. He tortured himself... and it is strange that humanity has always respected self-torturing people. He remained naked all the year round; he never took a bath, he never washed his mouth. Every year he used to tear out his hair, because he was against technology; the razor blade is great technology for him.

But because of these great qualities – nakedness, fasting for months, torturing himself in cold, in hot, not taking a bath, tearing his hair – which are signs of a certain kind of madness you will find in every madhouse... Very strangely, in madhouses, the people who remain naked tear their hair; both the things happen simultaneously in the same madness.

And why was he torturing himself so much? – just to justify that he was the real successor of the twenty-three tirthankaras who had preceded him. Is this self-assertion or something else? And these qualities I don't think have anything to do with religion. Not taking a bath in a hot country like India, in the hottest state of Bihar, wandering naked... There were no tarmac roads or cement roads; dust must be gathering around the year, and a naked person not taking a bath – it is simply disgusting.

I have been in close contact with Jaina monks. I used to sit as far away from them as possible, because they all stink. I don't consider stinking to be religious. When they would say something, their very breath was so thick.... They used to call me, "Come close. Why are you sitting that far away?"

I said, "It is my standpoint not to come too close to saints. Sinners are okay; they are at least human. You are practicing inhuman things. I don't consider it a privilege to be sitting close by you. It is enough that you called me and I have come; otherwise, I am feeling sick surrounded by Jaina monks. The whole atmosphere is stinking!"

Now, what was special in Mahavira? And why was he competing? He was criticizing Gautam Buddha, he was criticizing Goshalak so mercilessly. These were the competitors. Goshalak was the most prominent competitor of Mahavira, and Mahavira was using as abusive language as you can conceive.

Gautam Buddha tried himself to compete – and they are all against competition! Gautam Buddha wanted to be the twenty-fourth tirthankara – it was a great privilege and respectability.

A man who wants respectability is not religious. From whom are you wanting respectability? From the blind? From the people who are unenlightened? From the people who are drowning in darkness? You are hankering for their respect? You are even worse than those people whose respect you want. And what is respectability other than nourishment for the ego? And when he could not succeed, Buddha declared himself – so-called, self-styled.

I will relate to you a strange story.

Gautam Buddha was born when his mother was standing under a tree in the garden. He was born from a standing woman; he came down on the earth standing, and he walked seven steps immediately, and declared unto the sky, "I am the greatest buddha ever born!"

Whom do you call self-styled?

What about Mohammed?

Every medical examination of the facts about his life shows that he was epileptic, uneducated – and he became a self-styled messenger of God. And you cannot find anything of any worth....

The same is true about Krishna and Rama.

Krishna is thought by the Hindus to be the perfect reincarnation of God; all others are imperfect, partial incarnations of God. I cannot understand how you can cut God into parts – but they consider Krishna to be a perfect incarnation. What are the qualifications he fulfills?

He was the ugliest man, absolutely immoral. He gathered sixteen thousand women just like cattle, and he was married only to one woman. These sixteen thousand were all other people's wives; they were snatched from their families.

But because he had power, he had an army, he had a great following behind him, nobody objected, "What are you doing? You will never be able even to remember the names of sixteen thousand women. You are destroying sixteen thousand families. Small children are left behind without mothers; their husbands are crying, but they are poor and they cannot do anything against you. Their parents are old, they were dependent on them. You have caused sixteen thousand women to desert their families."

In India the family is not a small phenomenon like in the West. In the West the family consists, at the most, of five people: the husband, the wife, and three children. In India it was a joint family system. One family consisted of maybe sixty people, fifty people.

For Krishna, just seeing a beautiful woman was enough to drag her into his palace. And he was the man who persuaded one of the greatest warriors of the world, Arjuna, to fight and create the greatest war India has ever seen. It is called The Great War, mahabharat.

Strangely enough, this persuasion of Arjuna, who did not want to fight with his own cousin-brothers... On both sides there were relatives, friends, colleagues, teachers; Arjuna could not believe it: to murder all these people... The whole Srimad Bhagavadgita, the most famous Hindu religious scripture, is full of persuasion for violence.

And the most amazing thing is that the great Mahatma Gandhi, who used to think that he was nonviolent – perhaps the greatest nonviolent person in the world – called Srimad Bhagavadgita his mother. Nobody objected that the Bhagavadgita is completely violent; it preaches violence and war. Adolf Hitler could have called it his mother, and that would have been consistent, but not Mahatma Gandhi.

But just a blindness that does not allow you to see into your own tradition... All that is old is gold for these people. They never think that the past was not as great a past as you think. If it was great, from where have you come? You are a descendant of that great past. The world would not have been in such a mess.

In China, Confucius, Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu... nobody objected to the idea that women have no souls. For centuries in China women have not been considered as spiritual beings – they don't have any soul, hence they are just like the furniture. If a husband killed his wife, it was not a crime. And these people – Confucius, and Lao Tzu, and Chuang Tzu – all tolerated it.

This tolerance is a silent acceptance. They could have objected, but nobody wants to risk his prestige. Nobody wants to be condemned by the blind masses.

I say unto you, all these religious founders were so-called, self-proclaiming.

I have told you that now it is my turn, and I am going to be on the warpath!

Every day I will take one issue and try to explain to you how this issue has been supported by all the religions, and humanity has been harmed immensely, wounded immensely.

Today I have chosen the subject, the woman, because the woman is half of humanity.

In the Christian trinity there is no place for a woman. The Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost – absolutely a gay society. Even Jesus, who teaches to love your enemies, was disrespectful to his mother. I am reminded of an incident....

Jesus was teaching in the marketplace to a crowd. His mother had not seen him for years and she was standing outside the crowd. somebody shouted to him, "Your mother is waiting outside! She has not seen you for years."

Jesus said, "Tell that woman" – he could not even use the word mother. "Tell that woman that nobody is my mother, nobody is my father! My father lives in heaven."

Such an insulting, humiliating attitude from a man who teaches to love your enemies, and "If somebody slaps you, give him your other cheek too." This is hypocrisy. Although he mixed with women, even prostitutes, he did not allow any woman to be his apostle. All the twelve apostles were men. It is a male chauvinist ideology.

Just today I have received a report on a woman who was a Catholic, educated in a Catholic convent. Her name is Michelle Roberts. She became very disgusted because of the attitude of the bishops and her teachers.

The bishop told her that the woman is the door to hell! She became so disgusted, she renounced Catholicism and got converted to Buddhism, and went to Thailand. There she found that in Thailand, Buddhism believes women have no souls. Utterly frustrated, she dropped the very idea of religion.

Gautam Buddha insisted for twenty years continuously that no woman can be initiated into his discipleship. The woman has first to be born as a man, and then only she can be a disciple. Then there is a possibility, if she is in the body of a man, to become enlightened.

Strange... all these people have been teaching that you are not the body, and when it comes to the subject of women, suddenly the woman becomes the body! First she has to change the body into a man's.

Unfortunately, at that time there was no plastic surgery available, otherwise every woman who wanted to be initiated would not have had to wait for another birth; she can have plastic surgery and become a man right now.

What was Buddha's fear? The fear shows clearly that he did not trust his own disciples, the hundreds of so-called enlightened disciples – he did not trust them. And it is natural, because whether they say it or not, celibacy is unnatural, and all the religions who have been teaching celibacy are afraid of women.

The question is not the woman; the question is that if the woman is initiated, then she will be mixing with men, and what will happen to celibacy?

But nobody has looked into the matter – all these so-called great religious leaders – that woman is not needed to destroy your celibacy. Men are enough: man to man, man to animal – homosexuality, sodomy are as ancient as the Old Testament. Nobody has been celibate.

Yes, Buddha could have been, for the simple reason that for twenty-nine years he had been in the company of the most beautiful women of his kingdom. He was finished. Enough is enough. But poor people who have not known any relationship of love are being initiated into celibacy: this was his fear.

The same fear predominates in Jainism. Mahavira declared the same thing: that no woman is capable of entering into the ultimate state of enlightenment unless she has the body of a man.

Again I have to remind you: these people seem to be absolutely self-contradictory, continuously teaching that you are not the body, you are not the mind – and when the question of women comes up, suddenly they forget their whole philosophy. The woman has first to get into a man's body. What is so great about the man's body? But male chauvinists... all founders of religion are male chauvinists.

In Jainism a beautiful incident happened.

A woman named Mallibhai asked the contemporary tirthankara, the contemporary Jaina master, "Why is a woman prevented?"

He said, "For the simple reason that unless you are naked and live like we live, you cannot become enlightened." And a woman certainly feels shy to be naked, particularly amongst so-called celibates.

But Mallibhai was a lioness! She immediately dropped her clothes, and she said, "If nakedness is the only problem, I am naked."

And she rose to deep meditations, to such a height that Jainism had to accept her as one of the tirthankaras. But such cunningness, such callousness... they changed her name so that posterity

would never know that a woman had become equal to Mahavira! They changed her name from Mallibhai – bhai means a woman – to Mallinath – nath means a man.

I used to harass my father, that "I want to see which one of the twenty-four statues in the temple is Mallibhai."

He said, "I don't know. Don't harass me. They all are men!"

Even the statue has been made that of a man! The name has been changed, the statue is made of a man, just so that the fact that a woman has become enlightened is erased from the memory of man.

Mohammedanism has not allowed women any social freedom – not even to show their faces. Mohammedan women's faces become pale because they cannot even have sunlight, pure air, open sky. They have to keep hidden behind clothes; you can see only their eyes. You cannot recognize even your wife.

And what about Mohammedan men? They are allowed to have four women as their wives. Mohammed himself had nine wives. Now this is absolutely unnatural. Existence keeps a certain balance, an equal number of men and women, so if you marry nine women, eight men are deprived of women. These eight men are bound to create prostitutes, homosexuality, sodomy, and all kinds of perversions. Once Mohammed managed to have nine wives, the door was open.

Just forty years ago, when India became independent, there used to be a Mohammedan state, Hyderabad, and the king of Hyderabad state was the Nizam. He had five hundred wives – even in this century – because Mohammed had not said, "Don't go beyond four; four is normal. But if you can afford more, God is graceful to you." Five hundred women...?

I have been to Hyderabad many times. I inquired, and I was completely puzzled. These five hundred women were not only the Nizam's own wives; in these five hundred women his father's wives – except his own mother – were also included. His grandfather's wives who were still alive were also included. They came as heritage.

Woman has been reduced into a commodity. Just like money and palaces and furniture and diamonds, she also comes as a heritage.

So the Nizam was having even his grandmothers, his great-grandmothers, as his wives – and nobody objected, no Mohammedan objected.

The woman has been the most oppressed, and the reason is these so-called religious people, these self-styled founders of religion.

In fact, religion is not yet born.

My whole effort with you is to bring an authentic religiousness into the world. The whole past consists of ugliness and obscenity.

You will be surprised to know that your so-called obscene literature is nothing compared with the religious scriptures – and not only scriptures, but in sculpture also. You just go to Khajuraho.

In Khajuraho there used to be one hundred temples. It was a city of temples only, and every temple had thousands of statues of naked women in all kinds of sexual postures – and such absurd postures that if you try you cannot manage them.

I used to go to Khajuraho often, because it was on the way to Chhatarpur, a small state where I had many friends. Mohammedans have destroyed seventy of the temples, and thirty temples were covered in mud to protect them from the Mohammedans, in the corner of a deep forest. So thirty temples are still there.

When for the first time I went to see, just on the way, I could not believe my eyes. Men and women are making love standing on their heads! Just to stand on your head is enough trouble; to make love... and both are standing on their heads – would have been a great practice, a discipline, a lifelong discipline.

You will be surprised... your playboys and your playgirls are nothing compared to Khajuraho. Two men are making love to one woman from both the sides. Three men are making love to one woman: two from both the sides, and one from the mouth! And these are religious temples!

I am going to expose all these religions by and by. Now I have to see how many people's religious feelings are hurt.

These temples of Khajuraho are not exceptional. The same temples exist in Jagganath Puri, where the Puri Shankaracharya, my arch-enemy, presides over those naked women! These same kinds of sculptures exist in Konarak. They were all over India. Most of them have been destroyed by the Mohammedans, because they were anti statues. God should not have any statue; he cannot be confined to a stone. They destroyed millions of statues all over India, but still a few have remained in deep forests, or maybe out of their reach. They show the reality of this so-called religious country.

And if you feel so hurt, just go to Khajuraho, go to Konarak, go to Puri, and let your religious feelings hurt as much as you want. I am simply stating facts. I have not been hitting so hard, for the simple reason that I wanted the idiots who have been calling me a "so-called, self-styled god" to ask me – but nobody ever asked. They were simply writing – everybody – in their magazines, newspapers, in books, that I am a "self-styled god."

But they were not aware that once I drop the word bhagwan, I am going to expose all your Bhagwans as self-styled; there is no other way. And I am going to expose them on every single point: poverty, ecology, celibacy, violence.

All these religions have been destructive, harmful, a curse to humanity. They need to be completely destroyed. Only on their death is there a possibility of a religiousness arising, a new man with a new vision in which there will be no difference between man and woman.

Now the sutra:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

ONCE, A MONK ASKED MASTER NAN-YIN, "WHAT IS YOUR SPECIAL TEACHING?"

NAN-YIN REPLIED, "IN AUTUMN WE REAP; IN WINTER WE STORE."

The answer looks strange, but its implication is clear. He is saying, we live moment to moment spontaneously, responding to the reality. We don't have a doctrine already in the mind, according to which we live. We live without thoughts, beyond mind, allowing our consciousness to respond to reality.

"IN AUTUMN WE REAP; IN WINTER WE STORE."

In fact, he has said the most essential thing for religiousness. Nan-yin is one of the great masters I have always loved.

ANOTHER MONK ASKED NAN-YIN, "WHAT IS THE WAY?"

NAN-YIN ANSWERED, "A KITE FLIES ACROSS THE GREAT SKY; NOTHING REMAINS THERE."

To disappear into the ultimate sky beyond the horizons is "THE WAY."

A man of the quality of Nan-yin I can call religious: so authentic, so sincere, so accurate – not a single word more, not a single word less. You cannot edit his statements, they are so complete, so perfect.

NAN-YIN ANSWERED, "A KITE FLIES ACROSS THE GREAT SKY; NOTHING REMAINS THERE. Everything dissolves.

"This is the Way. Nirvana is the Way."

Go deep into your inner sky and disappear and you will be one with the cosmos. There is no outer way, there is no outer asceticism, no outer discipline: a simple meditateness...

Relaxing into yourself, you will find your inner sky. Allow everything to disappear; not even a trace is left behind. You have come home. This is the Way.

ON ANOTHER OCCASION, NAN-YIN ASCENDED THE ROSTRUM AND SAID, "ABOVE THE MASS OF RED FLESH STANDS ONE AT AN IMMEASURABLE HEIGHT."

He's saying that the body is just red flesh. Above the body stands your consciousness, like a great Himalayan peak.

"ABOVE THE MASS OF RED FLESH STANDS ONE AT AN IMMEASURABLE HEIGHT."

The height is so great, it is immeasurable. Your body may be small, but you are not your body.

It does not matter whether the body is of man or woman; both are just a mass of red flesh. And the consciousness is not contaminated by the body, neither is it contaminated by your thoughts. Its purity is so absolute that once you have found it, you will find standing above your own body

and mind a great peak, immeasurable, of consciousness which reaches to the highest possibility of human life and its potentiality.

Now these are the real religious people, who don't talk of unnecessary things. They simply state a simple fact. He has not made any difference between man and woman. He is far greater a Buddha, far greater a Mahavira – but he has not founded any religion.

He lived with his lovers, he shared his insight with his lovers, friends. And when asked, "Why don't you found a religion?", he simply laughed. He said, "Don't you see the other organized religions? They have all killed the truth. I am the last person to found a religion. When I disappear, I don't want to leave my footsteps on the sands of time.

"And you have also to remember," he used to say to his disciples: "Don't ever try after me to organize a religion. The moment truth is organized, it is killed. There is no way to have an organized truth. There is no way to have an organized love. These are individual affairs."

This is the greatness of the individual. No organization can touch it, no society can reach to it.

A MONK THEN CAME OUT FROM THE ASSEMBLY AND SAID, "IS NOT THIS 'ABOVE THE MASS, AND SO ON,' THE MASTER'S WAY?"

Are you not talking about the master's way? – beyond the mass, beyond the body?

This is what he was trying not to be done by his people. Immediately, in front of him a monk stands up and starts talking about "This is the way."

This is how scriptures arise, this is how religions arise – by people who are intellectuals but are not in any way enlightened, awakened, illumined. They can understand things intellectually, of great complication, but they cannot understand the obvious truth of your inner being.

The monk said, "IS NOT THIS 'ABOVE THE MASS, AND SO ON,' THE MASTER'S WAY?"

NAN-YIN REPLIED, "THAT'S SO."

AT THAT, THE MONK OVERTURNED THE ZEN SEAT.

The Zen seat is overturned only when somebody declares his enlightenment.

Nan-yin has said, "THAT'S SO," but he has not said that the monk is enlightened: "You are simply repeating like a parrot what I have said."

But hearing that this is so, the monk must have thought, "I have got the point."

AT THAT, THE MONK OVERTURNED THE ZEN SEAT OF THE MASTER.

NAN-YIN SAID, "LOOK WHAT A ROUGH, WILD FELLOW YOU ARE!"

THE MONK DID NOT KNOW WHAT TO SAY OR DO AND NAN-YIN DROVE HIM OUT OF THE TEMPLE.

People think that compassion should not do such a thing – turning him out of the temple. But it is out of compassion that he is turned out of the temple, to show him that "You are not enlightened. First find out your own experience, and then come and I will welcome you, and you can overturn my seat, you can sit on my seat; I will vacate the seat for you. But right now it is your absolute need that you should be thrown out of the temple." It is not unkindness; it is a very superior compassion.

Shusai wrote:

LIKE A LOVELY CLOUD

IN A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE,

NEW YEAR'S FIRST SUNRISE!

These beautiful people! A small stream, very small, but it has contained the most precious ones.

When Shusai says,

"LIKE A LOVELY CLOUD IN A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE, NEW YEAR'S FIRST SUNRISE!" – what an amazement that "I am still alive!" What an amazement that "I don't deserve such a beautiful sunrise."

And yet existence goes on showering from all directions, in thousands of ways. But you are dumb, you are deaf, you are blind. You don't see the sunrise, you don't see the sunset.

I have seen people walking on the road. The sun is setting – such psychedelic colors all over the horizon – and nobody is looking at it. Somebody is talking to himself, you can see the lips moving; somebody is counting something, somebody is looking down on the earth. They are completely unaware that a great sunset, which will never be repeated again...

But a man of aesthetic sensibility, of religious consciousness, will gather all these beauties, will become one with the sunset, will become one with the sunrise, will become one of the stars in the night, will become one of the roses, or the lotuses. He will enjoy this tremendous mystery that is unfolding every moment all around you. Everything is poetry, and everything is music, and everything is a great dance.

But all the religions, the organized ones, have destroyed your sensibility. They have destroyed your perceptivity.

When I was a teacher in the university I used to have a beautiful garden. I have always had a beautiful garden around me. A Hindu monk, very famous among the Hindus, had come to see me. I took him around the garden – because my garden was winning for years, every year, the first prize. We used to bring such big dahlias, such big roses – almost impossible to believe. And that old fool, the Hindu monk, said to me, "A man of spirituality like you should not indulge in any senses."

Even looking at the roses is indulgence, because if you can appreciate the beauty of a rose, what prevents you from appreciating the beauty of a woman? It is the same sensibility. To destroy the sensibility, to make your skin as thick as possible, to make your skull as thick, as retarded as possible so you don't appreciate anything... you cannot enjoy this beautiful existence.

To my understanding, if you cannot enjoy that which is outer, you are incapable of enjoying that which is inner, because the inner is far deeper. The outer is immediately available.

According to my experience, enjoying the beauty of flowers and stars suddenly makes you aware to look into yourself: what is my beauty? What is my being's light? The outer beauty indicates towards the inner.

I am in favor of a deep balance. Enjoy the outer beauty, the outer sensibility; it will help you in your meditation. It is not going to distract you. It distracts you because you have been inhibiting your outer sensibility. If you have not appreciated the beauty of a woman or a man, then when you will close your eyes you will be surrounded by beautiful women, by beautiful men. This has been your inhibition, this is your suppression, which will come to the surface the moment you start going inwards. You have not fulfilled your responsibility for the outer existence. You are not worthy to enter into the inner sanctum.

I teach you to love the world, not to renounce it, because that is the only way to find yourself. You are part of this existence, you cannot escape from it. All escape is false, and creates only frauds.

Question 1

Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

DO YOU RECOMMEND FOR YOUR DISCIPLES – AS GURDJIEFF DID FOR HIS – THAT WE IDENTIFY WHAT OUR "CHIEF CHARACTERISTIC" IS?

Maneesha, no, absolutely no, because Gurdjieff's system is totally different.

You cannot put one car's parts into another car of another make. Both cars are functional.... I am not against Gurdjieff's system, but I have a far more refined system. Gurdjieff is crude, cruel, and goes unnecessarily into disciplines which don't matter. They can be discarded.

For example, what Maneesha is asking, that was his main theme: you have to find your chief characteristic. Somebody has greed as his chief characteristic, somebody has jealousy, somebody has pride, somebody has envy, and so on, so forth.

I don't want to deal with parts of your being separately; it will be a long process. That's why not a single man among Gurdjieff's disciples has become enlightened – not even P. D. Ouspensky, who was his spokesman. Nobody knew anything about George Gurdjieff until P. D. Ouspensky started writing about him. P. D. Ouspensky was already a world-renowned mathematician.

In fact, if you want to understand George Gurdjieff, don't read his books, you will not understand what he is writing. He was not well-educated in any language. He became an orphan when he was only nine years old, and then he moved in the most primitive part of the world, the Caucasus. In the mountains, among the primitive tribes, he moved from one tribe to another – they were all gypsies, continuously on the move – so he learned everything amongst those gypsies.

When he started writing, he had to invent his own words, because he did not know any language perfectly, particularly any contemporary language. So you will be surprised to find that one sentence runs the whole page, one word runs the whole line. You cannot understand what he is talking about. By the time you have reached to the end of the passage, you have forgotten the beginning, and you may read a hundred pages but you cannot find ten lines which are understandable.

It was P. D. Ouspensky.... If you want to understand Gurdjieff, read P. D. Ouspensky. He is a man of contemporary genius, and he has found out through Gurdjieff, living with him for almost thirty-five years, slowly slowly the essential core of his teaching. This was one of the most important things, but it is primitive.

According to me, there is no need to find which is your chief characteristic. We have to go beyond it. What is the point of finding it? You have to be a witness of all the things: anger, greed, envy, jealousy, violence – whatsoever it is, you have to be just a witness of it all without getting identified with anything.

That is my refinement on Gurdjieff.

Gurdjieff dealt retail: find out first which is the chief characteristic, then find out the second, then find out the third.... And your whole mind is full of so many things, that if you are going to deal partially in a retail way, this life is not enough. You will need many lives, and even then there is no guarantee that you will remember what you have gained in the past life.

Do you remember anything that you have gained in your past life? And you have lived in many lives, and perhaps you have meditated, perhaps you have been an ascetic, perhaps you have followed a certain path, but you don't remember anything.

I want to finish everything wholesale! There is no need to find your chief characteristic, it will be part of your mind. I want you to be a witness of all your characteristics. In a single blow finish the whole game!

Maneesha, there is no place in my vision for Gurdjieff's ideology.

But I love the man. He was primitive, but he was right. But he was right for primitive people; he was not right for the contemporary intelligence. That's why he could not find many people to follow him.

He lived in his commune near Paris, and not more than twenty people were ever there. They also by and by disappeared, because it seemed such a long, long process, that soon they recognized that this life is not enough to finish the course.

Gurdjieff died enlightened himself, but not even P. D. Ouspensky was enlightened.

Finally, he himself – P. D. Ouspensky, who has made Gurdjieff well known around the world – dropped from his discipleship, because it was so torturous for no reason at all.

Gurdjieff was in Tiflis, in the Soviet Union, and P. D. Ouspensky was teaching his teachings in London. He phoned him from Tiflis, saying "Come immediately! Drop everything." When the master

gives such a call... Ouspensky dropped everything – he had created a big school – and rushed towards Tiflis thousands of miles away. And when he reached, utterly tired, exhausted, to Gurdjieff's house, Gurdjieff said, "Right now, go back and start your work in London."

Ouspensky could not believe that he would do such a thing to him. He had abandoned everything, the school was destroyed; he had ordered him to come: "Leave everything!" – and now he is not saying a single word. He has not even allowed him to enter into the house, he is just on the steps, and Gurdjieff says, "Okay, you have come; now just go back. Start your work in London."

It has some significance, but very primitive. It simply means a test for your trust. But even Ouspensky could not tolerate this humiliation. He had destroyed his whole school, he had finished with everything, and now again to start from ABC....

He started the school again, but it was no more concerned with the living Gurdjieff. It was only concerned with the Gurdjieff that Ouspensky had written about. So he never mentions Gurdjieff's full name in his new editions of his books, he only talks about "G". He had to break away from him.

And this happened to almost all the disciples.

It is perfectly good to read Ouspensky, but don't get into Gurdjieff's books. You will come out insane.

It is time for Sardar Gurudayal Singh.

"Mommy! Mommy!" cries Little Albert. "Can I go into the sea?"

"No, not today, Albert," replies his mother – "maybe tomorrow. The sea is far too rough and choppy now – it is too dangerous."

"But mom," cries Little Albert, "daddy is in the sea swimming."

"I know, dear," says his mother, "but daddy has got lots of life insurance!"

One day in Judge Grump's courtroom, Big Black Leroy is on trial for assault and battery. Boris Babblebrain, the lawyer, is severely cross-examining Leroy, trying to prove the black guy guilty beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Leroy just quietly looks at Boris, and maintains that he merely pushed the plaintiff "a little bit."

"Okay," snaps Babblebrain, "just how hard?"

"Ah," replies Leroy, coolly, "like I said, just a little bit."

"Now," badgers Babblebrain, "for the benefit of the judge and jury, will you please step down here, using me for the subject, and illustrate just how hard a little bit is."

"Sure," says Leroy, smiling as he steps down from the witness stand.

Boris is excited, hoping that Leroy will feel intimidated and overdo his demonstration, thereby proving himself guilty.

When Leroy reaches Boris, he suddenly kicks the lawyer as hard as he can in the shins, then seizes him bodily, and with full force, lifts Boris over his head and hurls him across the room.

Turning around from the mess on the floor, Leroy smiles up at Judge Grump and explains, "Your honor, just about one-tenth that hard!"

Sardar Gurudayal Singh is rumbling along M.G. Road in his old Ambassador car when he gets pulled over by Officer Ghansu of the Poona traffic police.

Officer Ghansu looks inside the car and sees a big black hole in the dashboard.

"What happened to your speedometer?" asks Officer Ghansu.

"I sold it," replies Sardar Gurudayal Singh. "I don't need it any more."

"What do you mean, you don't need it any more?" shouts the cop. "How can you tell how fast you are going?"

"That is easy," laughs Sardar Gurudayal Singh. "At twenty miles an hour, the fenders rattle. At thirty, the doors rattle. At forty, my turban rattles. At fifty, my teeth rattle. And at sixty, my teeth fall out!"

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

(gibberish)

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Be silent.

Close your eyes.

Feel your body to be completely frozen.

This is the right moment to look inwards with your total consciousness, and with an urgency as if this is the last moment of your life.

Deeper and deeper... The deeper you go, the closer you come to yourself and existence.

As you move deeper, a great silence descends on you.

More deeper... and a ecstasy, a drunkenness... as if you are drinking from the divine source itself.

The moment you reach to the center of your being, you know without any doubt your existence is eternal, your being is beyond birth and death.

Centered, you are a buddha, the awakened one.

Just remember one quality, because buddha, the awakened one, consists only of one quality, simple and single: witnessing.

Witness whatever is happening to you.

Witness the body far away on the circumference.

Witness the mind also far away.

Witness also the experiences of silence, peace, ecstasy.

You are only a witness. Not to get identified with anything brings you to the ultimate freedom of consciousness. From that point you can disappear into the blue sky not leaving a single trace. You can become the very cosmos.

This is the ultimate destiny of the evolution of consciousness.

To make this witnessing clear,

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Relax.

Let go...

But remember only one thing: that you are a witness of the body, of the mind, of all the experiences that are surrounding you. This witnessing makes you a buddha. No other initiation...

It is your self-realization.

At this moment you are the most blessed people on the earth, because suddenly you have found your center. You have also found your birthright: to be a buddha.

The evening was beautiful on its own, but your presence – ten thousand buddhas' presence – has made it a miraculous evening.

I can see the whole Gautam the Buddha Auditorium turning into an ocean of consciousness. You are melting your separation and becoming one with the whole. This is the only process of becoming holy.

Gather as much silence, ecstasy, blissfulness, the sense of eternity, and persuade the buddha to come along with you, to melt into your daily activities so there is no difference between the center and the circumference. Every day, inch by inch, the distance is becoming less and less.

Sooner or later everybody is going to have his spring, and suddenly... the enlightenment.

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Come back, but come back as buddhas: silently, gracefully, with an immense sense of eternity, immortality, and sit for a few moments just to remember and remind yourself of the golden path that you have traveled towards your center, and all that you experienced there.

It has to become your very breathing, your very heartbeat.

There is no reason why it should not be! To be a buddha is your birthright.

I proclaim to the whole world: everybody who is living has the birthright to be a buddha! Just get centered in your witnessing, unwavering like a small flame of a candle in a house where no wind blows, and the flame is absolutely unwavering.

To be centered in an unwavering witnessing is the greatest secret I can convey to you.

Okay, Maneesha?

Yes, Beloved Master.

CHAPTER 5

The day has been hilarious

12 January 1989 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

ONCE CHOKOMAN WAS ASKED, "WHAT IS THE PLACE OF
RELIGIOUS EXERCISES OF THE ANCIENT BUDDHAS?"

CHOKOMAN SAID, "JUST BY WALKING, THEY TROD ON IT."

THE MONK WENT ON, "AND AFTER THEY HAD TROD ON IT?"

CHOKOMAN REPLIED, "ICE MELTING, TILES BREAKING UP."

THE MONK THEN ASKED, "HOW DOES THAT HAPPEN?"

CHOKOMAN RESPONDED BY SAYING, "THE GENTLEMEN IN THE CITY, THE LITTLE
CHILDREN OUTSIDE THE WALLS."

ON ANOTHER OCCASION, A MONK ASKED CHOKOMAN, "WHAT IS THIS SWORD THAT WILL
CUT A HAIR THAT IS BLOWN ONTO IT?"

CHOKOMAN REPLIED, "YOU CAN'T TOUCH IT."

THE MONK THEN ASKED, "HOW ABOUT ONE WHO USES IT?"

CHOKOMAN SAID "HIS BONES AND BODY ARE SMASHED TO SMITHEREENS."

THE MONK COMMENTED, "THEN, IT'S A GOOD THING NOT TO BE ABLE TO TOUCH IT!" – AT WHICH CHOKOMAN STRUCK HIM.

Friends,

The day has been very hilarious. What I was saying... the masses have started proving it.

The Buddhists have joined hands with a minority Mohammedan league. They threatened the police that I should be arrested – as if by arresting me they are giving an answer to my argument. They threatened that they will come in a procession and destroy the ashram.

That exactly proves what I have been saying: that the world is not yet civilized, and there is no such thing as religion anywhere. These people are simply subhuman.

Even if you destroy this ashram, my arguments will not be destroyed. Even a blind man can see it!

They wanted to garland me with a garland of shoes. It only shows that they have become Buddhists but they have not forgotten their forefathers' craftsmanship of thousands of years. They have been making shoes – they are the chamars – and anybody who offers shoes as a garland only shows his poverty. He has nothing else to offer. Just a poor shoemaker...

But even that will not destroy my argument. You can bring all the shoes of the whole world, but still what I have said, and what I am going to say, will stand absolutely intact and pure.

These people went to the Deputy Police Commissioner. He seems to be a nice, educated, cultured man. He refused, saying that "You cannot have any procession, because you don't understand.... You are misinterpreting." He came to the ashram, and said that "I have refused their permission to take a procession against you, or I am going to arrest them, because there is no validity at all."

Whatever I have said, I can say to any court, any high court, any supreme court. And this will be the right action: to take me to the court. Or if they have intelligence enough, I can allow three persons – they should choose – to argue with me on each point that hurts their so-called, self-styled religious feelings. Just those three persons have to fulfill the conditions of this campus. They have to come here unarmed, and they have to come here with an AIDS-negative certificate. We will welcome them with flowers, not with shoes – we have enough flowers – and I will give them every chance to argue on every point they want.

But this has been the whole conditioning for centuries. Poisoning Socrates, they thought that they were destroying his arguments. His arguments are still as alive, as strong as ever. Crucifying Jesus, they thought they were destroying the possibility of a new religion springing up. Now half of the world is Christian.

You cannot argue with swords, you cannot argue with throwing stones, you cannot argue with ugly slogans. These simply prove that you are barbarious, subhuman.

Perhaps if Charles Darwin were alive, I would have requested him to come here. His whole life he was searching for the middle agent – because monkeys or gorillas or chimpanzees cannot suddenly become man; they should pass through a transitory period. I would have welcomed him here, and told him that here we have found the missing link – the people who are no longer gorillas, but are not yet human beings either.

And now every effort is being made to camouflage the issue about the meaning of 'bhagwan', because I have exposed not only one religion, but all the religions. The Buddhists have joined hands with the Mohammedans, not knowing at all that these Mohammedans have destroyed thousands of Buddhist statues, have burnt thousands of Buddhist scriptures – and you are joining hands with them?

And the Mohammedans don't understand that Buddha would not have accepted the philosophy of Mohammed at all. Mohammed was a violent man, continuously fighting and warring and killing people – and that's what Mohammedans have been doing all along after Mohammed. Killing has become their profession.

That's why I felt very hilarious. Buddhists and Mohammedans are joining hands against me – a good sign of brotherhood. Soon every religion will join with you. Just wait a little, don't be in a hurry.

One self-styled Jaina monk, Daulatsagar Suriswarji, has stated fourteen meanings of the word 'bhagwan'. This is creating a camouflage.

Only for the argument's sake, I will read you the meanings he has given to 'bhagwan'.

First, essence.

But do you understand the meaning of essence? – that which is caught by the senses. A perfume is essence, because your nose catches it. Essence means anything that the senses catch.

Now what does that have to do with Mahavira? I don't think he was using perfumes.

The second meaning is knowledge. That will make all the knowledgeable people in the world Bhagwan. All the professors, all the deans, all vice-chancellors, all rabbis, all imams – even Ayatollah Khomeini will be called Bhagwan, because they are all knowledgeable people. All the brahmin scholars, pundits, priests – whether they are Christian or Mohammedan or Hindu or Buddhist, it does not matter. If knowledge is the meaning of Bhagwan, then all knowledgeable people become Bhagwan.

Then what is so great about calling Mahavira and Buddha and Krishna and Rama, Bhagwan? Just knowledgeable, just like parrots... repeating the scriptures.

The third meaning is greatness.

I could not resist having immense compassion on this poor fellow, Daulatsagar Suriswarji. There are all kinds of greatness in the world: are you going to call Alexander the Great, who conquered the world, Bhagwan? Are you going to call Adolf Hitler, Bhagwan? He believed that he was the

reincarnation of the Jewish prophet Elijah, and still there are his followers in Germany, in America, and all over the world.

I received a letter from the American president of the Neo-Fascist Society, and he told me, "You have been again and again criticizing Adolf Hitler. It hurts our religious feelings!"

I had never even dreamt that criticizing Adolf Hitler was going to hurt somebody's religious feelings. In his letter he said, "Perhaps you are not aware that Adolf Hitler was no ordinary human being. He was the reincarnation of the Jewish prophet Elijah."

I wrote to him that "If he is what you say, the reincarnation of the prophet Elijah, then you will be in trouble, because he killed six million Jews! What kind of Jewish prophet...?"

Whom are you going to call great? Ronald Reagan? Are you going to call people who have mountains of money great?

In America the richest man has four million dollars; in Japan the richest man has twenty-six million dollars. Certainly this man must be called Bhagwan. He has defeated everybody in the world. Never before has anybody had twenty-six million dollars. Forgive me, he has twenty-six billion dollars.

Japan is only one-fourth, as far as land is concerned, of the United States, but its value is four times more than the whole U.S.A. Now Japan should be called a great nation – the richest.

People who have money, people who have political power, people who have scientific knowledge... Are you going to call Albert Einstein, the man who created atomic energy, Bhagwan?

What does it mean? All these meanings have no reference to your Mahavira, to your Buddha, to your Rama. They don't have any meaning; this is simply camouflage.

Fourth is success. When I read it I said, "Aha! Success is Bhagwan."

There are millions of people who are successful. There are successful people like Picasso, there are successful people like Morgan, there are successful people like Ford. Are you going to call these people Bhagwan?

I am simply cutting in a single blow all the nonsense that this man, Daulatsagar Suriswarji, has produced. From where has he got these meanings? I don't bother about it. I have accepted those meanings, not bothering about linguistics. I can simply destroy all the meanings he has been talking of.

The fifth is affluence.

Buddha renounced his kingdom: what affluence? He was not called Bhagwan when he was the prince; he was called Bhagwan when he renounced the kingdom. Mahavira renounced his kingdom. These were beggars! – what affluence?

If affluence is the criterion, then the great Akbar, who ruled over the greatest part of India, should be called Bhagwan. Or Genghis Khan, who killed forty million people alone, terrorized the whole

continents of Asia and Europe, should be called Bhagwan. Stalin should be called Bhagwan, because the Soviet Union is the biggest territory in the world, and he ruled over it most of his life. He was the man who defeated Adolf Hitler. He should be called Bhagwan, although he killed one million Russians... even his own people.

All the dictators of the world, all the richest exploiters of the world should be called Bhagwan, if affluence is the meaning of the word. But not Mahavira. Standing naked... what affluence? He had not even a begging bowl in his hands.

Sixth, detachment.

If detachment is the criterion, then what about Mohammed having nine wives? – and the richest woman he married just for money. He was only twenty-six and the woman was forty. She was a widow, but had the most money in Saudi Arabia. He married the woman not for beauty, not for any love, but just for her money.

His whole life he was holding his sword, although on his sword he had written, "Peace is my message." Strange... He killed as many people as you can conceive, and peace is his message!

Mahavira will accept neither Mohammed nor Jesus.

Jesus was very much in love with wine. He even converted water into wine – absolutely a criminal act. He was visiting prostitutes. Neither Mahavira nor Buddha is going to accept Jesus or Mohammed as Bhagwan.

What detachment can you see in Krishna? He never renounced his kingdom. He was one of the greatest warriors, and conquered as much land as possible, was unafraid to kill millions of people in war. What detachment? You cannot call Krishna Bhagwan anymore – according to the so-called, self-styled Jaina monk, Daulatsagar Suriswarji – you cannot call Rama Bhagwan.

Rama is the most common name in India; it has almost become synonymous with Bhagwan.

But Rama never renounced his kingdom. On the contrary, because a washerman found that his wife had not returned home the whole night – in the morning she came, she must have been visiting some lover – he said, "I am not like Rama, whose wife Sita has been for years in confinement, in the hands of Ravana, Rama's enemy, and yet he has accepted her. I am not Rama; just get lost. Don't come to this home again."

When this message reached to Rama, rather than renouncing the kingdom he renounced Sita, his wife, who was pregnant with twins, without saying anything to her. He just told his brother, "Take her into the deep forest and leave her in some Hindu seer's ashram."

She asked again and again, "Where are you taking me?", and Lakshmana could not say anything. What to say? – he had tears in his eyes, and she was left in the deep forest. This is detachment?

That reminds me:

Rama's father, Dashrath, had four wives. Rama was the eldest son, and Bharat was the youngest among four brothers. Bharat was the son of the youngest woman. Of course, the youngest had much more power over Dashrath than the others. The youngest had asked him, just one time.... If she asked anything, he would not refuse it. And such a henpecked old man... he promised her without knowing what she was going to ask.

When the time came, she asked Dashrath, "You should remember what you have promised me. Now fulfill your promise! Send Rama for fourteen years in exile outside your kingdom, and make my son Bharat the king." And that old man followed this stupid idea. Rama was exiled, and Sita and Lakshmana, his younger brother, followed him, because they were absolutely convinced that this was unjust.

They were staying in a small cottage deep in the forest in South India, and Sita saw a deer made of gold running just in front of their cottage. Rama is thought to be Bhagwan, and he could not... Even an idiot could have realized that deer are not made of gold. And these so-called, self-styled Bhagwans have been calling the whole world a dream – but that gold deer was not a dream. So Sita sent him to catch the gold deer.

Such utter ignorance! Even you would have recognized that deer are not made of gold. And the whole world is illusory! – but the gold and the deer made of gold seemed to be ultimate realities.

He went into the forest to find the golden deer. And he had told Lakshmana not to leave the place, because Ravana was the king of Sri Lanka; his place was very close, and there was every danger that he may try to abduct Sita, "So whatever happens, you remain here."

And soon Rama found that golden deer had turned into a monster, so he started shouting for help. Lakshmana was in a dilemma: to go to his help... but he has been told not to leave Sita alone under any conditions.

Sita is thought to be one of the most holy women of India. She said to him, "Go to save your brother."

Lakshmana said, "But my brother has told me to stay here to protect you."

She said, "I know your protection. You always want your brother to die so that you can have me!" This is the holy woman, making such an absurd excuse to force him to go!

Now, feeling abused, he went to look for Rama. But he made a line in front of the cottage and told Sita, "Don't go outside this line whatever happens."

And Ravana came – that was a whole planned conspiracy – and he came as a beggar. He made it a point that, "If you don't come across the line, I will not accept whatever you give. And remember, you are turning away a beggar – and you are thought to be one of the holiest women! I am hungry, I am thirsty." So Sita came over the line, and he abducted her to Sri Lanka.

Three years of continuous war... and everybody thought that Rama was fighting for his wife. Everybody thought, "What a love!" – but it was not so.

When Ravana was defeated and Sita was brought to the camp of Rama, Rama said, "Listen, you woman! I have not fought this war for you. I have fought this war for the pride of my forefathers. And as far as you are concerned, you cannot enter into my cottage unless you pass a fire test, unless you pass through fire and come out alive. That will be the only test that you are pure, that you had no sexual relationships in this three years under Ravana's imprisonment."

I have always wondered: if Sita had to go through the fire test, why does not Rama also? He was also three years alone, and there is a possibility that he was in love with another woman.

But this is the male chauvinist society.

Sita passed through the fire. I don't think fire changes its rules for different people; I think it is pure mythology.

But my emphasis is that Rama should have taken the same test if he was a man of any integrity, if he was a man of any dignity. To ask a poor woman, who has suffered three years of imprisonment, and not to follow with her, is absolutely ugly and inhuman.

And after the fire test, still she was renounced. Just because a washerman had told his wife, "I am not Rama," Rama's ego was hurt. If he had really loved Sita, he should have renounced the world – detachment. But rather than renouncing the world and all the money and the whole kingdom, he renounced a poor pregnant woman without telling her even where she was being sent.

And you call it detachment? This man was too much attached with the kingdom.

And these Dalits, oppressed Buddhists, don't know at all that Rama was the man who killed an untouchable – the forefather of these people – on the grounds that Hindus don't allow the untouchables, the sudras, even to listen to their religious scriptures. Reading them is out of the question; they are not educated, in the first place, so they cannot read. Even listening... their scriptures become dirty. And a young man, just out of curiosity, asked "What is so precious in these scriptures?"

A few brahmins were doing a ritual and reciting the Rigveda, and he was hiding behind the bushes just trying to find out what is so precious. He was caught red-handed, listening. He was brought to the king, Rama: "You have to give punishment to this fellow! This should not happen again!"

And you call Rama Bhagwan? He gave a punishment to that young man in which he died then and there. Lead, hot and burning and liquid, was poured into his ears – because those ears have heard the holy scriptures of the brahmins. The young man died then and there. And yet you call Rama Bhagwan? And particularly these people whose forefather that young man must have been...

Seven, beauty.

You will be surprised to know: Buddha's statues are so beautiful, but it is inconceivable that these statues represent Gautam the Buddha. He was born on the borderline of Nepal and India; most probably he would have looked like a Nepalese.

This face, it is well-known to the historians, belongs to Alexander the Great. Alexander came to India just three hundred years after Buddha. Up to that moment no statue had been made, because Buddha had forbidden to make his statues; just worship the tree under which he has become enlightened.

But seeing Alexander and the Greek beauty – Alexander certainly was one of the most beautiful men – it was irresistible for the Buddhists to take the head of Alexander the Great and put it on Buddha's body. This face that you see on Gautam Buddha belongs to Alexander the Great, not Gautam Buddha.

And anyway, I have seen thousands of Jaina monks as ugly as possible. I cannot conceive... Mahavira lived naked in cold winters, in hot summers, eating only once in a while. In twelve years he had eaten only three hundred sixty-five days – two months' fast, three months' fast – and just look at his statue. He looks like an athlete – even Muhammad Ali is nothing! – he looks like a great boxer.

I cannot think that a man who has not been eating for months together, who has been living naked under the sky, in cold winter and hot summer, could have remained beautiful.

And you still call him Bhagwan?

In fact, even Gautam Buddha, who was the contemporary of Mahavira, has criticized him in many places. Mahavira used to have this self-styled assertion that he knows everything, past, present, future. He is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient. He knows everything that has happened before, is happening, and will ever happen; he is omnipresent – he is everywhere present; and he is omnipotent – he is all powerful.

Buddha criticized him in many places. Buddha said that "This so-called, self-styled tirthankara, who says that he is all-powerful, everywhere present, all-knowing – but I have known him begging before a house which was empty! He could not see that in the house there was nobody, and he is omnipresent, he is omniscient, and he is all-powerful!

"In the early morning hours when it is still dark, I have seen this fellow, Mahavira, trampling on the tail of a dog. When the dog started barking, then he moved away. This fellow says that he knows everything, past, present, future, and he does not know that just in front of him a poor dog is sleeping!"

And this seventh quality, beauty, has been abandoned by all your so-called Buddhas and Mahaviras.

Beauty is an enchantment, it drags you out. It takes you to the other: a woman, a man, a flower, a bird on the wing – but everything is outside.

They have all renounced beauty to such a point that one of the self-styled, so-called saints of the Hindus, Surdas... He was not born blind, but he had renounced the world and he used to beg for his food. One day he found, as he knocked on the door for food, a very beautiful woman, and he could not forget the woman. She was in his thoughts, she was in his dreams.

He went again and again to the same house – which is prohibited. You should not harass one householder every day for alms. But the woman's beauty was pulling him like a magnet. And the woman was certainly very compassionate, very motherly. She prepared beautiful food for him, but she had no idea at all that that man was now biologically interested in her.

Seeing his situation, the saint thought that, "It is the eyes which are taking me away from my discipline, away from my detachment" – so he burned both his eyes. Nobody knows his name – Surdas means "the blind man" – but he is respected for the fact that he burned both his eyes.

But just by burning both your eyes, you cannot forget the woman. In fact, now it will be even more difficult.

I am reminded of a great poet. He prayed to God, "When you took away my beloved" – the woman died – "why did you not make me blind? because I see her everywhere. And how long can I resist? This has become a self-torture! The same face I see everywhere. If you have taken her, at least please take my eyes." But the poet is wrong; he does not understand the biology, the physiology of man.

Your eyes can be taken away, but that will not disturb the beautiful face that you have seen. In fact, now you will not see anything else, which may have been a distraction. Now, only one face and you, for your whole life, fixed in a frame.

Beauty has been condemned by all your saints, and you are making the meaning of Bhagwan, beauty. All meanings given are imaginary.

Valor... That means all warriors, great warriors should become Bhagwans. Perhaps this self-styled monk, Daulatsagar Suriswarji, has not understood me at all, what kind of a man he is going to face.

What does valor have to do with Buddha? He had such a delicate body that King Prasenjita, one of the greatest kings of those days, gave his own personal physician to follow Buddha like a shadow, because his body was so fragile. "He is just like a roseflower; protect him in every way. The longer he can live, the better for humanity."

What kind of valor? Do you think he would have been able to have a boxing match with Muhammad Ali? Just the first hit on his nose, and perhaps that would have been his last breath.

Effort... And Buddha teaches continuously effortlessness.

I am simply surprised. These people are thought to be great saints! They don't understand a single word about spiritual reality. It is not attained by effort; it is attained by relaxation, dropping all effort, all longing, all search. Only then do you come to your own being. It is not by effort.

Yes, money is gained by effort, political power is gained by effort, but not spirituality.

Desire...

That's why I told you I have had such a hilarious day.

Bhagwan means desire – and all the teachings of all the great enlightened people of the world have been against desire. Unless you become desireless you cannot attain to your innermost luminous self, your being.

Splendor... What splendor do you see in a Jaina monk? What splendor do you see in your Hindu saints? What splendor do you see in Mohammed or Jesus?

Splendor is an inner experience, it is not something to be seen by the eyes.

But there have been very splendrous, beautiful people in the world. Cleopatra of Egypt is thought to have been the most splendrous, majestic woman ever born. But you cannot call her Bhagwan; she was a prostitute. She ruled over Egypt just because of her beauty. Whoever came to conquer Egypt – Caesar, Anthony, and other great conquerors – she would simply go to meet them and they would fall in love with her. It was impossible, irresistible. But you will not call her Bhagwan.

Religion: the twelfth meaning.

Which religion?

It is because of a Jaina saint... Jainas think that their religion is the purest religion, the ancientmost and the highest as far as other religions are concerned.

Do you think Pope the Polack is a Bhagwan? He is the greatest leader as far as numbers are concerned: six hundred million people belong to the Catholic church. Do you think he is Bhagwan?

Ayatollah Khomeini rules over Iran, and he has under him two thousand imams, all the priests in every mosque in the whole of Iran. Do you think Ayatollah Khomeini is Bhagwan?

What religion? Which religion are you talking about?

I was brought to Poona for the first time by a man who was a close contact of Mahatma Gandhi, Rishabhdas Ranka. Mahatma Gandhi's basic theme was that all religions are equal, although it was not his practice; it was only theoretical, verbiage. And Rishabhdas Ranka lived in his ashram, so he was very much influenced by the idea that all religions are equal.

He was by birth a Jaina, so obviously he thought to write a book of synthesis between Buddha and Mahavira. He showed me the manuscript. I simply looked at the title and I returned it back. He said, "You have not looked inside even one page?"

I said, "The title is enough." The title was BHAGWAN MAHAVIR AND MAHATMA BUDDHA.

I said, "Either you call both the people Mahatma or you call both the people Bhagwan."

He said, "That is difficult. I cannot call Mahavira Mahatma because there are millions of mahatmas. And I cannot call Buddha Bhagwan, because I am a Jaina by birth. I believe only in the twenty-four tirthankaras as Bhagwan, nobody else."

You will not believe that the Jainas have thrown Krishna into the seventh hell, because he created the greatest war India has ever known. He is the ultimate criminal.

And the same is true about Hindus.... The Hindus have not even mentioned this great splendor, this great religious man, this great beauty of Mahavira. They have not even mentioned his name in their scriptures anywhere.

No contemporary source, except Buddha, even mentions the name of Mahavira. If he was so great, such a splendor, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, do you think the contemporary literature would have completely missed him? And Buddha has mentioned him only to criticize him. It is only in the words of Buddha that we have a certainty that a man called Mahavira ever lived.

But the same is done to Buddha by the Hindus. He was certainly a very influential man, a very rational and logical man. Hindus could not deny him, but they could not accept him either, because he was against the caste system, he was against the Vedas, against the whole tradition of the Hindus. He was born a Hindu.

But remember always, it is one thing to talk about it, it is another thing to live it. He never initiated a single sudra as his disciple, although he was talking against the caste system. That would have been the proof. He was talking against riches, but all the kings of India were his disciples, lay disciples. Most of his enlightened disciples were princes who had left their kingdoms and come to his feet. But I have not come across a single initiation of a sudra.

And the sudras are converting themselves into Buddhism. They should bring proof that Buddha has initiated any sudra – a single sudra – to his communion. The question never arose.

But he was very influential, far more influential than Mahavira, more articulate. The Hindus could not simply ignore him. They had to accept him in such a way – in a very cunning way. Their PURANAS say...

These so-called Buddhists, self-styled Buddhists who want to destroy my commune, should first look into the Hindu scriptures. The Hindu scriptures, particularly the PURANAS – ‘purana’ means the ancient stories, ancient parables, ancient metaphors. In the PURANAS they have a beautiful story for you, and for all Buddhists to understand.

God made the world. He also made hell and heaven – heaven for the virtuous ones, and hell for the sinners. And he made the devil to be the king of hell, to control, to manage, to maintain. But thousands of years passed and nobody came to hell. Everybody was so virtuous that they were going directly to heaven.

The devil was tired of waiting, waiting, waiting. Finally he approached God. He said, "You are making me a laughingstock. For thousands of years not a single man has entered in hell, and I am sitting there alone, unnecessary. What is the point?"

God said, "Don't be worried. Go back, and I will come in an incarnation named Gautam Buddha, and I will corrupt people's minds, and I will corrupt people's moralities, and I will create sinners. You will not be alone anymore."

So Hindus have accepted Gautam Buddha as one of the incarnations of God, but on the other hand a God who comes to corrupt the people, a God who comes to fill hell with the masses. Since Gautam Buddha, hell is overflowing; many people are standing for centuries in queues. It is all due to the great corruption that Gautam Buddha brought to this land.

Do you see the cunning and tricky mind of the Hindu priests?

And these Buddhists want me to be arrested?

First, get the people arrested who are still holding such scriptures as religious and holy.

Thirteen, liberation.

But everybody around the world has been liberating: Lao Tzu in China, Chuang Tzu in China – you don't call them Bhagwan.

I am the first man to introduce Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu and thousands of others to this country; otherwise people have never heard their names. They all talk about ultimate liberation. Thousands of Zen masters have lived liberation, but do you call them Bhagwan? I am asking Daulatsagar Suriswarji, the self-styled Jaina saint.

And the last – he could not manage to hide it in this long list – last comes yoni. That was my meaning that I have given to you. Yoni means bhag, yoni means the female sexual organ, the vagina.

But he still tries to camouflage the issue. He says, "In the Jaina religion yoni does not mean vagina."

I was surprised to know that religion has anything to do with the vagina!

What does it mean in the Jaina religion? It means the cycle of birth and death.

Okay. How do you manage birth and death without the vagina, and without the male genital organs?

Finally, I have caught him red-handed. Yoni means the cycle of birth and death. How do you manage it? Without a woman and man there is no birth and no death.

So in brackets he writes yoni – and that is the only meaning. All these others are just bogus, efforts to create much cloud and mist in people's minds.

If yoni means the cycle of birth and death, it means the vagina of woman and the penis of man. The meeting of the two brings the circle of birth and death. That's what I have been telling you, and they are getting mad at me.

Now go to Suriswarji and ask him, "How do birth and death come into being? – from the woman's mouth?"

To be just straightforward is not a crime. That's why I say I am ready to face anybody, in any court. Or if you are intelligent enough, I am ready to invite you here, and point by point I want to discuss everything that is hurting your so-called, self-styled religious feelings.

Now Maneesha's sutra:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

ONCE CHOKOMAN WAS ASKED, "WHAT IS THE PLACE OF RELIGIOUS EXERCISES OF THE ANCIENT BUDDHAS?"

These are the people who count! Chokoman is a great Zen master.

CHOKOMAN SAID, "JUST BY WALKING, THEY TROD ON IT."

The question was,

"WHAT IS THE PLACE OF RELIGIOUS EXERCISES OF THE ANCIENT BUDDHAS?"

Only one exercise Chokoman mentioned:

"JUST BY WALKING, THEY TROD ON IT."

All disciplines, all moralities, all so-called scriptures, they simply trod on them. That is the only message of the ancient buddhas.

THE MONK WENT ON, "AND AFTER THEY HAD TROD ON IT?"

What happens when they have trodden on the scriptures, and religious exercises, and disciplines, and moralities, and all kinds of virtues? What happens?

CHOKOMAN REPLIED, "ICE MELTING, TILES BREAKING UP."

He is saying, "The moment someone walks over the heads of the statues and the holy scriptures and so-called religious exercises, the ice starts melting. Your separation with existence starts melting just like ice. TILES BREAKING UP... Your egos start breaking like tiles. The open sky, the ultimate existence, and you are no more separate from it."

The ice has melted in the ocean the same way the enlightened man finds his consciousness melting into the ocean of the cosmos.

These are the people with spine.

THE MONK THEN ASKED, "HOW DOES THAT HAPPEN?"

He could not understand, otherwise there is no more any point in asking anything. The master has said everything.

CHOKOMAN RESPONDED BY SAYING, "THE GENTLEMEN IN THE CITY, THE LITTLE CHILDREN OUTSIDE THE WALLS."

It is a very surprising answer. He is saying, "You have not understood. I have said everything. Now what is left is just to be a gentleman in the city, with little children outside the walls. Forget all

about religion and religious exercises. Forget all about ancient buddhas. Just get into the city, find a woman, have children, and move in the cycle of birth and death – yoni.”

ON ANOTHER OCCASION, A MONK ASKED CHOKOMAN, “WHAT IS THIS SWORD THAT WILL CUT A HAIR THAT IS BLOWN ONTO IT?”

Great swordsmen in their final examination cut hairs just with their swords. One hair becomes two hairs. The hair is the thinnest thing you can find. To cut it with a sword, and make two hairs out of one... The man is asking, “What is this sword that will cut a hair that is blown onto it into two?”

I have told you about a Zen story....

At the final contest of the warriors of Japan, the emperor himself used to preside. Three men had come from winning all over the country, to the finals. Thousands of people who loved swordsmanship...

In Japan it is loved as a meditation, because a swordsman cannot for a moment waver in his mind. If he wavers he is gone. He has to remain in the no-mind, so no thought can waver, and he has to act out of no-mind. It is allowing existence to act through him.

It is a beautiful exercise of meditation.

Japan has turned strange things into meditation: swordsmanship – so unbelievable; archery – so unbelievable. Who had ever thought that swordsmanship and archery could become meditations? But in Japan that transformation has taken place.

Those three swordsmen were all great. They had come from different parts, winning all along. The king released a fly for the first swordsman; he cut the fly into two pieces. There was great clapping and shouting. People could see a flying insect, and the man cut it in the air in two.

The second man... and a second fly was released, and he cut the second fly in three parts, just in the air. People could not believe their eyes.

Then the third – and they were waiting: “Now what can happen?” The third fly was released and the third swordsman waved his sword, and people started laughing because the fly went away, nothing was cut.

The swordsman said, “Shut up! You don’t know anything about swordsmanship. This fly will not have any children anymore!”

He was the winner. He cut the very cycle of birth and death. He liberated the fly.

“WHAT IS THIS SWORD,” THE MONK ASKED, “THAT WILL CUT A HAIR THAT IS BLOWN ONTO IT?”

CHOKOMAN REPLIED, “YOU CAN’T TOUCH IT.”

It is so subtle.

Chokoman is talking about the inner sword, which cuts all the strings with the body, with the mind, and leaves you in absolute silence, just a witness. You cannot touch that sword.

But the monk persisted. Then he asked,

"HOW ABOUT ONE WHO USES IT? I may not be able to touch it, but how about one who uses it?"

CHOKOMAN SAID, "HIS BONES AND BODY ARE SMASHED TO SMITHEREENS."

One who uses it, the sword of witnessing, the sword of meditation, his body, his mind, everything that he used to think he is, is thrown away into dust. What remains behind is a pure mirrorlike witnessing.

THE MONK COMMENTED, "THEN, IT IS A GOOD THING NOT TO BE ABLE TO TOUCH IT!"

He goes on misunderstanding and misunderstanding. "If that sword destroys the body and the bones and the mind and everything, then it is better not to be able to touch it" – AT WHICH CHOKOMAN STRUCK HIM.

It was enough.

But these idiots are all around the world. Their thick heads are such that you go on hitting them and it will not reach to their consciousness.

Nothing happened to that man. Ordinarily in Zen anecdotes, when the master hits, the person becomes enlightened. Here, the person goes to the city it seems, becomes a gentleman: "Have a wife and children, and turn over the cycle of birth and death" – called in Jainism, yoni.

Basho wrote:

WHEN A THING IS SAID,

THE LIPS BECOME VERY COLD

LIKE THE AUTUMN WIND.

Basho is the greatest haiku writer. His haikus have never been surpassed by anyone else.

WHEN A THING IS SAID – his meaning is, when somebody says something out of an authentic experience, when something comes from the silences of your innermost being, THE LIPS BECOME VERY COLD, because you are coming from such a cool place, like the Himalayas.

In your very innermost being everything is cool, so that when some word comes out of the lips, THE LIPS BECOME VERY COLD LIKE THE AUTUMN WIND.

You speak from the mind, you simply repeat what has been conditioned into you. You are not even as intelligent as parrots.

I have heard....

A woman had a beautiful parrot, but he died. She was very desperate and in despair. Her neighbors said, "There is not much to be worried about. Just go to a pet shop and get another parrot, even better than you had before."

So she went, and she loved one parrot, the beauty of it – Suriswarji would have called it Bhagwan. But the shopkeeper insisted, "Madam, you can choose any – we have hundreds of parrots – but leave that one alone."

The more he insisted, the more the woman said, "Whatever is the price is not the question. I have decided, I will take this parrot."

The shopkeeper said, "If you insist, I will give it to you. It is not a question of the price; it is a question that this parrot has lived in a very ugly place. He comes from the house of a prostitute, so he uses four-letter words" – like Bhagwan!

The woman said, "I will manage, I will teach him. I have no other work. My husband died, and just to replace my husband I took a parrot, because my husband was doing nothing else than what a parrot is capable of doing – and more nicely. I will manage, don't you be worried."

So she took the parrot, and she started teaching him. But the parrot was impossible. She would teach him the Christian, authorized prayer, and he would say, "Fuck it all!" The woman was at a loss what to do with this parrot.

And then came Sunday, and the bishop came for the round. It was early morning, the woman had just got up, and she saw this bishop's car coming towards her home. She had removed the blanket from the parrot's cage, because it was cold winter, but seeing the bishop coming, she again covered the parrot's cage, because nobody knows what this fellow will say. Before the bishop it would be very embarrassing.

As the bishop entered, the parrot inside the cage, hidden behind the blanket, said, "Aha! Today has been very short!" Every day, in the morning the blanket was removed, in the evening the cage was covered again. He said, "Today has been very short. I have never seen such a short day."

The bishop said, "What is the matter? Why have you covered the poor parrot?"

Now the woman was at a loss what to do. She said, "I feel embarrassed, but I have to tell you: he uses four-letter words."

The bishop said, "Don't be worried. I have a parrot myself, who is a very religious and saintly person. The whole day he goes on counting on the beads, praying to God. You give your parrot for a few days to me, and I will put it in the cage of my parrot. He is so saintly a person that he will teach your parrot to be virtuous, to be Catholic."

And what transpired when the new parrot went in? The other parrot looked into its eyes, and dropped the beads. The bishop could not believe it; he said, "Why have you dropped the beads?"

The parrot said, "My prayer is fulfilled! I was asking for a girlfriend. She has come!"

Question 1

Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

IT IS AMAZING TO ME THAT NOT ONE PERSON – THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE WORLD – RISES TO YOUR CHALLENGES AND ANSWERS YOU. AS YOUR DISCIPLE AND A LOVER OF A GOOD ARGUMENT, I WISH SOMEONE HAD THE GUTS TO DEBATE WITH YOU. ARE PEOPLE SO LACKING ANY FIRE THAT THEY DON'T HAVE THE INITIATIVE TO STAND UP FOR THE SOCIETY THEY LIVE IN AND THE VALUES THEY LIVE BY?

Maneesha, it is not a question of guts. Guts don't argue. Millions of people have guts. It needs genius, and guts have nothing to do with genius. It needs tremendous intelligence.

And my arguments are not arising out of intelligence either. My arguments are arising out of my clarity of no-mind. Unless somebody has no-mind, he cannot challenge me. And a man who has no-mind will understand me immediately without any argument. So it is a very complicated matter.

Let us go to simple matters: Sardar Gurudayal Singh time.

Kowalski goes to San Francisco for the first time in his life, and is very excited about seeing the city lights... city sights.

He checks into the famous Daffy Duck Hotel, and before he retires to bed, he asks the clerk what time the meals are served.

"Well, sir," replies Reginald, the clerk, "we serve breakfast from six to eleven, lunch from eleven to three, and dinner from three to eight."

"My God!" exclaims Kowalski. "When the hell am I going to see the sights?"

Grandpa Giggle is really worried about his health, and is waiting nervously in the hallway at Hamchop Hospital while a team of eminent physicians gathers together to consult about his case.

All the doctors retire to another room to discuss the old man's condition, but Grandpa has hidden his nephew, Little Albert, in a closet in the room to listen. Then Albert is supposed to report to him what the truth of the situation is.

After a few minutes, Albert escapes and runs back to the old man.

"Quick, Albert," asks Grandpa in a shaky voice, "what did those doctors say?"

"I cannot say for sure," reports Little Albert. "I listened hard, but they used such big words, I can't remember much of it. But I do remember one thing."

"Tell me!" cries Grandpa. "What is it?"

"Well," says Albert, "they said, 'We will find out everything at the autopsy!'"

One day at the Pearly Gates, Saint Peter opens the door and greets three new arrivals: Mrs. Baloney, a devout Catholic woman, Mrs. Baker, a good Protestant woman, and Mama Faginbaum, a Jewish woman.

"Okay," says Peter, welcoming the girls, "now that you have entered into heaven, this is the place where all your dreams come true. So each of you can tell me your special wish."

"My wish," says Mrs. Baloney, the Catholic, eyeing Mrs. Baker, "is that you get rid of all the Protestants in the whole universe!"

"My goodness!" exclaims Peter, "that is an odd thing to say here in heaven. What about you, Mrs. Baker?"

"My wish," cries Mrs. Baker, the Protestant, glaring at Mrs. Baloney, "is that you wipe out all Catholics from the universe!"

"Good God!" shouts Saint Peter. "That is really strange." Then turning to Mrs. Faginbaum, Peter asks, "Okay, Grandma, and what about you?"

"Oy vey!" says Grandma Faginbaum, waving her hands in the air. "What about me? Ah! Nothing for me – just give my friends what they want!"

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

(gibberish)

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Be silent.

Close your eyes, and feel your body to be completely frozen.

This is the right moment to enter into your inner being.

Gather all your consciousness, all your life energy, with an urgency as if this is going to be the last moment of your life.

Then rush towards the center of your being, which is the only shelter against mortality, which is the only shelter in the whole existence, the only security.

As you come closer to your inner being, you will start feeling a cool breeze, a great silence descending on you, a new fragrance that you have never known before.

As you settle in your center, a tremendous ecstasy takes over you. You are drunk with the divine. You have found your innermost hidden treasure, the buddha, the awakened one.

The awakened one has only one quality, and that quality is witnessing. Just witness: your body is not you, your mind is not you. All other experiences, howsoever beautiful, are not you. You are only the witness. As the witnessing deepens, you start melting – ice melting in the oceanic consciousness of the universe.

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Relax, but keep witnessing.

This moment, you are the most blessed souls on the earth.

I can see the ice melting....

I can see the Buddha Auditorium becoming a vast ocean of consciousness without a single ripple.

This beauty is you.

This blissfulness is you.

This eternity is you.

You have been always here. You will be always here, whether in the body or out of the body, but your existence is eternal.

I teach eternity, and only when you experience eternity do you know what freedom is. Then you disappear in the blue sky of the cosmos.

Disappearing in the cosmos is not annihilation; it is becoming one with the whole. And to become one with the whole is the only holiness. All else is just fraud.

Collect as many flowers, as much juice... You are at the very roots of your being. Fill yourself with all the fragrances, with all the silences, with the truth, with the beauty, with the good. And persuade the buddha to come along with you.

Until the buddha becomes your day-to-day life, you are only a bodhisattva – bodhisattva means buddha in the seed – but I want you to be buddha in the blossoming of a lotus.

Seeds you have been for many many lives. It is time to become a flower. I come to you as a spring.

Nivedano...

(drumbeat)

Come back. But come back totally transformed, with a grace that has not been with you before, with a silence, with a peace.

Sit down for a few moments just to recollect the golden path that you have traveled to the very center of your being.

Watch, witness that every day, inch by inch, the distinction, the distance between the circumference of your life and the center is becoming less and less and less. And the day is not far away when suddenly your circumference will melt into the center. That moment is the moment of enlightenment. That moment, the buddha is come to his ultimate flowering.

I don't want you to be Buddhists, I want you to be buddhas! Less than that is not for those who have intelligence, is not for those who are authentic seekers of truth.

Okay, Maneesha?