The Wisdom of the Sands, Vol 1

Discourses on Sufism

Talks given from 21/02/78 am to 01/03/78 am

English Discourse series

CHAPTER 1

The Tale of the Sands

21 February 1978 am in Buddha Hall

A STREAM, FROM ITS SOURCE IN FAR-OFF MOUNTAINS, PASSING THROUGH EVERY KIND AND DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRYSIDE, AT LAST REACHED THE SANDS OF THE DESERT. JUST AS IT HAD CROSSED EVERY OTHER BARRIER, THE STREAM TRIED TO CROSS THIS ONE, BUT IT FOUND AS IT RAN INTO THE SAND, ITS WATERS DISAPPEARED.

IT WAS CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT ITS DESTINY WAS TO CROSS THIS DESERT, AND YET THERE WAS NO WAY. NOW A HIDDEN VOICE, COMING FROM THE DESERT ITSELF, WHISPERED, ”THE WIND CROSSES THE DESERT, AND SO CAN THE STREAM.”

THE STREAM OBJECTED THAT IT WAS DASHING ITSELF AGAINST THE SAND, AND ONLY GETTING ABSORBED; THAT THE WIND COULD FLY AND THIS WAS WHY IT COULD CROSS A DESERT.

”BY HURTLING IN YOUR OWN ACCUSTOMED WAY YOU CANNOT GET ACROSS. YOU WILL EITHER DISAPPEAR OR BECOME A MARSH. YOU MUST ALLOW THE WIND TO CARRY YOU OVER TO YOUR DESTINATION.”

”BUT HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?”

”BY ALLOWING YOURSELF TO BE ABSORBED IN THE WIND.”

THIS IDEA WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE STREAM. AFTER ALL, IT HAD NEVER BEEN ABSORBED BEFORE. IT DID NOT WANT TO LOSE ITS INDIVIDUALITY. AND ONCE HAVING LOST IT, HOW WAS IT TO KNOW THAT IT COULD EVER BE REGAINED?

”THE WIND,” SAID THE SAND, ”PERFORMS THIS FUNCTION. IT TAKES UP WATER, CARRIES IT OVER THE DESERT, AND THEN LETS IT FALL AGAIN. FALLING AS RAIN, THE WATER AGAIN BECOMES A RIVER.”

”HOW CAN I KNOW THAT THIS IS TRUE?”

”IT IS SO, AND IF YOU DO NOT BELIEVE IT, YOU CANNOT BECOME MORE THAN A QUAGMIRE, AND EVEN THAT COULD TAKE MANY, MANY YEARS; AND IT CERTAINLY IS NOT THE SAME AS A STREAM.”

”BUT CAN I NOT REMAIN THE SAME STREAM THAT I AM TODAY?”

”YOU CANNOT IN EITHER CASE REMAIN SO,” THE WHISPER SAID. ”YOUR ESSENTIAL PART IS CARRIED AWAY AND FORMS A STREAM AGAIN. YOU ARE CALLED WHAT YOU ARE EVEN TODAY BECAUSE YOU DO NOT KNOW WHICH PART OF YOU IS THE ESSENTIAL ONE.”

WHEN HE HEARD THIS, CERTAIN ECHOES BEGAN TO ARISE IN THE THOUGHTS OF THE STREAM. DIMLY, HE REMEMBERED A STATE IN WHICH HE - OR SOME PART OF HIM, WAS IT? - HAD BEEN HELD IN THE ARMS OF A WIND. HE ALSO REMEMBERED - OR DID HE? - THAT THIS WAS THE REAL THING, NOT NECESSARILY THE OBVIOUS THING TO DO.

AND THE STREAM RAISED HIS VAPOR INTO THE WELCOMING ARMS OF THE WIND, WHICH GENTLY AND EASILY BORE IT UPWARDS AND ALONG, LETTING IT FALL SOFTLY AS SOON AS THEY REACHED THE ROOF OF A MOUNTAIN, MANY, MANY MILES AWAY.

AND BECAUSE HE HAD HAD HIS DOUBTS, THE STREAM WAS ABLE TO REMEMBER AND RECORD MORE STRONGLY IN HIS MIND THE DETAILS OF THE EXPERIENCE.

HE REFLECTED, ”YES, NOW I HAVE LEARNED MY TRUE IDENTITY.”

THE STREAM WAS LEARNING. BUT THE SANDS WHISPERED, ”WE KNOW, BECAUSE WE SEE IT HAPPEN DAY AFTER DAY: AND BECAUSE WE, THE SANDS, EXTEND FROM THE RIVERSIDE ALL THE WAY TO THE MOUNTAIN.”

AND THAT IS WHY IT IS SAID THAT THE WAY IN WHICH THE STREAM OF LIFE IS TO CONTINUE ON ITS JOURNEY IS WRITTEN IN THE SANDS.

We enter today into the world of Sufism. It is a world, but not a world-view. It is a transcendence, but not a philosophy of transcendence. It does not preach any theories, it simply gives you practical hints.

Sufism is not speculative. It is utterly realistic, pragmatic, practical. It is down-to-earth, it is not abstract. Hence, it has no world-view. And also, because it is not a system, it does not systematize knowledge.

A system is a complete explanation of existence. Sufism is not a system; it has no explanation for existence, it is a way into the mysteries of existence. It does not explain anything, it simply points to

the mysterious. It leads you into the mysterious. Sufism does not demystify existence.. All systems do that: their whole work consists in making the unknown known, destroying the mystery, destroying the wonder. Sufism leads you from one wonder to another, deeper into the wonderland.

It is not a system because it never gives any complete explanation about anything. It gives only very, very small hints, flashes of insight. It does not spin and weave philosophies; it spins and weaves stories, anecdotes, metaphors, parables, poetry. It is not metaphysics, it is metaphor. It is a finger pointing to the moon. You cannot understand the moon by analyzing the finger. But if you follow the direction with sympathy, if you fall EN RAPPORT, then you will come to see the moon. The finger is not the moon, the finger cannot be the moon, yet the finger can point the way.

The Sufi stories are not philosophical. They are just gentle hints, whisperings. Sufism does not shout, it only whispers. Naturally, only those who are ready to listen with sympathy - not only with sympathy. but empathy - only those who are ready to open their hearts in trust and in surrender can understand what Sufism is. Only those who are capable of love can understand what Sufism is. What is its message? It is not a logical analysis; neither is it as illogical as Zen. Sufism says to be logical is one extreme, to be illogical is another. Sufism is just somewhere in the middle, neither logic nor illogic. It does not lean to the left or to the right. It is not absurd. It is not logical like Socrates and it is not absurd like Bodhidharma. It says Bodhidharma and Socrates only look different, but their approaches are the same. In fact Bodhidharma is more logical than Socrates; that's why he stumbles into illogic. If you go on following the line of logic sooner or later you come to a point where you see logic is finished, but the journey continues. Bodhidharma is a Socrates who has gone the whole way and has come to that borderland where logic stops but life continues. Bodhidharma looks different but the approach is Socratic; it is intellectual. Zen is very much against intellect, but to be against intellect is still to be intellectual. Zen is anti-philosophy, but to be anti-philosophical is to be philosophical: that is YOUR philosophy. Sufism avoids the extremes. It follows the middle, the exact middle, the Golden Mean.

In Zen the key word is 'mindfulness'. In Sufism the key word is 'heartfulness'. Remember this - it will make it clear where they differ. Zen is against mind, but goes beyond mind through the mind. Sufism is not against the mind, Sufism is completely indifferent to the mind. Sufism is focused on the heart; it simply does not bother about the mind. It believes in heartfulness. Yes, a certain kind of awakening comes to the Sufi too. If we call the Zen-awakening SATORI mind-wakefulness, then we will have to coin a word for the Sufi awakening: 'heart-wakefulness'. The path of the Sufi is the path of the lover. The path of Zen is the path of the warrior, the samurai. And because of this basic difference in approach

Both use stories. Zen uses stories and Sufism also uses stories, but their stories have a different flavor, a different tone. The Zen story is absurd - it is a riddle, and a riddle which cannot be solved. You can try, but you will NEVER be able to solve it. That insolubility is built-in; it is intrinsic to the Zen story. It HAS to be absurd because it is a device to destroy your mind, to shock your mind. It is a sword... to kill your mind. It drives you almost mad, because there seems to be no solution coming and you have to go on meditating on the story. It is a meditation device. Many solutions are given by the mind, but all solutions are rejected by the Master. The disciple goes on, day in and day out, with new solutions, and the Master goes on shouting at the disciple, "This is nonsense! Go and search again!" Sometimes months, sometimes years pass, and then a moment comes to the disciple when he sees that there is no solution. And remember, if you simply think there is no solution then you

have missed the point. You have to come to a realization that there is no solution. In that state of no-solution, no-conclusion, a transcendence happens, a leap, a quantum leap - you have gone beyond the mind through the mind. The Zen story functions like a sword to cut the knot of the mind.

The Sufi story is not a riddle, it is a parable. It is not a shock, it is not a sword; it is persuasion, it is seduction. It is the way of the lover. It is very gentle and soft and feminine. Zen is very masculine, Sufism is feminine. The Zen story drives you mad: through creating a maddening state in the mind it helps you to go beyond it. It drives you crazy! The Sufi story intoxicates you slowly, slowly but inevitably.

The Sufi story has a poetry in it, a rhythm. The Sufi story has to be contemplated, not meditated upon. The Zen story has to be meditated upon. The Sufi story has to be imbibed, sipped like tea, enjoyed in a relaxed mood. The Zen story has to be penetrated with a very, very concentrated mind, in a very tense attitude, in intensity. You have to focus all your energies on the story. You have to forget the whole world; only that small absurd story exists. And you know it cannot be solved, and yet you have to put your whole energy into it. And all the time you know that this is absurd, it is not going to lead you anywhere, but the Master says, ”Focus! Concentrate! Pay attention! Look into the riddle of the story!”

The Sufi story has to be listened to just like a story. Sufis are great storytellers. They will sip tea or coffee, they will sit together in a cozy place, warm. The story will start, and the Master will tell the story. And the story only gives glimpses, hints, but very potential, very penetrating. All that is needed on the part of the disciple is to listen, not attentively but sympathetically, with an open heart, not with any tension. The story has to be enjoyed. It reveals its mysteries when you are enjoying it.

A few things more before we start enjoying the story: I said to you that Sufism is not a world-view. It is a vision, not a world-view. A world-view means you remain the same and you start believing in a philosophy, in certain explanations about reality. You remain the same, you are not changed at all. The world-view adds some knowledge to you - you become more knowledgeable.

A vision transforms you. A vision is possible only when you are transformed, when you are taken to other altitudes, other heights, other depths of life.

Sufism is a vision. In fact to call it ’Sufism’ is not right because it is not an ’ism’ at all. Sufis don’t call it ’Sufism’; it is the name given by the outsiders. They call their vision TASSAWURI, a love-vision, a loving approach towards reality. It is falling in love with existence. The person who thinks about existence is a little bit antagonistic because he creates a problem out of existence - as if existence is challenging him and he has to decipher it, he has to decode the mystery, he has to destroy the mystery. He fights.

Sufis say: We and the existence are one. There is no need to fight. Persuade, coo, invite, love, befriend, and the existence itself starts revealing its mysteries. There is no need to rape it. The philosophic approach, the scientific approach, the intellectual approach, is a rape! It is forcing existence to reveal its heart. It is undressing existence by force and violence. The violence may be of scientific methods or of logical methods - it doesn’t matter - but the violence is there. The philosopher has taken a standpoint as if nature is not ready to reveal its mysteries; it has to be forced. It is a violent approach.

Sufism says there is no need, the existence is waiting for you to come close so that it can reveal its heart. The existence is waiting for you to fall in love with it. If you are deeply in love with existence, it starts opening, it starts revealing its secrets. It has been waiting long for you to come close. There is no need to force it, there is no need to rape! You can fall in love.

A world-view is an aggressive stance, a vision is a love stance.

I said to you that Sufism is not a system, because all systems create bondage. They create prisons around you. Sufism is freedom. It does not create any system around you. It does not tell you to believe in a certain system. Yes, it talks about trust, but not of belief.

Trust is a totally different thing. Belief is belief in a theory, in a philosophy, in a world-view: you believe in Islam, you believe in Hinduism, you believe in Christianity. But when you trust, you trust in life. You don't believe in life, you trust in life; you believe in philosophies. Belief is a poor substitute for trust. And remember, belief is again from the head, trust is from the heart. Their qualities are different, altogether different, diametrically opposite. Never become part of a belief system: never become a Hindu or a Mohammedan or a Jaina or a Buddhist. When you become part of a belief system you are becoming a slave.

If you can find a place, a space, where belief is not imposed on you but trust is helped, find that place. That is the right place where you can really grow and grow into freedom. There is no other growth - growth in freedom is the only growth.

I said to you that Sufism is not a philosophy, but it is not anti-philosophy either. It simply takes no note of philosophies, anti-philosophies. It bypasses them, it is indifferent. It says: Why be bothered with words while reality is available? When you can drink the water, why be worried about the theories about water? When you can go in the sun and dance with the sunrays, why be bothered about theories? Why not have an experience, an authentic experience? Philosophy goes round and round; it is about and about. It never penetrates the core of truth. It thinks ABOUT truth, but to think about truth is to falsify. Truth has to be encountered, not thought about. Truth has to be LIVED not believed. Truth is not a conclusion: you don't arrive at truth by a syllogistic process. Truth is THERE! You are truth, the trees are truth, the birds are truth, the sun, the moon. The truth is all over the place, and you close your eyes and you think about truth? All thinking will take you astray.

There is no need to think. Live it! Only by living do you come to know it.

Sufism is not a way of thinking but a way of life, a way of living; not a philosophy of life but a way of life.

I said Sufism is not speculative. Speculation means that you think about things you have not known. Now this is foolish. Speculation means a blind man thinking about light, a deaf man thinking about music. When you think about God do you think you are in any way different from the blind man thinking about light? You have not seen God, you have not tasted anything divine, and you go on thinking. What will you do? Yes, mind is very clever and it can spin and weave beautiful systems, but those systems are just irrelevant. Good or bad, logical, illogical - they are just irrelevant. They have no relevance to reality, they have no context in reality, they are mind games.

Sufism is not a mind game; that's why it is practical, absolutely practical. If you ask a Sufi about God, he will laugh, or he will sing a song which has no reference to God, or he will tell you a story in which God is never mentioned, or he will say something which seems absolutely unrelated to the question. He is simply saying, "Don't be foolish. Let us be practical." You ask about God and he will talk about prayer, not about God. A true Sufi will avoid the subject of God. He will talk about prayer; prayer is practical. You ask about paradise and he will talk about your misery and how to drop it - that is practicalness. Because paradise is not somewhere else, when you have dropped your miserable ways, you are in paradise, or to be more true, you ARE paradise.

Sufis always talk about techniques, methods. They never talk about 'whats', they only talk about 'hows'. In that way they are as scientific as any scientist. Sufism is a glimpse of how religion should be. It is pointless to talk about God; create the ladder that takes you to God. It is utterly a waste of time talking about paradise; give methods so that paradise can be explored inside your being. It is an inner phenomenon, it is your inner space. And so is hell.

Sufism is not even a religion. Rather, it is religiousness. It has no church, it has no book - Bible or Koran or Veda or Dhammapada. It has no book, no sacred book. It has no church. Sufism is a very, very free-floating religiousness. Anybody can be a Sufi - a Hindu, a Christian, a Mohammedan. Anywhere, one can be a Sufi. It is a practical approach on how to create religiousness.

People think "How to belong to a religion?" Sufism says: That is foolish, stupid. The only meaningful question can be: how to create religiousness, how to transform one's own energy so it becomes religious? If you start belonging to a religion you will have only a label but you will not be religious, and your other world will be nothing but a projection of this world.

You can go and see the other-worldly people, and if you watch them closely and observe them you will be surprised: their other-worldliness is nothing but a projection of this-worldliness. In-their heaven they are hoping for the same pleasures, of course on a more permanent basis - more intense, more alive - but the same pleasures. In their hell they are afraid of the same pains and the same sufferings, more intense and more permanent. The difference is of quantity. The hellfire will be the same fire that is here, but maybe more intense, more fiery. It burns more, hurts more, wounds more, but it will be the same fire. And in paradise? It will be the same food - more delicious, more nourishing - but the difference is of quantity; and the quantity is not the real difference. A difference arises only when you move from a quantitative vision to a qualitative vision. When you start changing the quality of your life, that's what religiousness is.

A true religious person cannot be Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian. He's simply religious. Jesus is not Christian, he's religious; I call him a Sufi. Buddha is not Buddhist, he is simply religious; I call him a Sufi.

A Sufi is a person who has looked into the very essentials of religion and has discarded all that is non-essential.

I invite you into this benediction called Sufism, but you will be able to enter only if you have great sympathy. Listen with love; argumentation won't help. Sufism makes no effort to convince you. It simply makes itself available for all those who are ready to partake of it. It is an invitation open to all and sundry, but only those who are courageous enough to be non-argumentative will be able to

enter into this world of Sufism. Sympathy has to be the foundation, participation has to be the base. Fall EN RAPPORT. And remember, argumentation is cowardly. All cowards argue, and all cowards can argue. It is only the courageous who take the jump into the unknown. The unknown cannot be argued about, obviously; that's why it is called the unknown.

You can argue about the known, you can come to conclusions about the known through thinking, but how are you going to come across the unknown? Thinking can give you only the old, that which has been known and experienced. Thinking cannot give you something that has never been experienced and never known. If you remain too obsessed with thinking you will be stuck. The unknown does not come from your past, the unknown enters from the future. The unknown does not come from your memory - otherwise it would not be unknown. The unknown penetrates your memory but comes from some source we know nothing of, from some unknown source. Your memory has to give way: that's what I mean when I say listen sympathetically, get in tune. I'm not proposing a philosophical argument here. I will be simply telling you a story. With a story, you don't argue. With a story, you simply listen like a child. You enjoy its nuances, its turns, sudden turns. You simply start getting into its spirit, what the story wants to tell - and it has much to say. And the deeper your empathy grows, the deeper the story will reveal itself to you.

Trust

Let trust be YOUR approach towards Sufism. It is available only to those who trust. And remember again, only the courageous can trust. The cowardly always shrink back from the unknown.

Now the story... it is one of the most beautiful.

A STREAM, FROM ITS SOURCE IN FAR-OFF MOUNTAINS, PASSING THROUGH EVERY KIND AND DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRYSIDE, AT LAST REACHED THE SANDS OF THE DESERT.

Each single word is potential, and you will have to get into the spirit of each single word. A

STREAM...

Stream is a metaphor for life - for your life, for my life, for everybody's life. You are not suddenly here, you are not accidentally here. You have been here for ever and ever. From eternity, your stream has been flowing and flowing, and flowing from far-off mountains which you have completely forgotten, from a source... you don't have any idea anymore.

And you have been 'passing through every kind and description of countryside': you have been a rock and you have been a tree and you have been a bird and you have been an animal, and you have been all! All kinds of experiences have been available to you. You have passed through many, many landscapes. You have passed through all varieties, all possibilities - that's how life goes on enriching you.

But you go on forgetting. It is too much, it cannot be contained. The day-to-day worry is too much; it takes too much of your consciousness so you cannot remember. You have to forget the major part of your experiences because you have a very, very small attention, and that attention can contain only so much. Every day you have to forget almost ninety-nine percent of what you come to

experience; that one percent is kept. After a few days even that one percent is not totally kept, part of it disappears. After a few years the whole of it is gone, only the essential fragrance remains.

If your attention grows you will be able to contain more. Buddha has said that if your mind is unburdened of the day-to-day worries, you will be able to remember your past lives - that's true. If your focus on the mundane is relaxed, then the light will start falling upon the past. Buddha has remembered and talked about all his past lives, thousands of lives - the life when he was an elephant and the life when he was a tree, and so on and so forth. And they are your lives too.

You are not suddenly here, you have a continuity. You are a continuum. Consciousness is a stream.

In the West, William James used these words for the first time: 'stream of consciousness'. He must have heard it from some Sufi source, there is no other way - because Sufis have always been talking about stream of consciousness, stream of life. It is an on-going, a flowing phenomenon; it is movement, it is not static. Even while you are here you are not static. Every moment things are changing: the body is a flow, the mind is a flow, your being is a flow. You are not the same even for two consecutive moments. In the morning you were so happy, so trusting, by the afternoon you have become so doubting and untrusting, and by the evening everybody is a skeptic, cynical and sarcastic. Early in the morning everybody seems to be prayerful, innocent. As the day wears on, as you are cheated and pulled and pushed from this side and that, you start losing your innocence.

You are constantly changing... a movement. And if you try to remain the same you will create misery, because then you will be fighting against your very life. The message is flow, let go. The message is don't swim upstream. The message is go with the stream; this is your life. And don't be afraid, because this stream has been flowing down the ages, for centuries - there is no need to be afraid - and this stream will be flowing down the centuries in the future too. From one eternity to another eternity, it continues.

You are the fabric of the universe. You will not disappear. Even when you disappear many times, you remain; the essential remains. Only the non-essential goes on disappearing, but the non-essential is not you.

A STREAM, FROM ITS SOURCE IN FAR-OFF MOUNTAINS, PASSING THROUGH EVERY KIND AND DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRYSIDE, AT LAST REACHED THE SANDS OF THE DESERT.

Two more things about this statement

The source is in the mountains, in the heights. That's what every religion of the world has been saying: that man is a descendant of God, the source is high in the mountains, man has descended from the high. That's why Christianity was so much against the idea of Darwinian evolution - because that idea goes against all the religions.

The theory of evolution preaches that man has been coming not from the mountains but from the valleys; that man has been coming, growing upwards. And all the religions of the world have been teaching just the opposite: they have been saying man is a descendant, he comes from God. And there is something to be understood about it: if you come from God only then can you go to God, otherwise not - because the source is always the goal. The circle completes, you reach to that point from where you have come.

Darwin created a very strange philosophy, a linear progression that you go on evolving and evolving - but where will that evolution end? It is like a line; it goes on and on. It begins somewhere in the dark valleys. Where will it end? It cannot end anywhere. It is a line that goes on and on. It is linear - it will always remain incomplete, it will always remain unsatisfied, it will never be fulfilled.

The religions tell a totally different story. They say man comes from God and finally reaches into God again. It is a circle, it is a completion, and in completion is fulfillment.

A STREAM, FROM ITS SOURCE IN FAR-OFF MOUNTAINS, PASSING THROUGH EVERY KIND AND DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRYSIDE, AT LAST REACHED THE SANDS OF THE DESERT.

At last!

Every consciousness reaches to a point of cul-de-sac, a point which Sufis call 'the desert'. The desert is a point where you start feeling you are disappearing. The desert is a point where you feel you are dying. The desert is a point when you feel UTTERLY hopeless, meaningless, a point where you start contemplating suicide, a point where you cannot figure it out - what to do, what not to do, to be or not to be. One day or other every consciousness has to face the desert, because without passing through the desert you will never really be mature. That is part of the training of every soul. In fact when you start encountering the desert, you start thinking of religion. When things are going good who bothers about religion? Who contemplates? Who meditates? Who prays? When things are not going good then you start thinking that there must be something basically wrong with you.

This is a strange phenomenon - that whenever a person has all that he needs he encounters the desert. The affluent society encounters the desert. The poor society is still far away from the desert. The affluence brings the desert very close by, because you have all that you were hoping for: you have the woman that you wanted, the house, the money, the prestige, the power. You have all that you had always dreamt about, now there is no more left to dream: the desert has come. Now you suddenly feel a kind of insomnia. You cannot even sleep, the desert is all around.

How to transcend this desert? - the desert of meaninglessness, the desert of anguish, the desert of absurdity.

JUST AS IT HAD CROSSED EVERY OTHER BARRIER, THE STREAM TRIED TO CROSS THIS ONE TOO...

Naturally. We always react from our past. It has always worked, so we think it is going to work in every situation, but one day a situation arises where your past is simply irrelevant; it doesn't work. That is real crisis... and real opportunity too.

The Chinese word for crisis - they don't have a word, they have pictures - the Chinese ideogram for crisis is beautiful. It consists of two small pictures, of two small ideograms: one means danger, the other means opportunity. Crisis is danger AND opportunity; it will depend on you. If you go on reacting out of the past you will be committing suicide. It is dangerous. If you have the intelligence to see that the problem is new so the answer has to be new - old answers won't do - if you have that intelligence to see, then it is great opportunity. Passing through the desert you will attain to great maturity and great integration. And remember, this is how it happens every time.

Just the other night a beautiful woman took sannyas. She was afraid. The fear was a very significant fear: the fear was that she could not keep one promise, the promise of marriage, so she was afraid of whether she would be able to keep this promise of sannyas or not. But a marriage is a marriage; sannyas is not a marriage. A marriage is a bondage, sannyas is freedom. A marriage is a chain - it is law. Sannyas is liberation - it is love. But you can understand that her argument must have gone deep inside her. She wanted to become a sannyasin - a sincere woman - but she was afraid about whether she would be able to keep this promise, because she had failed before. She could not keep the promise that she had given to her husband.

We always think out of the past. That is how EVERYBODY reacts. That is the meaning of reaction. That is the difference between reaction and response. A response means seeing that the situation is so new that you cannot have any answer from the past; seeing this, you respond to the situation. You go with the situation, you don't think of the past. If you think of the past and if you bring your past into it, you will destroy the opportunity for growth and you will go on behaving in the old pattern, the old rut. That's what happens.

You have been a Christian, you have been a Hindu, and now you are afraid of being a sannyasin. You think this is also another church. This is not! You think this is again an organization. This is not! You think now this is again becoming part of a belief system. This is not! You are confronting something utterly new, but naturally you react out of the past. You think, "I was a Christian, now what is the point of becoming a sannyasin?"

It happens every day. A Buddhist monk came and he said, "I am fed-up with being a monk, so I don't want to become a sannyasin." I said, "But this is not to be a monk. My sannyasins are not monks!"

The word 'monk' means one who lives alone, in loneliness. 'Monastery' comes from the same word, 'monk' - a person who renounces the world and lives alone

'Monopoly' comes from the same word, and 'monogamy' also comes from the same word. They all mean one - one husband to one wife, monogamy. 'Monopoly' means one person possesses power over the whole thing.

My sannyasins are not monks, they are non-monks. My sannyasins are not nuns. I don't destroy people. A nun is a ruin of a woman. A monk is a caricature of a man. I enhance their humanity, I enhance their life and their love. But naturally when a Buddhist monk comes he thinks, when a Catholic monk comes he thinks, "What is the point?"

Just a few days ago there was a Catholic monk here.

Living in a Catholic monastery for twelve, thirteen years, he escaped somehow. Now he was afraid. He said, "Now I am very much afraid! I am afraid of you, Osho, because you are appealing to me so much that I fear I may become a sannyasin. And just now I have escaped, and I don't want to get into any other system again."

It is natural, we can understand, but the natural is not necessarily true. There are situations when you are facing something so new, something that you have never faced before, but your eyes are full of the past. They interpret in the old, rotten ways.

JUST AS IT HAD CROSSED EVERY OTHER BARRIER...

It had crossed mountains, it had crossed plains, it had crossed valleys. The stream had crossed many, many things. Coming from the high mountains, from some unknown source, it had travelled long, it had been on a great pilgrimage. It had many experiences of how to cross over the hard rocks; it had always been victorious. Now all that experience will become a barrier.

THE STREAM TRIED TO CROSS THIS ONE TOO - THIS DESERT - BUT IT FOUND AS IT RAN INTO THE SAND, ITS WATERS DISAPPEARED.

It was a new situation. Intelligence consists in seeing the fact that when a situation is new, never try the old. When the situation is new, be new! Be inventive! Just drop the past! Look anew! Let your consciousness respond to the new. Mirror it! And don't be afraid of errors and mistakes, because in a new situation the only error that is unforgivable is the error of using something which was useful in some other situation - the ONLY error which cannot be forgiven! All other errors and mistakes are perfectly good, are okay; you will learn through them.

IT WAS CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT ITS DESTINY WAS TO CROSS THIS DESERT, AND YET THERE WAS NO WAY.

This word 'conviction' is used in a very strange way by Sufis.

You say, "I am a convinced Christian" or "I am a convinced Hindu" - that is not the meaning, not the Sufi meaning. Sufis say conviction only means that which arises from your innermost core, not from the outside. For ex-ample, everybody searches for happiness - that is a conviction. It is natural. Nobody has told you to seek and search for happiness, it is intrinsic to you; everybody is seeking and searching for it. Nobody has told you that happiness would be possible. In fact, many philosophers are saying that happiness is not possible. Freud says that happiness is not possible. Nietzsche says that happiness is impossible - it has never happened and it can't happen. It can't happen in the very nature of things; it is impossible. But still, who bothers about Nietzsche and Freud? People go on searching. Even Nietzsche went on searching, and even Freud went on searching. In his philosophical moments he knew it was not possible, but there were non-philosophical moments too, when he was a human being and not a psychoanalyst, not the founder of psychoanalysis but just a human being - a father, a husband, a lover, a friend. Then he started searching for happiness, and he knew it was not possible. But that knowing remains superficial.

Conviction is that which is in-built. The bird making a nest in the tree is CONVINCED of something which he has no knowledge of. He has never made any nest before, he has never given birth to any children before - this is for the first time - and he has never been to any school to learn how to make a nest either. Nobody has told, nobody has taught, and suddenly a conviction arises. The moment the bird is pregnant a conviction arises from some unknown depth that a nest has to be built - not so much in the head, but in the very fibers of his being. He starts moving, arranging things. A thousand and one things have to be arranged, and by the time the children come the nest will be ready. He has no idea of the children, what type of children, no idea of the nest, but it happens. This is conviction in the Sufi sense of the word.

Sufis use words in their own way. They twist and turn the language. They make it fit into their own vision. And my feeling is that their use of the word 'conviction' is exactly as it should be.

IT WAS CONVINCED, HOWEVER

... Against all knowledge, against all experience. The stream was seeing itself disappearing into the desert, but still there was a conviction that its destiny was to cross this desert.

Is not that conviction in you too? Are you not 'convinced, however'? Is there not a conviction somewhere deep down in your being that this earth is not your home, that you have to find your home, that here, somehow, you are a stranger, that the love that you are living is somehow superficial - there is much more that must be your destiny - that the life that you are living is not the life that you were meant to live? This conviction is there; hence the search, hence the adventure, hence one goes on looking here and there, in this direction and that direction. Somewhere there must be a way to find your destiny fulfilled.

Who has told you that this is not your home? Who has told you that there is more to life? Who has told you that there is some life which goes beyond death? Nobody has returned from the dead, nobody has said "I have survived." No Buddha, no Mahavir, no Krishna has returned from the dead, but there is a subtle conviction, an unshakeable conviction, that somehow you will go on living. This body will be gone, this life will be gone, but life will continue, life with a capital 'L'.

IT WAS CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT ITS DESTINY WAS TO CROSS THIS DESERT, AND YET THERE WAS NO WAY. NOW A HIDDEN VOICE, COMING FROM THE DESERT ITSELF, WHISPERED, " THE WIND CROSSES THE DESERT, AND SO CAN THE STREAM."

Now look very sympathetically into the story. It has a great message for you.

It says that 'the desert itself whispered'. What does it mean? What does it stand for? It means if you listen to the situation, the problem that is facing you, the crisis that you are going through, if you listen silently to the crisis itself, you will find the key to open the door. In the problem is the solution: that is the meaning. In the disease is hidden the medicine, the treatment. If you can go into the problem without any ready-made answers, the problem will whisper to you, will say to you how it can be solved.

The desert is the crisis of the stream, the stream is dying in the desert. But look! - even the desert is your friend. You have just to listen.

When you are angry, listen to anger, and you will find the key to open the doors of compassion. When you are sexually overwhelmed, listen to your sexuality and you will find the door to SAMADHI. Listen to your greed, and you will be surprised that in the very phenomenon of greed is hidden the secret of sharing.

This is the art of being meditative. This is real meditation: whenever you are faced with a problem, go into the problem - and you can go only if you don't have any solutions already. Those solutions are the enemies. Now see the change: you think those solutions that you are carrying in your head as knowledge are your friends, you think where will you be without those solutions? That is not true; those solutions are the enemies. Because of those solutions you cannot listen to the silent whisper of the problem, you cannot penetrate the mystery of the problem.

Look at it in this way: you know sex is bad because you have read it in the scriptures. You know it is sin because that's what the priests have been saying down through the ages. Now this has become ingrained in you, this is your knowledge: sex is sin. Because of this you will never be able to look deeply into sex with sympathy, you will never be able to go into its mystery. This idea that sex is sin will hinder you, prevent you. And you know that you already know, so there is no point in learning.

If you listen to the phenomenon of sex that knocks at your door every day, year in, year out, and goes on knocking even while you are dying You will be surprised to know that whenever prisoners are crucified, sentenced to death, the last thing that happens to a man is ejaculation. We cannot be so certain about the woman because she has no ejaculation. She must have an orgasm, but invisible. And this is my observation of many people I have watched dying; that has been one of my hobbies from my childhood.

In my town I never allowed anybody to die without my being there. The moment I would hear that somebody was on his deathbed, I would be there. If I was not found for a few hours, then my parents would know: "Then look for some dying man. He must be there." I would follow to the last pilgrimage, and I would go with every dying person, rich, poor, beggar - even a dying dog or a cat - and I would sit and watch. And I was surprised again and again, the more perceptive I became; I have seen it happen again and again: that the last idea when the man dies is sexual, and so is it the case with the dog and with the cat.

Sex goes on persisting. It leaves you only when you have learned the lesson, and to learn the lesson you will have to listen to it. You will have to be very meditative with sex, not antagonistic. You will have to be very silent. Enter into sex as you enter a temple - it is the holy of the holies - and that secret-most key is hidden there, the master key. Because sex is the source of life, it must have the key that can open the doors.

That is the meaning when the desert whispered, "The wind crosses the desert, and so can the stream."

THE STREAM OBJECTED

... Just as you object to me many times. Every day I go on receiving letters - objections, objections: "This should not be so, this should be like this" - and you don't know what you are saying. You don't know where you are, and you go on prescribing, and you go on advising, and you go on objecting.

Just the other day I received a letter. The person has a strong desire to become a sannyasin, but he objects to sannyas "because it is a kind of slavery" You don't know anything about sannyas. You don't know anything about surrender. Surrender makes you a master, not a slave - but that is a mystery to be lived, and there is no other way to understand it unless you live it. And whatsoever objections come, come from your past knowledge. And that past knowledge is not valid anymore, not valid for sannyas. You have never been a sannyasin!

Now this river has never entered into a desert, has never crossed a desert. For the first time the desert has arrived in the river's life.

THE STREAM OBJECTED THAT IT WAS DASHING ITSELF AGAINST THE SAND, AND ONLY GETTING ABSORBED: THAT THE WIND COULD FLY AND THIS WAS WHY IT COULD CROSS A DESERT.

”But how can I?” - very logical. ”The wind can fly. I cannot fly. The wind can cross the desert, but how can I?”
”BY HURTLING IN YOUR OWN ACCUSTOMED WAY YOU CANNOT GET ACROSS.”

Listen

The desert says, ”By hurtling in your own accustomed way you cannot get across.” You will have to drop the accustomed way, the habitual way. That’s what surrender is: dropping the habitual, dropping the past, dropping the known, dropping the learned, and facing the new with a new consciousness.

”YOU WILL EITHER DISAPPEAR OR BECOME A MARSH. YOU MUST ALLOW THE WIND TO CARRY YOU OVER TO YOUR DESTINATION.”

That’s what let-go is. You MUST let go. You must allow existence itself to take you to your ultimate destiny. This is what surrender is all about. The desert is teaching surrender to the stream.

”BUT HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?” ”BY ALLOWING YOURSELF TO BE ABSORBED IN THE WIND.”

That is death, that is dying - dying in the Master, relaxing into the Master; one who has disappeared, disappearing in him.

THIS IDEA WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE STREAM. AFTER ALL, IT HAD NEVER BEEN ABSORBED BEFORE. IT DID NOT WANT TO LOSE ITS INDIVIDUALITY.

People go on coming to me and they say, ”Sannyas is good, but what about our individuality? Will we not be losing our individuality?”

You don’t have any! And you are so worried about losing it. What individuality have you? The river is worried that it will lose its individuality. In fact, remember always: the essential can never be lost. That’s why in surrender, when you surrender, only the non-essential disappears and the essential arises in its total clarity and brilliance. It was hidden in the non-essential. The non-essential was ninety-nine percent, the garbage was ninety-nine percent, and the Kohinoor, the diamond of your being, was behind the garbage. When you surrender only the garbage can be surrendered, only the non-essential can be surrendered. The essential is that which CANNOT be surrendered; there is no way to surrender it. So when the garbage is gone, for the first time you realize your essential core, your Kohinoor, your diamond.

But the stream is afraid.

IT DID NOT WANT TO LOSE ITS INDIVIDUALITY. AND, ONCE HAVING LOST IT, HOW WAS ONE TO KNOW THAT IT COULD EVER BE REGAINED?

That is your fear too. Everybody hesitates before sannyas, this way and that. How is one to be certain that by surrendering your being you will not be lost? How will you regain it? And you cannot

be angry with the stream. Natural logic, YOUR logic, everybody's logic: "How am I going to know that the essential also will not be lost? And how will I come back again into myself?" The fear is natural.

"THE WIND," SAID THE SAND, "PERFORMS THIS FUNCTION."

The function of the Master is the function of the wind: he allows you to be absorbed in him. In that absorption the non-essential disappears and the essential is, for the first time, luminous to you. You surrender to the Master and the Master gives you back your inner being, your real being. He takes away only that which you are not. He takes away only that which you never had with you, and he gives you back that which you have always had with you but were never aware of. He gives you that which you are, and he takes away that which you are not.

"THE WIND... PERFORMS THIS FUNCTION. IT TAKES UP WATER, CARRIES IT OVER THE DESERT, AND THEN LETS IT FALL AGAIN. FALLING AS RAIN, THE WATER AGAIN BECOMES A RIVER."

"HOW CAN I KNOW THAT THIS IS TRUE?"

Every seeker asks, one day or other, "How can I know that this is true? This may be just a myth, a story, a belief to exploit streams. It may be fraud, it may be deception, it may be a subtle trick to cheat, it may be a strategy. How can I know that this is true?"

The river wants to be convinced logically. The river wants a proof. The river wants to have a preview of what is going to happen.

"IT IS SO, AND IF YOU DO NOT BELIEVE IT, YOU CANNOT BECOME MORE THAN A QUAGMIRE, AND EVEN THAT COULD TAKE MANY, MANY YEARS; AND IT CERTAINLY IS NOT THE SAME AS A STREAM."

The desert says, "It is so. There is no way to prove it. There is no way to have a preview of it. One knows only by going into it."

People come to me and they ask, "What is sannyas?" and I am always at a loss. What to tell them? All that I can say is: become a sannyasin and know what it is. It is an experience, a taste; it is known only by tasting it. But they are logical people, rational people. And they say, "That's okay, but what is the proof that once we enter into it And if nothing happens, if there is no taste in it, no joy in it Some guarantee is needed, some proof is needed. And if there is no proof, at least one thing has to be certain: that we can come back again to whatsoever we were before. Once we dissolve ourselves, it is getting into insecurity, it is moving into something like a dark night. This is risky."

But there is no way to know things of the beyond. The only way is to go into them, to be them. "And one thing is certain," the desert says, "I cannot give you any proof. I can only say it is so, I have seen it happen again and again. But if you don't trust it, you cannot become more than a quagmire. So you can choose - either you become a quagmire, or you take the risk and you disappear in the wind. Even by deciding to become a quagmire you will never be a stream again. Either way, the stream is going to disappear. You can disappear in cowardliness and you will become a quagmire.

And you can disappear into a quantum leap, in great courage. There is a possibility: if you can trust you may be again, in a different form, on a different plane."

When the disciple disappears in the Master, he disappears on a very low plane and is born on a higher plane. He dies as gross and is born as subtle. He dies as body and is born as spirit. He dies as circumference and is born as a center. But the decision is yours; you can become a quagmire. But remember, that way also the river is no more.

"BUT CAN I NOT REMAIN THE SAME STREAM THAT I AM TODAY?"

The stream asks a very, very irrelevant question: "Are these the only two alternatives? - that either I have to become a quagmire and lose my individuality, or I have to disappear into the winds and take the risk of some unknown journey, not knowing where it is going to land me or whether I will be back again on the earth or not? Are these the only two alternatives? Is there not a third alternative?"

"BUT CAN I NOT REMAIN THE SAME STREAM THAT I AM TODAY?"

That's what you also think. But you cannot remain the same. Life is moving, and there is no way to go back, and there is no way to stop movement.

A great scientist, Eddington, has said that the word 'rest' is an empty word, because in life there is NO situation which corresponds to the word 'rest'. Everything is moving, nothing is at rest. Stars move and the earth moves and the sun moves and life moves and the tree moves - and everything is movement. Never for a single moment is there any rest. Even when you are asleep and you say "I am resting", you are not resting. Everything is moving. After eight hours you will be eight hours older. Even in your deep sleep dreams are moving, your consciousness is moving, your body is changing, your mind is changing. All is movement, life is movement, so there is no way to remain the same.

"YOU CANNOT IN EITHER CASE REMAIN SO," THE WHISPER SAID. "YOUR ESSENTIAL PART IS CARRIED AWAY AND FORMS A STREAM AGAIN. YOU ARE CALLED WHAT YOU ARE EVEN TODAY BECAUSE YOU DO NOT KNOW WHICH PART OF YOU IS THE ESSENTIAL ONE."

To know the essential, the only way is to drop the non-essential, to discard the non-essential. To know the false as false is the only way to know what truth is.

WHEN HE HEARD THIS, CERTAIN ECHOES BEGAN TO ARISE IN THE THOUGHTS OF THE STREAM.

Yes, it was true; the stream could see. The stream was not human. Human beings are very blind; even streams are not so blind. Human beings are very stupid and adamant and stubborn. The stream could see the point, that "Yes, I cannot remain the same. I have NEVER been the same even for two consecutive moments, things have always been changing. That is true! I have been a constant change. Except for changes, everything changes. It is true."

The stream could see the point. And she could see the two alternatives: one is to become a quagmire, a dirty quagmire, and get lost in the desert forever and ever; the other is: take a risk,

disappear into the wind, evaporate and trust and see what happens! You are not going to lose in any way. You cannot remain the same, so that is no more an alternative. Now the only alternative is to become a cowardly quagmire or to become a courageous quantum leap.

The people who remain with doubt become quagmires. Only the people who attain to trust know what reality is. The moment the stream became aware of this whisper's message, certain echoes began to arise in the thoughts of the stream.

That is what is happening in you too! Listening to me, whenever a moment of trust arises in you, certain echoes... something from your own unconscious starts surfacing.

Yes, DIMLY HE REMEMBERED A STATE IN WHICH HE - OR SOME PART OF HIM, WAS IT? - HAD BEEN HELD IN THE ARMS OF A WIND.

If you listen to me, if you participate in my being, certain echoes will arise in you: yes, somewhere, in some moment, you were part of existence. You had existed without any worry, without any doubt. You had existed in a kind of at-one-ment with the whole - that was in your mother's womb. And if it was possible, why can't it again be possible? The existence was taking care; if you relax maybe it can take care again.

DIMLY HE REMEMBERED A STATE IN WHICH HE - OR SOME PART OF HIM, WAS IT? - HAD BEEN HELD IN THE ARMS OF A WIND. HE ALSO REMEMBERED - OR DID HE? - THAT THIS WAS THE REAL THING, NOT NECESSARILY THE OBVIOUS THING TO DO.

Remember it, a great statement: the obvious and the natural are not necessarily the real. The obvious is that which fits with your past. The natural is that which goes in tune with your habits; that may not necessarily be the real thing. There comes a moment in life when you face a desert, when all knowledge is futile, the past irrelevant, all habits, accustomed ways of thinking and behaving, simply don't make any sense. That moment of crisis, that moment of facing the desert, is a great moment. If you can be courageous enough to take the risk you will be transformed.

AND THE STREAM RAISED HIS VAPOR INTO THE WELCOMING ARMS OF THE WIND, WHICH GENTLY AND EASILY BORE IT UPWARDS AND ALONG, LETTING IT FALL SOFTLY AS SOON AS THEY REACHED THE ROOF OF A MOUNTAIN, MANY, MANY MILES AWAY. AND BECAUSE HE HAD HAD HIS DOUBTS, THE STREAM WAS ABLE TO REMEMBER AND RECORD MORE STRONGLY IN HIS MIND THE DETAILS OF THE EXPERIENCE. HE REFLECTED, " YES, NOW I HAVE LEARNED MY TRUE IDENTITY."

The stream took the risk; that was the only intelligent alternative.

If you see clearly, there is no choice. If you see clearly you will have to do the thing that is real. Choice exists only in a confused mind. You will be surprised to know this: a mind which has transparent clarity is choiceless. There are not alternatives. What alternatives can there be? - either something is right or something is wrong. When you are clear, when you have a clarity and perception, you simply see the right and you do the right. You don't start thinking whether to do the right or the wrong; there is no alternative left. The alternatives arise only in a confused mind. The confusion creates choice. The confused mind cannot see what is right and what is wrong - maybe

this is right, maybe that is right, maybe this is wrong, maybe that is wrong. It is all perhaps, maybe - h ence choice.

Many times people ask me, ”What is sin and what is virtue? And how to decide?” If you decide your decision will be wrong. If you choose you will be wrong. All choice is wrong. There is no way to decide. There is no need to decide what is sin and what is virtue. You only need a transparent mind, a clarity, a thoughtless mind, a no-mind, a mirror-like consciousness. In that consciousness WHATSOEVER HAPPENS is virtue. In that consciousness WHATSOEVER CANNOT HAPPEN is sin.

AND THE STREAM RAISED HIS VAPOR INTO THE WELCOMING ARMS OF THE WIND.

The stream could see clearly that this is the only possible way, there is no alternative: ”I cannot be the same... and it is just going into hell to become a quagmire. So why not take the risk, why not gamble?”
And the stream gambled, became vapor, disappeared into the winds. ...

INTO THE WELCOMING ARMS OF THE WIND...

They are always welcoming. Existence is always ready to embrace you. You just go on running, you go on escaping.

... WHICH GENTLY AND EASILY BORE IT UPWARDS AND ALONG...

The universe is always loving, always ready to befriend you. You are a child to it. It is very gentle, it takes care very delicately. It is very careful, it is very caring. And if sometimes you feel that existence is hard on you, remember always - you must be fighting with it. Your fighting creates the problem. Otherwise existence is always graceful, it is always motherly.

... AND GENTLY AND EASILY BORE IT UPWARDS AND ALONG, LETTING IT FALL SOFTLY AS SOON AS THEY REACHED THE ROOF OF A MOUNTAIN, MANY, MANY MILES AWAY. AND BECAUSE HE HAD HIS DOUBTS, THE STREAM WAS ABLE TO REMEMBER AND RECORD MORE STRONGLY IN HIS MIND THE DETAILS OF THE EXPERIENCE. HE REFLECTED, ”YES, NOW I HAVE LEARNED MY TRUE IDENTITY.”

The identity that you have right now is not your true identity. It is false. Your name is false, your form is false. You are not the name or the form - what Hindus call NAMARUP - you are neither name nor form. You are something beyond both. But you don’t know who you are: that is possible only if you surrender.

Surrendering means surrendering the false personality. Surrendering means surrendering the false identity. That’s why in sannyas your names are changed, your dress is changed. That is just a symbol to say to you that you are no more part of your past, that your name is gone, so all that was connected with the name is gone; that your dress is changed - you start thinking in new ways about your being.

”YES, NOW I HAVE LEARNED MY TRUE IDENTITY.”

THE STREAM WAS LEARNING. BUT THE SANDS WHISPERED, ”WE KNOW, BECAUSE WE SEE IT HAPPEN DAY AFTER DAY: AND BECAUSE WE, THE SANDS, EXTEND FROM THE RIVERSIDE ALL THE WAY TO THE MOUNTAIN.”

AND THAT IS WHY IT IS SAID THAT THE WAY IN WHICH THE STREAM OF LIFE IS TO CONTINUE ON ITS JOURNEY IS WRITTEN IN THE SANDS.

Listen to the wisdom of the sands.

This story is of immense value. If you allow it to fall into your heart as a seed, soon it will grow into a big tree. And when the time comes you will have great flowers and great fragrance.

This is the story of sannyas. This is what I am doing here. This is what is happening here.

CHAPTER 2

Trust in Allah...

22 February 1978 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:

Question 1

WHY ARE YOU AGAINST ASCETIC PRACTICES? ARE THEY NOT RELIGIOUS? IS NOT ASCETICISM A PATH TO GOD?

It is just the opposite: it is a path to the madhouse. It is pathological. It is an expression of an ill mind, it is an expression of a violent mind. Ordinarily the violence is directed towards others, but the violence can be dirccted to oneself too. And when the violence is directed to oneself it is more dangerous, because there is nobody to defend you.

When you are violent with somebody else the other is there to defend, to protect himself, to fight with you. When the violence turns upon yourself, it is absolute; there is nobody left to defend you.

So to me, Adolf Hitler is less dangerous than Mahatma Gandhi, Adolf Hitler is less violent than Mahatma Gandhi. It may be very difficult for you to understand it, but this has been happening down the ages: the people who are masochistic have declared themselves religious. Religion is an excuse to be a masochist. Take the excuse away and the masochist is exposed.

If you go on thinking that the person who is torturing himself is a spiritual person, you are also nourishing his masochism. He's simply enjoying torturing himself. There is a joy that comes out of torturing oneself: it consists of the feeling of power. When you torture somebody else, then too it gives you the feeling of power. That's why violence exists. People simply go on doing violence to

each other; that is their only way to feel powerful. They can destroy the other; that is their power. But there is a variety of violence where you can start destroying yourself, and you will feel powerful.

For example, the story is told of a Hindu saint - I don't believe it is true, but it could be true - that a Hindu mystic, Surdas, was passing through a street and he saw a beautiful woman, and for a moment he forgot that he had renounced the world. He forgot that he was a saint, he forgot all about religion, discipline, yoga. In that moment his heart simply moved with great passion and love towards the woman. Just a moment later he caught hold of himself. He went back to his hut and destroyed his eyes, became blind, because the scriptures say if the eyes lead you astray, destroy them. He must have felt immensely powerful while destroying his eyes: "I can do even this!" The ego must have felt very subtle nourishment. The ego must have become more strong than ever. And it was not the eyes, it was his capacity to become unconscious; the eyes had not led him astray. How can the eyes lead you astray? The eyes are just windows into the world. Standing in your room looking out of the window, you see a beautiful woman - you don't destroy the window. And by destroying the window you will not gain anything: you will not become more spiritual, you will not become less sexual, your passion not disappear. You will only be closed in your house and your passion will get on boiling within you. Eyes are windows.

Just a few days ago. I think just seven days ago a woman in America cut off one of her hands, because the Bible says, "If thy hand offend thee, it is better to cut it off and throw it away than to fall into hell and suffer for eternity."

These people - Surdas or this woman, and there are millions of that type - you call them religious? You call them spiritual? They are pathological.

A religious person is a healthy, whole person. He accepts life as it is, and he accepts the joys that life brings. He dances with the dance, he sings a thousand and one songs. His approach is not antagonistic, it is not anti-life.

The ascetic approach is anti-life. It is suicidal. You may be committing suicide very slowly and partially; that doesn't make much difference. Somebody jumps from a cliff and destroys himself; and somebody slowly slowly, in installments, goes on destroying himself, takes years to destroy himself: this is slow poisoning, but there is no difference. In fact the man who jumps from the cliff is more courageous than the man who goes on committing suicide slowly.

But down the ages we have praised these insane people, we have worshipped them. Because of this worship humanity has remained immature and humanity has remained abnormal. The normal people are not normal. they are only called normal. They exist in great numbers but they are not the norm - and they are not healthy either. They somehow manage to live their lives. The man who is destructive to his being is insane, and the people who worship him as a saint are also insane.

I am utterly against ascetic practices because those practices are against life. I am all for life. I am all for God. God is a celebration. Look around... the whole existence is continuously in a celebration, in a kind of 'alleluia'. It continues singing and dancing, and loving, and enjoying. If you watch existence you will understand what it is to be religious: to be part of this celebration is to be religious.

I have heard

The late Aga Khan III, leader of the Ismaili Moslem sect, was partial to the pleasures of the table.When a visitor asked him how he reconciled his predilection for worldly enjoyment with his status as a religious leader, the Aga replied, ”I do not think the Lord meant the good things of this world to be enjoyed only by the sinners.”

I perfectly agree with the Aga. It is stupid!... that only sinners can enjoy, and saints have to live in prisons called monasteries. They cannot eat, or even if they eat they are not allowed to taste. They cannot listen to beautiful music because it is sensuous. They cannot dance because the origin of dance is in sex; the peacock dances when the peacock wants to make love. They cannot sing because the song is nothing but an expression of sex. The birds sing; they are not reciting the Koran or the Vedas or the Gita. These are love-calls! The flowers bloom - they are not blooming there for you to cut them and take them to the temple to some altar. The flowers are the expression of the sexuality of the plant. If you watch deeply, everything is sensuous, life is sensuous; and everything is rooted in sex because life itself is born in sex.

The so-called spiritual person starts eliminating his life. One by one, all things disappear. He is left almost dead. He simply vegetates. I am not for that kind of existence.

My sannyasins have to be yea-sayers, not no-sayers. My sannyasins have to affirm life in its totality, in its multi-dimensionality, in all its possibilities and richness and variety. My sannyasin has to be rooted in existence, and my sannyasin has to live all the planes of life, from sex to SAMADHI. If something disappears on its own accord that is another thing, but that is not asceticism. I know a moment comes when your energies start moving into higher planes of being: sex disappears because it is not needed. It is not needed because you are enjoying the same energy on higher planes - not because it is wrong, not because it was something ugly. It is not needed because the same energy is having higher orgasms. SAMADHI is the ultimate orgasm, sex is only a glimpse of it.

Sex is a momentary SAMADHI, and SAMADHI is eternal sex.

Naturally when you have attained to SAMADHI sex will disappear, but not that you have to renounce it. If you renounce it, then you are doing something wrong. You go on moving deeper and higher, and whatsoever needs to disappear will disappear. Ultimately all disappears. Only God is left, only pure joy is left, uncaused joy is left; but not that you renounce. If you renounce you will never attain to that state.

I have heard

There was a young man who searched for greater and greater austerities, for he believed that nothing of real value is obtained easily. Finally he located an ancient monastery in the Himalayas whose monks had taken the most severe vows of poverty and austerity. This monastery was on the summit of an awesome mountain peak, and the monks had to climb and descend by hauling themselves up and down the iron chains that were hammered into the mountain-face. No heat was allowed in the monastery, and the monks slept on the cold, stone floors. For sustenance they descended the chains each day to pry up the frozen ground in search of the few lichens that grew there. The remainder of the time they meditated, chanted and made offerings. Now these practices pleased the young man and he requested, and he was granted, permission to remain with them.

The monks' form of meditation was to contemplate various riddles, and shortly after the young man's arrival the Abbot of the monastery posed this question: "How high is up?" Then he instructed the young man to meditate for one month and return with the answer. It was diff1cult to think about anything since he was constantly shivering. But the harshness was a challenge to the young man, and after a month had passed he was confident of the answer.

Again the Abbot asked: "How high is up?" and the young man replied: "As high as man's mind may imagine it to be." But the Abbot gave him a look of disdain and said: "Meditate for another month." And the young man did.

When the month had passed he met with the Abbot and his answer was: "Up is as high as God wills it to be." Again he was rejected and returned to his meditation. The next month when asked the same question he said not a word, but raised one cold, stiff finger and pointed up. And again he was sent away. Each month he became more and more convinced that no answer could ever satisfy the Abbot, and the young man's frustration increased. The next time he saw the Abbot and the question was asked, his voice was taut with suppressed anger: "This is foolishness! There is no answer!" And again he was sent away, this time with more mockery than usual, for the Abbot knew the young man was close to the truth.

As he departed from the presence of the Abbot, the young man vowed to make a last attempt to discover the answer. He ceased eating even the few lichens and maintained a vigil atop the roof that was raised over the mountains. When the long month finally ended the other monks removed him from the roof and tried to thaw him out so that he could speak with the Abbot. Then the question was asked again: "How high is up?"

The young man looked blank for a second, then suddenly he screamed and jumped violently up and down several times, and before anyone could stop him, he leaped across the room and kicked the Abbot so hard that he was thrown to the floor. The monks rushed to the aid of the Abbot and lifted him up. As soon as he had recovered, he smiled and said to the young man: "You have got it!"

Then the young man quickly gathered his few possessions and departed from the monastery. By the time he had returned home he was filled with happiness, for he had found truth and achieved enlightenment.

Or perhaps the reason he felt so good was because he was warm.

The ascetic practices give you a kind of ill, morbid joy. The more you go into them, the more you feel you are becoming a conqueror, you are conquering something. The more the body says "Don't destroy me!", the more you become adamant. You create a rift within yourself, between you and your body, and a great battle starts.

And the body is natural. The body simply asks for that which is healthy, natural, only for that which God allows and God wants to happen. The body has no unnatural desires; all its needs are natural needs, healthy needs. And the more you starve the body, the more the body prays and asks and haunts you. But you can make it a challenge: you can think that the body is trying to seduce you, that the body is in the hands of the enemy, in the hands of the Devil. And you can go on fighting more and more, with more strength, with more violence, with more aggression. You go on fighting with the body; a moment comes when you can dull the body.

If you go on fasting for a longer time the body by and by relaxes into a kind of dullness. It starts accepting, it adjusts itself; there is no point. There is nobody who takes care, so what is the point of going on crying? The body becomes dumb. You lose sensitivity, you become thick. You grow a thick skin around yourself: then the hot and the cold do not bother you, then starvation does not bother you. Rather, on the contrary, you feel very good deep inside - that you are conquering. But you are not conquering, you are losing ground. Each moment you are losing ground, because truth can only be known through the body! Truth is known by the consciousness but known THROUGH the body. One has to remain rooted in the body.

God Himself is rooted in the world. Take a tree out of the soil and it will die. The life of the tree is intertwined with the life of the earth: it needs water, it needs manure, it needs food, it needs the sun, the air, the wind. Those are natural needs, the tree exists through them. Take the tree out of the soil - for a few days maybe you may not notice that the tree is dying, the old water that it had contained in itself may keep it a little bit green, even a few buds may open, a few flowers may bloom, but not for long - sooner or later the reservoirs of the tree will be finished and the tree will die.

Take yourself out of your body and you will die. Your body is your earth. Your body belongs to the earth, it has come from the earth, it is a small earth around you. It nourishes you, it is not your enemy. It is not in the hands of the Devil. There is no Devil: the Devil is a creation of the pathological mind, the Devil is the creation of the paranoid mind. It has come into the world because of fear. But your so-called God is also out of fear; so your God and your Devil are both out of your fear. You have not known the real God. The real God is not out of fear. The real God is out of love, out of joy. The real God can only be experienced by becoming more and more sensitive, by becoming more and more open.

Be in your body. Get out of your mind and get into your senses: that is the only way to be religious. It will look paradoxical, but let me say it: the only way to be religious is to be in the world, and deeply in the world - because God is hidden in the world. There is no 'other world'. The other world is the deepest core of this world, it is not separate from it.

I'm against all ascetic practices. And in the future ascetics will be treated in mad-asylums, psychiatric hospitals. And out of a hundred of your so-called saints, ninety-nine have been neurotic, but because you believed you could not see what was really happening. Once you believe in a certain thing the belief creates the phenomenon.

If you drop all kinds of beliefs and you start looking with clarity, you will be surprised: man has not suffered through irreligious people, man has suffered in the hands of the so-called religious. Man's greatest misery has come out of the split between body and soul. Man has become schizophrenic because of your saints, your churches, your scriptures. And I'm not saying that there have never been real saints; there have been: Jesus or Diogenes, Buddha and Krishna, Zarathustra and Lao Tzu - these people loved life. And the tradition that says something else is created by the pathological.

Now Christians say Jesus never laughed: this is utter nonsense. This nonsense is imposed by the Christians on Jesus. They have painted Jesus as a sad, long face. The Jesus in the churches is a false Jesus. The churches have created an artificial Jesus of their own. The real Jesus, the authentic Jesus, was a man of laughter, a man of celebration. In fact, it can't be otherwise.

My message to you is: enjoy life as totally as possible and you will be coming closer and closer to the Divine, you will be coming closer to home.

The second question:

Question 2

YOU SPOKE TODAY OF THE NECESSITY OF HAVING A TRANSPARENT MIND SO ONE CAN SEE MORE CLEARLY, THUS ELIMINATING THE NECESSITY OF CHOICE.

ARE NOT DESIRES, WHICH STEM ONLY FROM THE EGO, THE SOLE CAUSE OF THE MUDDYING OF THE MIND? THEN, WITH NO DESIRES, THERE IS NO NEED FOR CHOICE. THINGS SIMPLY HAPPEN.

THE PROBLEM THEN COMES RIGHT BACK TO ELIMINATING THE EGO AND THE DESIRES. IT SEEMS TO BE A VICIOUS CIRCLE WHOSE HOLD IS BROKEN EITHER

1. THROUGH A GRADUAL PROCESS OF ATTRITION OF EGO AND DESIRES, SPANNING MANY LIVES, OR,

2. THROUGH CUTTING TANGENT TO THE CIRCLE BY TAKING THE LEAP OR GAMBLE INTO THE UNKNOWN. THE SECOND METHOD SEEMS TO BE THE PREFERABLE ONE, BUT WHERE DOES THE MOTIVATION COME FROM TO BREAK OUT OF THE CIRCLE? ACTION IS GENERALLY MOTIVATED BY SOME DESIRE.

ONE CAN LET THINGS HAPPEN, OR ONE CAN ACT, WHICH AGAIN MEANS CHOICE.

First, there are not two ways to come out of the desiring mind, there is only one way. If there were two then again there would be choice. There is only one.

The first thing you say: ”THROUGH A GRADUAL PROCESS OF ATTRITION OF EGO AND DESIRES, SPANNING MANY LIVES...”

That is out of your muddle-headedness. The first is created by your mind, because the mind always wants to postpone. It always says ’tomorrow’, ’next life’. It creates time. Time is a mind-creation, because mind cannot exist without time. Mind cannot exist in the now-here. Mind can only exist in the future or in the past; it projects. So the mind says, ”It is a very complex problem. You will be able to solve it only slowly slowly, desire by desire. You will have to change, practice. You will have to do a thousand and one methods, following paths, techniques, methods. Finally, somewhere in the distant future, one day you will become enlightened. You will come out of all desiring.”

But in all these lives that you will be practicing it will be out of motivation, the motivation to become enlightened. All your methods, all your practices, will be basically rooted in the motivation for enlightenment. So for all these lives you will be feeding the motivation to become enlightened, it will become stronger and stronger. You will not be able to get out of it, you will be helping it to become stronger. It will be more strong tomorrow, the day after tomorrow still more strong, and so on and so forth - because each day you will be carrying the motive in your mind, you will be giving

energy to it, you will be pouring your life juices into it. If you cannot become enlightened right now, tomorrow it is going to be a little more difficult, and the day after tomorrow still more difficult. And after that one never knows... it may happen, it may not happen at all. Now or never!

So the first alternative is not really there; it is a strategy of the mind.

And the second: ”THROUGH CUTTING TANGENT TO THE CIRCLE BY TAKING THE LEAP OR GAMBLE INTO THE UNKNOWN. THE SECOND METHOD SEEMS TO BE THE PREFERABLE ONE.”

There is no other! It is not preferable; that is the only thing there is. It is not a question of choosing. There is no choice in life, li& is simply choicelessly there. There are not two doors in life, it is only a single door. That is why Jesus says, ”The way is straight but narrow.” It is VERY narrow. There is not much possibility to choose, NO possibility to choose, really.

The problem is: how to do the second, which is the only one? How to do it? - because the question arises again: from where to get the motive?

Have you never seen any action arising in you which comes without any motivation? Later on you may find out, recapitulate, reconsider the whole situation, and you may think that there was a motive, but in the actual act there was none.

For example, you come across a path and you see a snake moving. There is not time enough to think. Motivation will need time, you will have to go into a syllogism: you will have to see the snake, whether it is poisonous or not, dangerous or not, you will have to think about other experiences with the snake, and other people’s opinions about the snakes. You will have to ponder. And then you will become afraid and there will be a motivation: how to protect yourself, how to jump, what to do? - but all these things are just imaginary. When you face the snake you simply jump out of the way. The jump comes first; there is no motivation, the act is total. You are the act! It is not that there is an actor and the act, and there is a mind between the two, thinking and pondering what to do. You simply act.

Your house is on fire: you rush out, you don’t ponder over it. No thinking happens. In a moment of no-thought the action arises: that action is unmotivated, although if you look backwards, if you recapitulate, you can find a motive. That motive is created by the mind. The mind cannot understand anything without the motive; mind is the motive. Even where no motive exists, the mind imposes a motive. Later on, sitting under a tree, relaxing, you will think, ”I acted out of the fear motive. I was afraid of death, that’s why I jumped.” But this is wrong, this is absolutely wrong. There was no death, there was no fear. You simply acted. The act came from intuition, not from thought and intellect. The house was on fire? - you simply rushed out. It was a natural phenomenon, it was a happening.

People used to come to Buddha again and again, and they would say, ”Yes, whatsoever you say is right, SEEMS right, seems rational, logical. We would also like to get out of this wheel of life and death, but you make things impossible. You say, ’Just jump without any motive, because if you have any motive then you will remain in the vicious circle of life and death. Because all motives are spokes of the wheel, so you will be clinging. If you have any motive, any desire, any goal, any future, you will be creating again and again the same pattern. Just come out of it with no idea.’”

People would say, ”We understand. It looks logical: the world is nothing but a projection of our desires, so if we have any desire - even to get out of the world - that will create another world, ad infinitum, one behind the other. You can go on and on. Then how to get out of it?”

And Buddha would say, ”You just see the point6 that life is meaningless. You be clear that this life is illusory, that there is only misery and pain and nothing else,, agony and nothing else.”

See that the house is on fire,, and then there is no how. The man whose house is on fire does not consult a guidebook, ’How To Get Out Of The House When It Is On Fire’. He simply finds a way. He jumps from the window, from the back door. He is not worried about the doors and the windows and the etiquette and the manners; those luxuries are not possible in that moment. You can afford those luxuries only when the house is not on fire and you are resting in your house and thinking and planning: ”If the house were on fire, from where would I get out?” But the ’if’ has to be there - then you can ponder over it, brood over it.

When I say ’the clarity of mind’, I simply mean seeing a fact as it is. If it is false it drops on its own accord from your being; you need not have any motive to drop it. Nobody has dropped anything, nobody can drop anything, because in the dropping is the clinging. You cannot renounce anything. In the very renunciation there is attachment.

You think, ”My living in the family, being with the wife and the children is an attachment. It does not allow me meditativeness. It does not allow me time, space to search for God. I should go to the Himalayas, I should leave this family.” You can manage to leave, you can renounce the family, you can escape to the Himalayas, but sitting in a Himalayan cave you will think of your wife and your children, and God will be as far away as ever - in fact, more far away. When you are with your wife and children you need not think much about them. They are there,, so what is the need to think? When they are not there then you will think continuously. Then all the joys that you had enjoyed with the wife and the children... your child giggling and running in the garden... you sitting by the side of your wife, and all that nostalgia will come in thousands of ways, inf ar more beautiful forms, far more luminous, far more psychedelic.

Sitting in your cave, what are you going to do? You will think of the home, the warmth of the home, the comfort of the home. The cave will only throw you back to the home again and again. The coldness of the cave will remind you of the warmth of your wife, her warm body. Nobody to look after you, nobody to take care of you... and you will be reminded again and again: ”What have you done to yourself?” and ”How can you forgive yourself for leaving your children as orphans?” That will torture, that will torture your being,, that will hurt. It will become a wound. You will not be able to forget, you will not be able to forgive either.

This is a stupid way. Nobody renounces, nobody leaves anything,, nobody drops anything. One who understands finds that a few things have disappeared. In the very understanding is the disappearance. I know - living in your home, living with your wife and children, a moment comes when you are no more a husband and she is no more a wife. In fact, when you are no more a husband and she is no more a wife, love arises in its greatest splendor.

To be a husband is ugly, to be a wife is ugly; it is institutional, it is legal. It is a kind of contract. Marriage IS ugly. There comes a moment of understanding when marriage simply disappears. And

you know, how can you become the master of a woman? The very idea is violent, the very idea is egoistic. How can you possess the woman? How can you reduce a beautiful woman into an ugly wife? She becomes a freedom again, she is no more in the cage called wifehood; you become free again, you are no more a husband - you both start flying into the sky, free. You are no more caged. The marriage has disappeared, the love-sky is open.

This is the way to get out of attachment: it is NOT by renouncing the people you love, it is by renouncing the ugly things that you have gathered around the people you love. And that renunciation comes out of a transparent clarity.

How can you say, ”This is my child”? All children are God’s children. If you are in your senses, how can you claim that ”This child is mine”? He comes through you, that is true, you have been a passage for the child, but you can’t own him, you can’t possess him. You can love him, you can celebrate his coming to you, but you can’t become in any way a power over the child. Understanding transforms situations.

Just try to understand what you are living, what your life is. Look deeply into it, watch deeply into it. There is no hurry to change anything. Never be in a hurry to change, just let your insight become profound. Seeing a thing as false, you are freed. And to know the false as the false is to know the truth as the truth. Seeing the false as the false, your eyes start moving towards the true.

That’s what I mean when I say enlightenment comes out of choicelessness. It is unmotivated. Seeing the futility of all kinds of motivation, it happens.

The third question:

Question 3

WHAT STANDS IN THE WAY OF MY SAYING YES TO LIFE, TO SURRENDERING TOTALLY, AND IS IT ALWAYS RIGHT TO SAY YES?

It is difficult to say yes to life, because you have been taught to say no. And the conditioning is very ancient. And not only is the conditioning there which does not allow you to say yes, there is some inner mechanism also that does not allow you to say yes.

When a child is born he is a yes-sayer. Slowly, slowly, as he starts feeling himself as an individual, the no arises. When the child starts saying no you can be certain this is the time when the ego is born. The ego cannot exist without saying no, so each child has to say no. It is an inner necessity for becoming an individual. If the child goes on saying yes to everything he will never become an individual, he will not have any definition to his being. How will he be able to define? ’Yes’ gives you no definition, ’no’ gives you definition. When you say no, you know it is ’I’ saying no. When you say yes, there is no ’I’ in it.

Life and you remain one when you say yes. When you say no you demark a line, you assert. That is the meaning of the Biblical story of Adam disobeying God, saying no. It is a MUST, otherwise Adam would never have become separate from God. He would never have had any individuality; he would have remained vague,, a kind of cloud, nebulous. He had to say no, he had to disobey, he had to

rebel. And remember, this is not something that happened in the past and happened only once; it happens with each new Adam, with each new child of man. Each child lives in the Garden of Eden for a few months, a few years, and then slowly, slowly he has to deny, he has to rebel, he has to disobey. The father says, ”Don’t do this!” and he has to do it just to say, ”I am myself. You cannot go on ordering me like that. I’m not a slave. I have my own preferences, I have my own likes and dislikes.” Sometimes the child even does something which he does not much like to do, but he has to do it because the father is saying don’t do it.

Children start smoking cigarettes; no child likes smoking a cigarette for the first time - nobody can like it. Tears come to the eyes, the child starts coughing, the throat feels in a misery, the heart does not like it - but he has to do it because the father is saying ”Don’t smoke!” He has to go against the father; that is the only way to have a separate existence. He has to go against the mother, he has to go against the teacher. There is a time for each child to say no, and that is good as it is. I am not against it, otherwise there would be no more individuals. But then you= become accustomed to saying no.

There is a time, a season to say no, and there is a time to learn to drop unnecessary noes. Otherwise you will never attain to the unity with the divine. Just see the point: no helps you to become separate from your father, your mother, your family, your society. It is good - as far as it goes, it is good - but then one day you have to learn to say yes to God, to existence..Otherwise you will remain always separate, and the separation creates misery, the separation creates a kind of struggle in life, a fight. Life becomes a war. And life should not be a war, it should be a relaxed joy.

So one has to say yes one day.

You ask me, ”WHAT STANDS IN THE WAY OF MY SAYING YES?”

You are afraid of losing your ego. You stand in the way, your ego stands in the way. And it was good that it helped you to get rid of your past heritage, history, your parents, your family, your church. It is good. Its work is finished; you are no more a child! Now don’t go on fighting. Just don’t go on carrying the old habit of saying no, otherwise you will remain childish.

See the paradox: if a child never says no he will never grow, and if a grown-up man goes on saying no he will remain childish. One day you need to say no with your total heart, and one day you need to drop the no too.

And you ask, ”... AND IS IT ALWAYS RIGHT TO SAY YES?”

No, not always. No has its own utility. One should not be addicted to it, that’s all. No is not bad in itself. There are moments when you have to say no, there are moments when you have to say yes. One should be free to say yes or no; that’s what I have been telling you. One should not be addicted to either. A free person is one who looks at each situation and says yes or no - whatsoever the response is, whatsoever he feels like in that moment. That yes and no should not come from the past, should not come from the memory. It should not be a reaction, it should be a response.

A man was alone out in a rowboat on the Potomac, shouting, ”No! No! No!”

Somebody was watching: ”Why is this man saying, ’No! No! No!’?” And there was nobody else, he was alone on the boat. And not only was he saying it, he was shouting to the sky, ”No! No! No!” The watcher was naturally puzzled.

”Nothing to worry about,” said a passing policeman to the puzzled man. ”He’s just a White House ’yes-man’ on vacation.”

A balance is needed. If you go on saying yes, yes, if you are a yes-man, that will be lopsided and you will need a vacation, and you will have to go on some boat alone and shout ”No! No! No!” Then you will feel good. Yes and no are like inhalation/exhalation; you need not choose. You have to inhale and you have to exhale, and both are needed.

Your house is on fire and you rush out: this is no. You are saying to the fire, ”I am going out.”

A snake crosses your path and you jump out of the way; you say no. You may not be actually saying no, but there are a thousand gestures which are a no.

A man should be free to say yes or no. If you are obsessed with yes, you will not have any individuality. If you are obsessed with no, you will have only the ugly ego. A man in a tremendous balance of yes and no is healthy and whole.

And to say yes is not ALWAYS right; it cannot be. Nothing is ALWAYS right, and nothing is always bad. But you have been taught fixed ideas again and again: this is bad and this is right. Rightness and badness change; they change as circumstances change. No act in itself is right, or can be right, or wrong, or can be wrong. Each situation is new, and one never knows. Never carry fixed ideas, fixed ideas are obsessive. Remain free to act.

A religious person is one who responds, is free to act in each and every situation, whose reactions are not fixed reactions, who is not mechanical.

Two men were out mountain climbing when one of them said, ”I’m more experienced than you. I’ll go in front and show you how it is done.” So he went up in front and fell down a great big hole about 250 feet deep. The other fellow shouted down, ”Are you all right?”

”No, I have broken both arms.”
”Well, climb up with your legs.”

”I have broken both legs too.”

”Well, then climb up with your teeth.” So he climbed up with his teeth and it took him ages. He was almost at the top when the fellow shouted down, ”Are you all right?”
And the answer came: ”YEEEEEEeeeeessss” and he went down again.

Yes is not always right.

The fifth question:

Question 4

’TRUST IN ALLAH BUT TETHER YOUR CAMEL.FIRST’ -

I LOVE THIS SUFI SAYING, BUT I DON’T KNOW WHO OR WHAT THE CAMEL IS.

It changes. The camel is not a fixed entity, it comes in all shapes and sizes. The camel is only a symbol. It simply says one thing: don’t be passive. God has no hands other than your hands. Trust in Allah, trust in God, but that should not be an excuse for becoming lousy, lazy.

There are three types of people in the world. One thinks he has to do a thing; he himself is the doer. He does not trust the whole, the encompassing whole. He simply lives on his small, small energy, and naturally is defeated again and again and proves a failure. If you live on your very small energy against this vast energy that surrounds you, you are going to be a loser, a goner. And you will suffer great agonies and anguish. Your whole life will be nothing but a long, long misery.

Then the second type of person is one who thinks, ”When God is doing everything, I need not do anything. I’m not supposed to do anything.” He simply sits and waits. His life becomes more and more lazy, and there comes a point when he no longer lives, he simply vegetates.

These two types represent East and West. The West represents the doer, the active type, and the East represents the non-doer, the passive type.

The West is driving itself crazy. The problem of Western humanity is too much action, no trust, too much dependence upon oneself, as if ”I have to do everything”, as if ”I am alone”, as if ”The existence does not care a bit about me.” Naturally it creates anxiety, and the anxiety is too much, unbearable. It creates all kinds of neuroses, psychoses; it keeps people always on the verge, tense, nervous. It is murderous, it is maddening. The West has succeeded in doing many things, and has succeeded in getting rid of the idea of God, and has succeeded in dropping all kinds of trust and surrendering, has dropped all kinds of relaxing moods, knows nothing of let-go, has forgotten completely. That’s why in the West people are finding it more and more difficult every day ever to fall asleep, because that needs a certain kind of trust.

Once I came to know a man who could not sleep in the night; he would keep himself awake. He would sleep in the day but he would keep himself awake in the night. His wife told me, ”You do something, because this is creating many problems. He cannot work because he sleeps in the day, and the whole night he keeps awake and keeps us also awake, so he is driving me mad!”

I inquired as to what the phenomenon was. The man was a great doubter, an untrusting man. He told me, ”I cannot sleep in the night because everybody is asleep. If something happens to me, then who is there to take care? I sleep in the day because the children are awake, my wife is awake, the neighbors are awake, the whole world is awake. If something happens to me it can be taken care of. If I die in the night, then...? If I stop breathing in the night, then...?” He was a madman.

But that is exactly what is creating insomnia in the West. People think they cannot fall asleep, that something has gone wrong in their bodies. Nothing has gone wrong in their bodies. Their bodies are as healthy as ever, in fact, more healthy than ever. But something has gone so deeply into their

minds: that they have to DO everything. And sleep cannot be done, that is not part of doing. Sleep has to be allowed. You cannot do it, it is not an act; sleep comes, it happens. And the West has forgotten completely how to let things happen, how to be in a let-go, so sleep has become difficult. Love has become difficult. Orgasm has become difficult. Life is so tense and strained that there seems to be no hope, and man asks again and again ”What to live for? Why go on living?” The West is on the verge of committing suicide. That suicide-moment is coming closer and closer.

The East has succeeded in relaxing too much, in being in a let-go too much. It has become very lazy. People go on dying, starving - and they are happy with it, they are not worried about it, they trust God. They adjust to all kinds of ugly situations. They never change anything. They are good sleepers, and they have a certain calm and quietude about them, but their lives are almost like vegetating. Millions of people die every year in the East just because of hunger. Neither do they do anything, nor does anybody else bother about it - ”It must be the will of Allah!”

This Sufi saying wants to create the third type of man, the real man: who knows how to do and who knows how not to do; who can be a doer when needed, can say ”Yes!”, and who can be passive when needed and can say ”No”; who is utterly wakeful in the day and utterly asleep in the night; who knows how to inhale and how to exhale; who knows the balance of life.

TRUST IN ALLAH BUT TETHER YOUR CAMEL FIRST.

This saying comes from a small story.

A Master was traveling with one of his disciples. The disciple was in charge of taking care of the camel. They came in the night, tired, to a caravanserai. It was the disciple’s duty to tether the camel; he didn’t bother about it, he left the camel outside. Instead of that he simply prayed. He said to God, ”Take care of the camel,” and fell asleep.

In the morning the camel was gone - stolen or moved away, or whatsoever happened. The Master asked, ”What happened to the camel? Where is the camel?”

And the disciple said, ”I don’t know. You ask God, because I had told Allah to take care of the camel, and I was too tired, so I don’t know. And I am not responsible either, because I had told Him, and very clearly! There was no missing the point. Not only once in fact, I told Him thrice. And you go on teaching ’Trust Allah’, so I trusted. Now don’t look at me with anger.”

The Master said, ”Trust in Allah but tether your camel first - because Allah has no other hands than yours.”

If He wants to tether the camel He will have to use somebody’s hands; He has no other hands. And it is your camel! The best way and the easiest and the shortest, the most short, is to use your hands. Trust Allah. Don’t trust only your hands, otherwise you will become tense. Tether the camel and then trust Allah.You will ask, ”Then why trust Allah if you are tethering the camel?” - because a tethered camel can also be stolen. You do whatsoever you can do: that does not make the result certain, there is no guarantee. So you do whatsoever you can, and then whatsoever happens, accept it. This is the meaning of tether the camel: do whatever is possible for you to do, don’t shirk your responsibility, and then if nothing happens or something goes wrong, trust Allah. Then He knows best. Then maybe it is right for us to travel without the camel.

It is very easy to trust Allah and be lazy. It is very easy not to trust Allah and be a doer. The third type of man is difficult - to trust Allah and yet remain a doer. But now you are only instrumental; God is the real doer, you are just instruments in His hands.

And you ask: ”I LOVE THIS SUFI SAYING BUT I DON’T KNOW WHO OR WHAT THE CAMEL IS.”

It depends on the context. The content of the camel will be there, but the context will be different. Each day it happens: you could have done something but you didn’t do it, and you are using the excuse that if God wants it done, He will do it anyhow. You do something and then you wait for the result, you expect, and the result never comes. Then you are angry, as if you have been cheated, as if God has betrayed you, as if He is against you, partial, prejudiced, unjust. And there arises great complaint in your mind. Then trust is missing.

The religious person is one who goes on doing whatsoever is humanly possible but creates no tension because of it. Because we are very, very tiny, small atoms in this universe, things are very complicated. Nothing depends only on my action; there are thousands of criss-crossing energies. The total of the energies will decide the outcome. How can I decide the outcome? But if I don’t do anything then things may never be the same. I have to do, and yet I have to learn not to expect. Then doing is a kind of prayer, with no desire that the result should be such. Then there is no frustration. Trust will help you to remain unfrustrated. and tethering the camel will help you to remain alive, intensely alive. And the camel is not a fixed entity; it is not the name of a certain entity. It will depend on the context.

The town was in an uproar. An inmate of the local lunatic asylum had escaped and had raped two women. Everybody was horrified.

Late that afternoon the local newspaper’s headline ran: ”NUT BOLTS AND SCREWS”.

Now if you read the headline alone you will never know the meaning of it - ’nut bolts and screws’. You will have to read the whole story; the meaning will depend on the context.

Unfortunately, the lives of most people reflect the insight in the following exchange between two businessmen:

”It is remarkable! You have been in the market for only six months and you end up with a million dollars? How did you do it?”

”Ah,” the response was, ”it’s very easy. I started with two million.”

The camel is not a fixed entity. You will have to look into the whole context; it will go on changing. But the saying is of immense value: it is the Sufi approach to create the third man.

The sixth question:

Question 5

WHAT IS THE LAW OF KARMA?

It is not in fact a law, because there is nobody behind it as a lawgiver. On the contrary, it is intrinsic to existence itself. It is the very nature of life: whatsoever you sow, you reap.But it is complex, it is not so simple, it is not so obvious.

To make it more clear, try to understand it in a psychological way, because the modern mind can understand only if something is explained in a psychological way. In the past, when the law of karma was talked about - when Buddha talked about it and Mahavira talked about it - they had used physiological, physical analogies. Man has gone far away from that, man has moved far away from that. Now man lives more in the psychological, so this will be helpful.

Every crime against one's own nature, every one, without exception, records itself in our unconscious - what the Buddhists call ALAYAVIGYAN, the storehouse of consciousness - EACH crime.

And what is a crime? It is not because the court of Manu says it is a crime, because that court is no more relevant; not because the Ten Commandments say it is a crime, that too is no more relevant; not because a certain government says it is a crime, because that goes on changing. Something is a crime in Russia and the same thing is not a crime in America. Something is a crime according to the Hindu tradition and the same thing is not a crime according to the Mohammedan tradition. Then what is crime? There has to be a universal definition for it.

My definition is: that which goes against your nature, that which goes against your self, your being, is a crime. And how to know that crime? Whenever you commit that crime it records in your unconsciousness. It records in a certain way: it records and starts giving you a feeling of guilt. You start feeling yourself despised by yourself, you start feeling yourself unworthy, you start feeling yourself not as you should be. Something inside you becomes hard, something closes inside you. You are no more as flowing as you have been before. Something has become solid, frozen; that hurts, brings pain, and brings a feeling of unworthiness.

Karen Horney has a good word to describe this unconscious perceiving and remembering. She says "It registers". I liked it... it registers. Everything that you do registers itself automatically. If you have been loving it registers that you are loving; it gives you a feeling of worth. If you have been hateful, angry, destructive, dishonest, it registers and gives you a feeling of unworthiness, a feeling of being something below human, a feeling of inferiority. And whenever you feel unworthy you feel cut off from the flow of life. How can you flow with people when you are hiding something? Flow is possible only when you expose yourself, when you are available, TOTALLY available.

If you have been cheating your woman and seeing another woman, you cannot be with your woman totally. It is impossible, because it registers: deep in your unconscious you know that you have been dishonest, deep in your unconscious you know that you have betrayed, deep in your unconscious you know that you have to hide it, that you are not to reveal it. If you have something to hide, if you have something to keep secret from your beloved, there will be distance - the bigger the secret, the bigger the distance will be. If there are too many secrets then you are completely closed. You cannot relax with this woman, and you cannot allow this woman to relax with you because your tenseness creates tenseness in her, her tenseness makes you even more tense, and it goes on, creating a vicious circle.

Yes, it registers in our books, in our beings. Remember, there are no books which God is keeping: that was an old way of saying the same thing. Your being is the book! Whatsoever you are and whatsoever you do is constantly being registered. Not that there is somebody writing it; it is a natural phenomenon. If you have been lying it is registered that you are lying, and now you have to protect those lies, and to protect one lie you will have to tell one thousand lies, and again to protect those one thousand lies you will have to go on and on and on. You become, by and by, a chronic liar. Truth becomes impossible for you, because to tell one truth will be dangerous now.

See how things go together: if you tell one lie then many lies are invited - the same attracts the same - and now truth is unwelcome, because the darkness of the lies will not like the light of truth. So even when your lies are not in any danger of being exposed you will not be able to speak truth. If you speak one truth, many other truths are invited - the like attracts the like. If you are naturally truthful it is very difficult to lie, even once, because all that truth protects you. And this is a natural phenomenon. There is no God keeping a book. You are the book. You are the God, your being is the book.

Abraham Maslow says, ”If we do something we are ashamed of, it registers to our discredit. And if we do something good, it registers to our credit.” You can watch it, you can observe it.

The law of karma is not some philosophy, some abstraction. It is simply a theory which explains something true inside your being. The net result: either we respect ourselves, or we despise and feel contemptible, worthless and unlovable.

Every moment, you are creating yourself; either a grace will arise in your being or a disgrace: this is the law of karma. Nobody can avoid it. Nobody should try to cheat on karma, because that is not possible. Watch... and once you understand it things start changing. Once you know the inevitability of it you will be a totally different person.

And the last question:

Question 6

WHAT IS INTENSITY?

It is important, because it is only through intensity that one arrives. When all your desires, when all your passions, fall and become one flame, it is intensity. When there is only one left inside you and your total being supports that one, it is intensity.

It is exactly what the word says: in tensity. The opposite word is ex tensity: you are spread out, you have a thousand and one desires, many fragmentary desires, one going to the north, one going to the south. You are being pulled apart. You are not one, you are a crowd. And if you are a crowd you will be miserable, if you are a crowd you will never feel any fulfillment. You don’t have any center. Intensity means creating a center in yourself.

There are two words which are significant to understand. One is ’centrifugal’: it means arrows moving from the center going in different directions, extroversion. Small pieces, small parts of your being flying all over the place, in all directions, in all possible directions: that is centrifugal. That’s

how people are - they are centrifugal. Another word is 'centripetal': when all the arrows are coming towards the center, when all the fragments are joined together. In the first you are falling apart, you are in a kind of de-centering. In the second you are falling together, a kind of integration arises. You are getting centered, concentrated IN: that is the meaning of intensity.

Sometimes you have known moments, in some danger... suddenly, in a dark night, you are faced with a naked sword, and you will know what intensity is. Suddenly ALL your thought will disappear, the crowd will become one. In that moment you will be one single individual.

The word 'individual' means indivisible. You will be undivided, you will be a unity - not only a union but a unity. You will be utterly one. The death facing you has created the intensity.

Or in love sometimes You fall in love and there is an intensity. All else becomes irrelevant, peripheral. Only the love is all and the whole of your heart.

When such intensity arises in meditation it brings you to God; or in prayer, then it brings you to God.

A story:

The scene was the last Olympic games. In the quarters of the American wrestling team stood John Mack, the trainer, warning his protege, Mike 'Bull' Flamm, about the forthcoming match.

"You know," Mack said, "the Soviet wrestler you are about to tackle, Ivan Katruvsky, is one of the greatest wrestlers in the world. But he really is not as good as you are. The only thing he's got that makes him a terror is his pretzel-hold. If he once gets a man in his pretzel-hold, that man is doomed. He has used the pretzel-hold on twenty-seven competitors, and in each case his opponent gave up within ten seconds.

"So, listen to me, Bull, you have got to be damned careful. Never let him get you in that pretzel-hold. If he once clamps you in it, you're a goner!"

Bull listened carefully to Mack's instructions on how to avoid that crippling grip of Ivan's.

For the first three minutes of the bout, neither the American nor the Russian could gain an advantage. The crowd was on edge.

Then, suddenly, pandemonium broke loose - Bull Flamm had fallen into the clutches of Ivan's pretzel-hold and was moaning in agony. Mack knew the match was lost, and he left the arena in deep gloom. Down the corridor, the echoes of Bull's anguished cries still reached him.

And then, as Mack was about to enter his quarters, he heard an enormous shout arise from the stadium, a cheer the likes of which he had never heard in all his long experience. The stands were in absolute uproar. From the shouts, Mack knew that Bull had won the match, but he couldn't understand it. What could have caused the unthinkable turnabout?

A minute later Flamm came trotting into the American dressing room. His trainer threw his arms around him, and said, "Bull, how in hell did you ever get out of that pretzel-hold?"

”Well,” answered Flamm, ”he twisted me into such shapes that I never felt such agony in my life. I thought my bones were going to break. And as I was just about to faint I saw two balls hanging in front of me. With one desperate lunge, I bit those balls. Well, Mack, you can’t imagine what a man is capable of when he bites his own balls.”

CHAPTER 3

The Journey is the Goal Itself

23 February 1978 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:

Question 1

ONE DAY YOU EMPHASIZE BEING MATURE, ANOTHER DAY YOU SAY ”BE LIKE A CHILD.” IF I ADOPT A MATURE ATTITUDE, I FEEL MY CHILD IS REPRESSED AND STARVED FOR EXPRESSION. IF I LET MY CHILD DANCE, SING, THEN ALSO CHILDISH ATTITUDES COME UP, LIKE CLINGING TO A LOVE-OBJECT. WHAT TO DO?

Prabhu Maya, being mature does not mean adopting a mature attitude. In fact, adopting a mature attitude will be one of the greatest barriers to becoming mature.

Adoption means something imposed. Adoption means something cultivated, practiced. It is not arising out of you. It is a mask, a painted face; it is not your real being. That's what everybody has been doing. That's why on the earth people only appear to be mature - they are not, they are utterly immature - deep down, the adopted attitudes. They remain childish. Their maturity is only skin-deep, or not even that much. Scratch any man a little bit and you will find a childishness arising out of him. And not only the so-called ordinary people - scratch your saints and you will find immaturity arising. Or, scratch your politicians and your leaders, go and just watch any parliament of the world, and you will never see any other gathering of so many immature and childish people together.

Man has been deceiving himself and others. If you adopt, you will be false, pseudo. I have not been telling you to adopt anything. Be! Adoption is a barrier to being. And the only way to be is to start

from the very beginning. Because your parents have not allowed you in your childhood, so you are stuck somewhere. The mental age of the so-called normal people is not more than between ten and thirteen years - not even fourteen! And you may be seventy or eighty, but your mental age remains stuck somewhere before you became sexually mature. The moment a person becomes sexually mature, at thirteen or fourteen, he is sealed forever. Then he goes on becoming false, and more false. One falsity has to be protected by other falsities, one lie has to be defended by other lies. And then there is no end to it. You become just a heap of rubbish; that's what personality is. Personality has to be dropped, only then does individuality arise. They don't mean the same thing. Personality is just a showcase thing; it is exhibition, it is not reality.

Individuality is your reality, it is not a show-thing. One can dig as deeply as one wants into you and he will find the same taste. Buddha is reported to have said, "You taste me from anywhere and you will find the same taste, just as you taste the ocean from ANYWHERE and you will find it salty." Individuality is one whole. It is organic. Personality is schizophrenic: the center is something and the circumference is something else, and they never meet, and they are not together. Not only do they never meet, not only are they different, they are diametrically opposed to each other, they are in constant fight.

So the first thing to understand: never adopt a mature attitude. Either BE mature or BE immature. If you are immature then be immature. By being immature you will be allowing growth. Then let the immaturity be there; don't be false, don't be insincere about it. If you are childish, so you are childish. So what? Be childish. Accept it, go with it. Don't create a division in your being, otherwise you are creating the fundamental madness. You just be yourself.

Nothing is wrong with being childish. Because you have been taught that something is wrong in being childish you have started adopting attitudes. From your very childhood you have been trying to be mature, and how can a child be mature? A child is a child; he has to be childish.

But it is not allowed, so small children become diplomats - they start pretending, they start behaving in false ways, they become lies from their very beginnings. And the lie also goes on growing. And then one day you start searching for truth; then you have to go into the scriptures, and scriptures contain no truth at all. The truth is contained in your being, that is the real scripture. The Veda, the Koran, the Bible - they are in your consciousness! You are carrying all that is needed by you, it is a gift from God. Everybody is born with truth in his being; life IS truth. But you started learning lies.

Being with me, drop all lies. Be courageous. And of course you will feel a great fear arising in you, because whenever you drop the personality, your childishness, which has never been allowed, will surface. And you will feel afraid: "What! Am I going to be childish, at this point? When everybody knows that I am a great professor - or a doctor or an engineer - and I have a Ph.D. degree, and I am going to be childish?" The fear arises - the fear of public opinion, of what people will think.

That same fear has destroyed you from the very beginning. The same fear has been the poison: "What will my mother think? What will my father think? What will people think, the teachers and the society?" And the small child starts becoming cunning - he will not show his heart, he knows that will not be accepted by others. So he will create a face, a camouflage. He will show that which people WANT to see. This is diplomacy, this is being political. This is poison!

Everybody is political. You smile because it pays to smile, you cry because it is expected of you to cry. You say a certain thing because that makes things easy. You say to your wife ”I love you” because that keeps her quiet. You say to your husband, ”I will die without you, you are the only person in my world, you are my life” - because he expects you to say it, not because you are feeling it. If you are feeling it, then it has beauty, then it is a real rose. If you are simply pretending, massaging his male ego, buttressing him because you have some ends to fulfill through him, then it is an artificial flower, a plastic flower.

And you are burdened with so much plastic: that is the problem. The world is not the problem. The so-called religious people go on saying, ”Renounce the world.” I say to you that the world is not the problem at all. Renounce the falsity - that is the problem; renounce the artificial - that is the problem. There is no need to renounce your family, but renounce all that pseudo-family that you have created there. Be true, authentic. Sometimes it will be very painful to be true and to be authentic. It is not cheap. To be untrue and inauthentic is cheap, convenient, comfortable. It is a trick, a strategy to protect yourself; it is an armor. But then you will miss the truth that you have been carrying in your soul. Then you will never know what God is, because God can only be known within you: first within, then without; first in, then out - because that is the closest thing to you, your own being. If you miss God there how can you see God in Krishna, Christ, Buddha? All nonsense. You cannot see God in Krishna if you cannot see God in yourself. And how can you see a God in yourself if you are continuously creating lies around you? The lies are so much that you have almost forgotten the way to your being. You are lost in the jungle of lies.

So the first thing to remember

You ask, ”ONE DAY YOU EMPHASIZE BEING MATURE, ANOTHER DAY YOU SAY ’BE LIKE A CHILD’.”

There is no contradiction in it. Just by being like a child you will become mature; that is the beginning of maturity. You were not allowed by your parents and by your society.

Sannyas is just an effort to undo the wrong that has been done to you by the society, to erase, to annihilate all that has been created around you by your society. Sannyas is a revolution. It is rebellion, rebellion against the so-called pseudo-life. It is risky, it is dangerous, because you will start falling apart from the pseudo-people around you. You will become a misfit. You will have troubles. Lies are very convenient.

Frederick Nietzsche has said that man cannot live without lies; and for about ninety-nine percent of people he is right. Why cannot man live without lies? - because lies function as buffers, shock absorbers. Lies function like a lubrication; you don’t go on colliding with people. You smile and the other smiles - this is lubrication. You may be feeling angry inside, you may be full of rage, but you go on saying to your wife ”I love you”. To express the rage is to get into trouble.

But remember, unless you can express your rage you will never know how to express your love. A man who cannot be angry cannot be loving either, because he has to repress his anger SO much that he becomes incapable of expressing anything else - because all things are joined together inside your being, they are not separate. There are no watertight compartments between anger and love; they are all together, mixed with each other. It is the same energy. If you repress anger you

will have to repress love too. If you express love, you will be surprised - anger is arising with it. Either suppress all or all will have to be expressed. You have to understand this arithmetic of your inner organic unity. Either be expressive or be repressive. The choice is not that you can repress anger and express love; then your love will be false because it won't have any heat, it won't have the quality of warmth. It will just be a mannerism, a MILD phenomenon, and you will always be afraid in moving deeper into it.

People only pretend to love because they are expected to love. They love their children, they love their wife or husband, their spouses, their friends, because they are expected to do certain things. They fulfill these things as if they are duties. There is no celebration in them. You come home and you pat your child's head just because that is expected, just because that is the thing to do, but there is no joy in it - it is cold, it is dead. And the child will never be able to forgive you, because a cold pat on the head is ugly. And the child feels embarrassed, you feel embarrassed.

You make love to your woman but you never go far into it. It can take you really far out, it can take you to the ultimate bliss, you can dissolve into it. But if you have never allowed your anger and you have never been dissolved in your anger, how can you allow love to dissolve you? And it has happened many times - you will be surprised - that a lover has killed the woman because he allowed his love and then suddenly the anger came. It is a well known fact that many times a lover has simply killed the woman, suffocated her. And he was not a murderer; the society is responsible. He simply dared too much and went too deeply into love. When you go too deep you become wild, because your civilization is on the surface. Then anger arises, then all that is hidden inside you arises, and then you are almost mad.

To avoid that madness you make love in a very superficial way. It is never a tremendous phenomenon. Yes, people are right when they say that it is just like a sneeze: it relaxes tensions, it relieves you of a certain energy that was getting heavy on you. But this is not the real picture of love. Love has to be ecstasy - not like a sneeze, not just a release but a realization, a liberation. Unless you know love as a liberation, as ecstasy, as SAMADHI, YOU have not known love. But that is possible only if you are not pseudo, if you have been authentic in everything - if you have allowed anger, if you have allowed laughter, if you have allowed tears, if you have allowed all; you have never been a preventive force, you have never been holding anything, you have never been controlling; if you have lived a life of uncontrol. And remember, by uncontrol I do not mean a life of licentiousness. The life of uncontrol can be of great discipline, but the discipline is not imposed from the outside. It is not an adopted attitude. The discipline comes from your own inner experiences. It comes from the encounter with all the possibilities of your being. It comes by experiencing all the aspects, it comes by exploring all the dimensions. It comes out of understanding. You have been in anger and you have understood something in it: that understanding brings discipline. It is not control. Control is ugly, discipline is beautiful.

The word 'discipline' basically means capacity to learn, hence the word 'disciple'. It does not mean control; it means to be capable of learning, to be open to learn. A disciplined man is one who goes on learning through life experiences, who goes into everything, unafraid, who risks, who explores and adventures, who is always ready to go into the dark night of the unknown, who does not cling to the known and who is always ready to commit mistakes, who is always ready to fall in a ditch and who is always ready to be laughed at by others. Only people who are courageous enough to be called fools are able to live and love and know and be.

Maturity comes through more and more, deeper and deeper experiences of life, not by avoiding life. By avoiding life you remain childish.

One thing more: when I say be like a child I don't mean be childish. A child has to be childish, otherwise he will miss that great experience of childhood. But whether you are young or old, childishness simply shows that you have not been growing. But to be like a child is a totally different phenomenon.What does it mean?

Jesus says again and again, "Unless you are like a child you will not enter into my kingdom of God." And so I say to you: You will not enter into my kingdom of God if you are not like a child. What does he mean by 'like a child'? He means many things. One, the child is always total. Whatsoever the child is doing, he becomes absorbed in it, he is never partial. If he is collecting sea-shells on the beach, then ALL else simply disappears from his consciousness, then all that concerns him are the seashells and the beach. He is absorbed in it, utterly lost in it. That quality of being total is one of the fundamentals of being like a child. That is concentration, that is intensity, that is wholeness.

And the second thing: a child is innocent. He functions from a state of not-knowing. He never functions out of knowledge because he has none.

You always function out of knowledge. Knowledge means the past, knowledge means the old and the told, knowledge means that which you have gathered; and every new situation is NEW, no knowledge is applicable to it. I'm not talking about engineering or technology: there the past is applicable because a machine is a machine. But when you are behaving in a human atmosphere, when you are communicating with alive beings, no situation is a repetition of any other. Each situation is unique. If you want to function rightly in it you will have to function through a state of ignorance, like a child. Don't bring your knowledge into it, forget all knowledge. Respond to the new as new, don't respond to the new from the old. If you respond from the old you will miss: there will be no bridge between you and what is happening around you. You will always be late, you will always go on missing the train.

Anand Maitreya goes on dreaming again and again of a train, and he always misses it. He's rushing and running and reaches the station, and by the time he reaches, the train has left. And this is not only Maitreya's dream, this is the dream of millions of people. This is one of the commonest dreams. Why does this dream come again and again to millions of people on the earth? They ARE missing life. They are always late. There is always a gap. They try, but the bridge is never made. They cannot commune, they cannot get into anything, something hinders. What is it? It is knowledge that hinders.

I teach you ignorance.

And when I say be like a child I mean always remain learning, never become knowledgeable. Go on learning; learning is totally different. Knowledge is a dead phenomenon, learning is an alive process. And the learner has to remember this: he cannot function from the standpoint of knowledge.

Have you not watched and observed it? - little children learn so fast. If a child lives in a multi-lingual atmosphere he learns all the languages. He learns the language that the mother speaks, the father speaks, the neighbors speak - he may Learn three, four, five languages very easily, with no problem.

Once you have learned a language then it becomes very difficult to learn another language because now you be childish. A child has to be childish, otherwise he will miss that great experience of childhood. But whether you are young or old, childishness simply shows that you have not been growing. But to be like a child is a totally different phenomenon.What does it mean?

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on learning to the very end, even while he is dying. A buddha goes on learning to the very end. What makes a dog old? - knowledge makes a dog old.

Buddha remains young, Krishna remains young. We have not a single statue of Buddha which depicts him as old, or of Krishna which depicts him as old. Not that they never became old! Krishna lived up to the age of eighty, became very old, but something in him remained always young, childlike. He continued to function from the state of not-knowing.

So first, when I say be like a child I mean be total.

And the second thing is remain a learner, function from the state of not-knowing. That's what innocence is: to function from not-knowing is innocence.

And the third thing, and the last: a child has a natural quality of trust, otherwise he cannot survive. When the child is born he trusts the mother, trusts the milk, trusts that the milk will be nourishing him, trusts that everything is okay. His trust is absolute, there is no doubt about anything. He's not afraid of anything. His trust is so much that the mother is afraid because the child can go and start playing with a snake. His trust is so much that a child can go and poke his hand into the fire. His trust is so much; he knows no fear, he knows no doubting: that is the third quality.

If you can know what trust is, if you can learn again the ways of trust, then only will you know what God is, then only will you come to realize what truth is. This has to be understood.

Science depends on doubt. That's why the whole of education has become the education of doubt. Science DEPENDS on doubt, it cannot grow without doubt. Religion depends on trust, it cannot happen without trust. These are diametrically opposite directions.

Remember, if you bring trust into a scientific work you will miss the whole point. You will not be able to get ANYTHING, YOU will not be able to discover anything. Doubt is the methodology there. You have to doubt and doubt and doubt; you have to go on doubting until you stumble upon something which cannot be doubted, which is indubitable. Then only, in helplessness, you have to accept it, but still with a grain of doubt that tomorrow new facts may be arising and the whole thing will have to be dropped. So only for the time being Science never comes to any ultimate truth but only tentative truth, approximate truth. Only for the time being is it accepted as truth because who knows? - tomorrow researchers will find new facts, new data. So science comes only to hypotheses, tentative, arbitrary. What Newton had discovered has been thrown down the drain by Albert Einstein, and what he has discovered will be thrown by somebody else. In science, doubt is the methodology. Trust is not needed. You have to trust only when there is NO possibility to doubt, and that too, only tentatively, for the time being, in a kind of helplessness. What can you do? - because no doubt is possible. You have looked from all sides and all doubts are dissolved and a kind of certainty has arisen.

Religion is a diametrically opposite dimension. Just as in science doubt is the method, in religion trust is the method.

What does trust mean? It means that we are not separate from existence, that we are part of it, that this is our home, that we belong to it, that it belongs to us, that we are not homeless, that the

universe is a mothering universe! We can be children with the universe just as the child trusts that whenever the need arises the mother will come and take care - when he is hungry she will come and feed him, when he feels cold the mother will come and hug him and give warmth, love, care. The child trusts. All that he needs to do is whenever he is in some need he has to scream, cry so that the mother's attention is attracted towards him, that's all.

Religion says this universe is our mother or our father, hence these expressions. Jesus called God 'abba', which is far better than father. 'Father' is a formal word, 'abba' is informal. If you have to translate 'abba' rightly, it will be closer to daddy than to father. But to call God daddy looks a little absurd; the church won't allow. The church will say this is not right. But Jesus used to call him 'abba', which is daddy.

In fact, a prayer has to be informal Father looks so far away. It is no wonder that by calling God 'the Father' we have put Him far away, distant somewhere, in heaven. Daddy feels closer - you can touch Him, He is almost tangible, you can talk to Him.With a God-Father sitting somewhere high in the heavens, you can go on shouting and still you cannot trust whether you will be able to reach Him.

Religion is a childlike approach towards existence: the world becomes a mother or a father. You are not against nature, you are not fighting with nature. There is no fight, there is great cooperation. The fight seems to be stupid and absurd.

Doubt does not work in religious experience, just as trust does not work in scientific exploration. Science means exploring the without and religion means exploring the within. Science is the religion' of things, religion is the science of being. Just as you cannot see a flower through the ear; howsoever sensitive an ear you have, howsoever musical an ear you have, you cannot see a flower through the ear. The ear can only catch sounds; it has its limitations. If you want to see the color, the light, the form, you will have to look through the eyes. The eyes are so beautiful but they have their limitations - you cannot hear music through the eyes. Even the greatest music - Beethoven or Mozart - even the greatest music will not be able to penetrate the eyes. The eyes are deaf, you will have to hear through the ears.

Doubt is the door to things. Trust is the door to being. Only through trust is God known.

And remember, you can commit the fallacy in two ways. The so-called religious people have been fighting science, the church has been fighting science. That was a foolish fight because the church wanted that science should depend on trust. And now science is taking revenge: now science wants that religion should also depend on doubt, on skepticism, on logic.

Man is so foolish that he goes on repeating the same mistakes again and again. The church in the Middle Ages was stupid, now people who think they are scientists are doing the same stupidity again.

The man of understanding will say that doubt has its own world. You can use doubt as a method, but it has its limitations. And so has trust its own world, but it also has its limitations. There is no need to use trust to know about things, there is no need to doubt about the inner; then you are creating a mess. If trust were used for scientific exploration, science would not have been born at all. That's why in the East science has remained very primitive.

I have come across Indian scientists: even a scientist in India who may have all the education that is possible in the West, who may have won awards, or maybe even if he is a Nobel laureate, remains somewhere, deep down, unscientific, superstitious. He goes on trying in some ways - known or unknown to him, aware or unawares - to impose trust on the outside world. And the very very religious person from the West remains somewhere, deep down, doubtful. The West has explored the possibilities of doubt, and the East has explored the possibilities of trust. Both are different dimensions, they don't meet anywhere; the inner and the outer don't meet anywhere. You have to use both.

And I call that man a man of understanding who can use both: when working in a scientific lab he uses doubt, skepticism, logic; when praying in his temple, meditating, he uses trust. And he is free - he is neither bound by trust nor bound by doubt.

This is my approach for my sannyasins. Don't be bound by your ears or by your eyes, otherwise you will remain poor. You have got both! - so when you want to see use eyes, and when you want to listen close your eyes. It is not accidental that when listening to music people close their eyes. If you know how to listen to music you WILL close your eyes, because eyes are no longer needed.

So is it with doubt and trust. Trust is the quality of the child, these three qualities; the quality of being total, the quality of remaining ignorant in spite of knowledge, and the quality of trust. This is the meaning.

Childishness is a kind of sentimental emotional state. That is not needed for you. Every child has to be allowed to be childish, as every adult has to be allowed to be adultish, but an adult can also have the qualities of being a child. Childishness is not needed, that tantrum quality is not needed, that sentimentality is not needed. But maturity can cope perfectly well with the qualities of being like a child. There is no contradiction between them. In fact, you can become mature only if you ARE like a child.

"ONE DAY YOU EMPHASIZE BEING MATURE, ANOTHER DAY YOU SAY 'BE LIKE A CHILD.' IF I ADOPT A MATURE ATTITUDE, I FEEL MY CHILD IS REPRESSED AND STARVED FOR EXPRESSION. IF I LET MY CHILD DANCE, SING, THEN ALSO CHILDISH ATTITUDES COME UP, LIKE CLINGING TO A LOVE-OBJECT. WHAT TO DO?"

You allow it. Your childishness has remained unfulfilled. Let it come and let it be fulfilled - the sooner the better - otherwise it will go on clinging to you to your very end. Allow it expression and it will be gone. You simply pour it; and this is the place where you can do it easily and nobody will interfere with you.

Just a few days ago there was an old woman sannyasin, Shefali - she must be seventy - and she started feeling like a child, and she was very worried. And when I told her "You need not be worried, you be childish", she started playing with small children. Even the children were a little embarrassed: "What is the matter?" But soon they accepted. Children are very accepting: soon they forgot her age, and she enjoyed the trip tremendously. She got so much out of it that she came to me and told me, "My whole life has been a wastage!" She became REALLY a child again, full of wonder and awe, singing and dancing and playing, running after butterflies and collecting flowers and colored stones. It was a beautiful experience to see that old woman. Her face was transformed: it suddenly became luminous, a great grace descended on her.

You allow it. Once it is allowed it will have its time and will go, and it will leave you very much fulfilled. It is better to go into it right now than postpone it - because the more you postpone the more difficult it becomes - and then out of it you will find a childlike quality arising. Childishness will disappear. It will be temporarily there, then it will be gone and your child will be fresh and young. And after that child is attained you will start growing. Then you can become mature. You cannot mature with all the lies that you are carrying around yourself. You can mature only when you become truthful, when you become true.

The second question:

Question 2

IS IT POSSIBLE TO LIVE RELIGIOUSLY AND CONTINUE ON THE ROAD TO ENLIGHTENMENT WHILE LIVING IN A COUNTRY LIKE THE USA AND INVOLVING ONESELF IN A COMPETITIVE BUSINESS?

The question is from Alan Rudick.

What do you think? Can you become religious in India, in a country like India?

My own feeling is that if you want to become religious the USA is the best place, because it has succeeded in knowing, in having all that man has desired for centuries, and in that very success it has failed. That very success has become its failure.

It is very apparent that you can have all the money in the world and remain poor inside, that you can have all the gadgets, the latest, and yet remain unfulfilled. That fulfillment has to be sought in some other direction, in some other dimension. It is apparent in America, it is not so apparent in India. It cannot be so apparent in India - not at least in modern India. It was apparent once.

When Buddha lived, India was almost in the same situation as America is today. India was known in the world as a golden bird - it was! It was the richest country in those days. Religion blooms only when a country is affluent, never otherwise. Buddha was the by-product of that affluence, because only in affluence do your hopes disappear. You become hopeless. There is no way outside anymore. You have seen the whole way, to the very end; there is nothing. Eyes start turning inwards automatically. It is not an accident that a poor country starts thinking of communism, not of religion.

In India if you want to be politically powerful you have to go on shouting slogans about socialism, communism, and things like that. You never hear any slogan about religion. Why? In a religious country why don't politicians exploit religion? - they know that nobody wants religion, people are fed-up with religion. People are not religious. Traditionally they appear religious but they are not religious. They are hungry, they are starved, they don't have shelter, they don't have food, they don't have clothes. Their basic needs are not fulfilled; what to say about God?

There is a hierarchy of needs. The physical needs are basic: unless they are fulfilled you will not be able to know of psychological needs. A hungry man will not be interested in Beethoven, or in Shakespeare, or in Leonardo da Vinci. A hungry man is interested in food - and it is natural, nothing is wrong in it. A hungry man is interested in how to feed the body and how to survive.

When the question is of survival who bothers about classical music? But when your hunger is satisfied, your body is warm, you have a house to live in, suddenly you start becoming interested in new things, things in which you had never been interested - in music, in poetry, in art, in philosophy. These are psychological needs. You start thinking great things. The body is satisfied, the mind says ”Now I can also have my needs fulfilled.”

When the mind-needs are fulfilled - when you have listened to all kinds of music and you have danced all kinds of dances, and you have gone deep into philosophy, art, poetry, sculpture, architecture, when you have seen all these things and you are satisfied, saturated - the third kind of need arises: that is religion. That is the God-need, the spiritual need. That is the highest need.

If a hungry man is interested in God, his God cannot be the true God. His God will only be a provider of food.

He will say to God, ”Give me my daily bread.” That is a poor man’s God. It is not strange that the Christian prayer has it: Give us our daily bread. Buddha could not have conceived, Krishna could not have conceived such a prayer: Give us our daily bread? Asking for bread? It looks profane. But Jesus himself was poor, belonged to the poor. He was teaching poor people, he had to create a God who is a provider.

It is not accidental that Jesus’ followers go on talking about Jesus’ miracles.What are those miracles? First, they are physiological: a blind man is given eyes, an ill person is healed; or miracles like Jesus’ turning stones into bread. Just think! These miracles say something. Jesus does not turn stones into sermons, but into bread; Jesus does not turn stones into music, but into bread; and he turns water into wine. Now we don’t have any miracles like that around Buddha. There are miracles, but they are totally different - the hierarchy. Buddha’s miracles are so different that you will be surprised.

A woman goes to Buddha: her child is dead and she is crying and she is weeping, and she is a widow and she will never have another child, and the only child is dead, and that was all her love and all her attention. She goes crying and weeping to Buddha. If she had gone to Christ then the miracle would have been that Christ would touch and bring the dead back, as he brought Lazarus back. What did Buddha do? Buddha smiled and said to her, ”You go into the town and just find a few mustard seeds from a house where nobody has ever died.” And the woman rushed into the town, and she went to each house. And wherever she went they said, ”We can give you as many mustard seeds as you want, but the condition will not be fulfilled because so many people have died in our house. And woman, don’t be mad! Buddha has played a trick on you. You will not find a single house on the whole earth.”

But she hoped, ”Maybe... who knows? There may be some house that has not known death.” And she went around and around the whole day. By the evening a great understanding had dawned on her: ”Death is part of life; it happens. It is not something personal, it is not something like a personal calamity that has happened to me.”With that understanding she went to Buddha.

He asked, ”Where are the mustard seeds?” And she smiled... and she said, ”You did it!” She fell at his feet and said, ”Initiate me. I would like to know that which never dies. I don’t ask for my child back, because even if he is given he will die again. So what is the point? Teach me something so that I can know inside myself that which never dies.”

Now this is a totally different story. Jesus' miracle looks more miraculous because the earth was still poor. Can't you see the point? The East is turning Christian and the West is turning Buddhist. The more the West becomes rich the more Buddhist it will be. The new Christians are born in the East - poor tribes, primitive tribes, untouchables, the downtrodden. To them, Jesus has appeal. They would like somebody to turn stones into bread, they are hungry. What have they to do with Buddha? Buddha seems too aristocratic, talks about great things which make no sense to the poor and the hungry.

In the Second World War a miracle happened: Japan from the East, fought with America. That was the first great encounter between East and West in war. And what happened? Now Los Angeles has moved to Japan and all Buddhist Zen centers have moved to America. This is a miracle! If you want to find Zen you will have to go to America. Don't go to Japan; people will think you are stupid: "Zen? Have you gone mad?" "You don't belong to this century," they will think. "You are not contemporary."

If you want to find Zen centers, they are flourishing in America. But if you want better car technology, better radios, better watches, go to Japan.

This has been happening all the time, down the ages, through the ages. There is a hierarchy: Japan is interested in better cars, better radios, better television; America is fed-up with the telly!

Just a few days ago, in one university, they purchased a brand new Cadillac and burned it! Very symbolic People are fed-up with the cars, people are fed-up with gadgets. People want something higher. Jesus will not be relevant anymore, only Buddha can be relevant. Jesus' miracles will seem very small because science can do those miracles. Buddha's miracle will seem very very great because science cannot do it.

And you ask me, "CAN A MAN BE RELIGIOUS IN THE USA?"

Where else? America is the land where religion has a future. In India, in China, religion has no future. Yes, religion has a past in India, but no future. America? - there is no past for religion, but there is a future. In the East the sun is setting, in the West the sun is rising. Don't be worried about that - about how you can be religious in America. You cannot be religious in India! India only pretends to be religious, and its religion remains a very very low kind of religion. I'm not talking about the past, remember; I'm not talking about the Upanishads and the Gita and the Buddha. In those days, India was America. Now, all that is gone.

And there is a very subtle point to be understood; this is how the wheel of history moves: whenever a country becomes very rich it becomes religious because then the highest need starts asserting, and whenever religion starts flowering the country will become poor, sooner or later. Just think: if hippies go on growing in America, and Zen centers go on growing in America, and my sannyasins go on growing in America, how long can America remain rich? Who will take care of the technology that makes America rich? People will meditate. They will not go to the universities, they will be dropouts. Who will bother about ordinary, mundane things, the worldly things? People will become navel-gazers. They will close their eyes and be quiet and satisfied and happy. They will not be scientists anymore.

This is how the wheel moves. First, a country is poor: it starts rushing towards technology, better science, better ways of living, higher standards of living; then one day, when it attains and comes to

a peak, suddenly it falls flat. Suddenly it comes to know that all effort has been in vain: ”We have not arrived anywhere, we have been chasing an illusion, we have been after a mirage”; suddenly people start dropping out. That’s what sannyas is.

Thousands of people dropped out of their world in Buddha’s time and followed Buddha. They had seen the illusoriness of worldly desire. They had arrived and found it lacking. But then the country started becoming poor. Sooner or later the country becomes poor; when people meditate too much the country becomes poor. People think of the other world, this world becomes poor. When the world becomes poor they start turning anti-religious. They become communists, they become ANYTHING else, but not religious. Again the wheel starts moving.

Now Japan has dropped Zen, has dropped religion, has dropped meditation; it is one of the MOST materialistic cultures. Now soon it will become rich; it is becoming rich. Once it has become rich And there will be rebellion against richness, and people will start thinking of the beauties of poverty, the beauties of non-possession, the beauties of being free of all attachment. People will start thinking how to become wanderers: ’Why bother to live in a house, caged? Why not have a tent and move, one day on this beach and another day on that beach?Why not enjoy the whole earth?”

This is the circle: poverty, technology, religion, poverty, technology, religion. This is how things move.

In India, if you remain too long, you will become communist.

You ask, ”IS IT POSSIBLE TO LIVE RELIGIOUSLY AND CONTINUE ON THE ROAD TO ENLIGHTENMENT” - the best place is America, and to be more particular, California-land - ”WHILE LIVING IN A COUNTRY LIKE THE USA AND INVOLVING ONESELF IN A COMPETITIVE BUSINESS?”

To be religious does not mean to renounce. It simply means to see what is the case. If you can see that competition is a game, there is no problem. Don’t be serious about it. Seriousness is the problem, competition is not the problem at all! Then it is a game. Enjoy it, but know it is a game. And whether you succeed or fail does not make much difference; it doesn’t matter, it is irrelevant. All that matters is that you enjoyed the game, that it was fun. The loser and the gainer both enjoyed the game. A kind of sportsmanship is needed, that’s all.

When you play cards the real thing is not to win, the real thing is to pass time. The real thing is to enjoy the game, the nuances of the game, the strategies of the game - that is the real thing. One is bound to be defeated, one is bound to succeed: that is not the point at all, that is not the target.

If you can live in the world and play it like a game, if you can live in all kinds of relationships and remember that the world is a GREAT drama - the stage is big and you cannot see where it begins and where it ends, but it is a drama, it is a very dramatic world - if you can remember that it is a drama, then there is no problem. Then you are simply playing a role but it will not create any worry in you, it will not create any strain or tension in you. You will play the game, and by the evening, when you come home, you will forget all about it.

If you are serious then there is trouble. But if you are serious, you can renounce the world, you can renounce competitive games and you can move to the Himalayas - sitting in the cave you will

remain serious. Then your meditation will take the flavor of seriousness and it will create strain. What will be the difference? You are on Wall Street, fighting tooth-and-nail, a cut-throat competition, murderous, and you are seriously in it, and worried day and night about whether you are going to succeed, whether you are going to make it or not! Then you will be sitting in a Himalayan cave, meditating SERIOUSLY, tooth-and-nail. Now you will not have any other throat to cut but your own, but it will remain cut-throat. Now you will be in competition with yourself, with your body, with your mind, and fighting and fighting. You will divide yourself and the fight will start. And now you will be worried about whether you are going to make it or not - ”When is this enlightenment going to happen?” - whether it is going to happen or not. And I would like to tell you: this will be more of a worry than being there on Wall Street, because very many people are known to have made it there, and in the Himalayan caves... very rarely, once in a while. You will be in more trouble.

My suggestion is: drop seriousness. Take life as a fun, take life as a play. Enjoy it, it is worth enjoying. It is a beautiful game, it is a great opportunity - to learn, to see, to understand. But don’t be serious.

Life is non-purposive. It is not going anywhere, it has no goal. The journey is the goal itself! That’s what I want my sannyasins to learn: the journey is the goal itself. Move non-seriously, playfully, and then whatsoever you are doing is meditation. Any act done playfully becomes meditative. Meditation is the quality that arises naturally when you are enjoying, non-seriously. Yes, playing cards can be meditative, gambling can be meditative, business can be meditative. Anything can be turned into meditation. The only thing that needs to be added is a non-serious playfulness. Then it doesn’t create any tension in you, no stress is produced. You remain relaxed. Learn how to remain relaxed and Wall Street is as good as any Himalayan cave.

And never be deceived by the so-called Indian spiritual saints who go on trotting around America and saying that ”India is the only religious land”. Don’t be deceived by them; India is not. India is one of the most materialistic lands on the earth right now. Its materialism is repressed, deep down repressed. It has a face of religiousness, but behind that face you will find nothing but materialism. Don’t be deceived by the face.

I’m not saying that there are not a few people who are religious; there are, but there are everywhere. Religion has nothing to do with the East and the West in fact. Religious people are everywhere. Just as poetry has nothing to do with East and West - poets are everywhere; painting has nothing to do with East and West - painters are every-where; singing has nothing to do with East and West - singers are everywhere; loving has nothing to do with East and West; so with religiousness - religious people are everywhere. They are very few, that is true; it is very difficult to find them, that too is true, but no country has any monopoly. In India, if you watch deeply, if you observe deeply, you will be surprised.

Meditate on this small anecdote.

A young unsophisticated priest was walking through Times Square when a young lady approached him and asked, ”Would you like a blowjob? Ten dollars.” The priest did not answer but proceeded on his way.

A few blocks later another damsel sauntered up to the priest and sweetly inquired, ”How about a blowjob, Father? Ten bucks.” Again the priest said nothing.

When he reached his church the priest encountered a nun and asked her, ”Say, sister, what is a blowjob?”

She looked him straight in the eye and said, ”Ten dollars!”

You just try to look straight in the Indian eye, and you will find ten dollars! They go on talking against money, but all their talk against money is money-oriented. They go on talking against sex, but that talk is just a symbol of their repressed sexuality. Beware of this phoniness. India is one of the most phony lands in the world today.

And the last question:

Question 3

TRUTH IS ONE, YOU SAY. THEN WHY ARE THERE SO MANY RELIGIONS?

Truth is one, but interpretations are many and can be millions. Truth is one, but the people who see truth are different. Their eyes give different angles.

Christ has his own unique personality, as Krishna has. When Christ looks at the truth the truth reflects in his eyes; that becomes Christianity. When Krishna looks at the truth, truth reflects in his eyes, and that becomes Hinduism. Hinduism is not direct truth. Christianity is not direct truth. They have come via unique persons, and the unique person’s uniqueness is always reflected in it. When Buddha comes to truth, truth becomes Buddhist, has to become; it takes the color of Buddha. When you will come to see the truth, there will be a meeting of you and the truth. The truth will transform you and you will transform the truth, and the ultimate result will be a cross-breeding between you and truth. Then the Bible will be different from the Upanishads, and Tao Te Ching will be different from Dhammapada. It is the meeting of the individual with the whole, but the individual brings his uniqueness.

When a painter comes into the garden and looks, he sees thousands of colors that you are never aware of. He sees many greens, not one green; different shades of green. He has a trained eye to see color. When you see, you just see trees are green; your eyes are not trained for it. When a poet comes he will sing a song about the trees, the painter will paint a painting of the trees, and the song and the painting will be different. Although they both happen in the same garden, they both happened through the same garden, interpretations are bound to be different.

Truth is one and religiousness is one, but the moment it descends on the earth it takes a form. That form is going to be different. If we understand this then there will be no fight between forms; all those forms will be accepted. In fact the world is richer because there is Christianity and Buddhism and Taoism and Hinduism and Jainism - the world is far richer. Just think of a world which is only Christian! Just think of a world which is only Buddhist! It would be a poor world, it would not have variety. Truth would suffer.

Listen to this anecdote:

At a bar in Paris an American was drinking with three Frenchmen. ”Tell me,” he asked, ”what is SANG-FROID? Oh, I know that if you translate it, it means COLD BLOOD, but I would like to know the connotation of that particular term.”

”Well,” answered one Frenchman, ”let me try to explain. Suppose you have left your home - presumably on a business trip - and you come home unexpectedly. You find your wife in bed with your best friend. You do not get emotional, you do not get unduly upset. You smile at both of them, and you say, ’Pardon the intrusion.’ Well, that is what I would call SANG-FROID.”

Another of the Frenchmen standing by broke in and said, ”Well, I wouldn’t exactly call that SANG-FROID. I think SANG FROID is just unusual tact. Suppose in the same situation you wave hello to your friend and your wife who are in bed, and with complete imperturbability you say, ’Pardon the intrusion, sir. Don’t mind me. Please continue. ’Well now, that’s what I would call SANG-FROID.”

”Ah!” broke in the third, ”well, maybe. But as for me, I’d go a step further in my definition. If under the same circumstances you said, ’Pardon the intrusion. Please continue!’ - and your best friend in bed COULD continue, well that’s what I would call SANG-FROID.”

Truth is one but interpretations are many. And it is good, and it is a more beautiful and a richer world because of that.

CHAPTER 4

Contrary to Expectation

24 February 1978 am in Buddha Hall

A WISE MAN, THE WONDER OF HIS AGE, TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES FROM A SEEMINGLY INEXHAUSTIBLE STORE OF WISDOM.

HE ATTRIBUTED ALL HIS KNOWLEDGE TO A THICK TOME WHICH WAS KEPT IN A PLACE OF HONOR IN HIS ROOM.

THE SAGE WOULD ALLOW NOBODY TO OPEN THE VOLUME.

WHEN HE DIED, THOSE WHO HAD SURROUNDED HIM, REGARDING THEMSELVES AS HIS HEIRS, RAN TO OPEN THE BOOK, ANXIOUS TO POSSESS WHAT IT CONTAINED.

THEY WERE SURPRISED, CONFUSED AND DISAPPOINTED WHEN THEY FOUND THAT

THERE WAS WRITING ON ONLY ONE PAGE.

THEY BECAME EVEN MORE BEWILDERED AND THEN ANNOYED WHEN THEY TRIED TO PENETRATE THE MEANING OF THE PHRASE WHICH MET THEIR EYES.

IT WAS: WHEN YOU REALIZE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CONTAINER AND THE CONTENT, YOU WILL HAVE KNOWLEDGE.

Man is not born perfect. He is born incomplete. He is born as a process. He is born on the way, as a pilgrim. That is his agony and his ecstasy too - agony because he cannot rest, he has to go ahead, he has always to go ahead. He has to seek and search and explore; he has to become, because his being arises only through becoming. Becoming is his being. He can only be if he is on the move.

Evolution is intrinsic to man's nature, evolution is his very soul. And those who take themselves for granted remain unfulfilled; those who think they are born complete remain unevolved. Then the seed remains the seed, never becomes a tree, and never knows the joys of spring and the sunshine and the rain, and the ecstasy of bursting into millions of flowers.

That explosion is the fulfillment, that explosion is what God is all about - exploding into millions of flowers.When the potential becomes the actual, only then is man fulfilled. Man is born as a potential; that is unique to man. All other animals are born complete, they are born as they are going to die. There is no evolution between their birth and their death: they move on the same plane, they never go through any transformation. No radical change in their life ever happens. They move horizontally, the vertical NEVER penetrates them.

If man also moves horizontally he will miss his manhood, he will not become a soul. That's what Gurdjieff meant when he used to say that all people don't have souls. It is very rare that a person has a soul. Now this is a very strange statement, because down the ages you have been told that you are born with a soul. Gurdjieff says you are born only with the potential of becoming a soul, not with the actual soul. You have a blueprint, but the blueprint has to be worked out. You have the seed, but you have to search for the soil, and the season, and the right climate, and the right moment to explode, to grow.

Moving horizontally, you will remain without a soul. When the vertical penetrates you, you become a soul. 'Soul' means the vertical has penetrated into the horizontal. Or, as an example, you can think of a caterpillar, the cocoon and the butterfly.

Man is born as a larva. Unfortunately, many die also as larvae, very few become caterpillars. A larva is static: it knows no movement, it remains stuck at one space, at one place, at one stage. Very few people grow into caterpillars. The caterpillar starts moving; dynamism enters. The larva is static, the caterpillar moves. With movement life is stirred. Again many remain caterpillars: they go on moving horizontally, on the same plane, in one dimension. Rarely, a man like Buddha - or Jalaludin Rumi or Jesus or Kabir - takes the final quantum leap and becomes a butterfly. Then the vertical enters in.

The larva is static; the caterpillar moves, knows movement; the butterfly flies, knows heights, starts moving upwards. The butterfly grows wings; those wings are the goal. Unless you grow wings and you become a winged phenomenon, you will not have a soul.

Truth is realized through three states: assimilation, independence and creativity. Remember these three words, they are very seminal. Assimilation - that is the function of the larva. It simply assimilates food, it is getting ready to become a caterpillar. It is arranging, it is a reservoir. When the energy is ready it will become a caterpillar. Before the movement, you will need a great energy to move. The caterpillar is assimilation, complete; the work done.

Then the second thing starts: independence. The larva is dropped. Now there is no need to stay in one place. The time has come to explore, the time has come for the adventure. The real life starts with movement, independence. The larva remains dependent, a prisoner, in chains. The caterpillar has broken the chains, starts moving. The ice has melted, it is no more frozen. The larva is a frozen state. The caterpillar is movement, river-like.

And then comes the third stage, of creativity. Independence in itself does not mean much. Just by being independent you will not be fulfilled. It is good to be out of the prison, but for what? Independence for what? Freedom for what?

Remember, freedom has two aspects: first, freedom FROM, and second, freedom for. Many people attain only to the first kind of freedom, freedom from - free from the parents, free from the church, free from the organization, free from this and that, free from all kinds of prisons. But for what? This is a very negative freedom. If you know only freedom from, you have not known real freedom, you have known only the negative aspect. The positive has to be known - freedom to create, freedom to be, freedom to express, to sing your song, to dance your dance. That is the third state: creativity.

Then the caterpillar becomes a winged phenomenon, a honey-taster, searches, discovers, explores, creates. Hence, the beauty of the butterfly. Only creative people are beautiful because only creative people know the splendor of life: they have eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts to feel. They are fully alive, they live at the maximum. They burn their torch from both ends. They live in intensity, they live in totality.

Or, we can use the metaphors used by Friedrich Nietzsche. He says that man's life can be divided into three successive metamorphoses of the spirit. The first he calls 'the camel', the second he calls 'the lion', the third he calls 'the child'. Very pregnant metaphors... the camel, the lion and the child.

Each human being has to draw upon and assimilate the cultural heritage of his society - his culture, his religion, his people. He has to assimilate all that the past makes available. He has to assimilate the past; this is what Nietzsche calls the camel stage. The camel has the power of storing up in his body enormous amounts of food and water for his arduous journey across the desert. And the same is the situation of the human individual - you have to pass across a desert, you have to assimilate the whole past. And remember, just memorizing is not going to help... assimilation. And also remember: the person who memorizes the past memorizes only because he cannot assimilate. If you assimilate the past you are free from the past. You can use it, but it cannot use you. You possess it, but it does not possess you.

When you have assimilated food you need not remember it. It does not exist separate from you: it has become your blood, your bone, your marrow; it has become you.

The past has to be digested. Nothing is wrong with the past. It is your past. You need not begin from ABC, because if each individual had to begin from ABC there would not be much evolution. That's why animals have not evolved. The dog is the same as it was millions of years ago. Only man is the evolving animal. From where does this evolution come? It comes because man is the only animal who can assimilate the past. Once the past is assimilated you are free from it. You can move in freedom and you can use your past. Otherwise you will have to pass through so many experiences; your life will be wasted.

You can stand on the shoulders of your fathers and forefathers and their fathers and their forefathers. Man goes on standing upon each man's shoulders, hence the height that man achieves. Dogs cannot achieve that, wolves cannot achieve that; they depend on themselves. Their height is their height. In your height, Buddha is assimilated, Christ is assimilated, Patanjali is assimilated, Moses is assimilated, Lao Tzu is assimilated. The greater the assimilation the higher you stand. You can look from the peak of a mountain, your vision is great.

Assimilate more. There is no need to be confined by your own people. Assimilate the whole past of all the peoples of the whole earth; be a citizen of the planet earth. There is no need to be confined by the Christian and the Hindu and the Mohammedan. Assimilate all! The Koran is yours, the Bible is yours, so is the Talmud, and so are the Vedas and the Tao Te Ching - all is yours. Assimilate all, and the more you assimilate the higher will be the peak on which you can stand and look far away, and distant lands and distant views become yours.

This Nietzsche calls the camel stage, but don't be stuck

there. One has to move. The camel is the larva, the camel is a hoarder. But if you are stuck at that staKe and always remain a camel, then you will not know the beauties and the benedictions of life. Then you will never know God. You will remain stuck with the past. The camel can assimilate the past but cannot use it.

In the course of his personal development the time comes when the camel has to become the lion. The lion proceeds to tear apart the huge monster known as 'thou shalt not'. The lion in man roars against all authority.

The lion is a reaction, a rebellion against the camel. The individual now discovers his own inner light as the ultimate source of all authentic values. He becomes aware of his primary obligation to his own inner creativity, to his inmost hidden potential. A few remain stuck at the stage of the lion: they go on roaring and roaring and become exhausted in their roaring.

It is good to become a lion, but one has still to take one more jump - and that jump is to become the child.

Now each of you has been a child. But those who know, they say the first childhood is a false childhood. It is like first teeth: they only look like teeth but they are of no use, they haVE to fall out. Then the real teeth are born. The first childhood is a false childhood, the second childhood is the real childhood. That second childhood is called the 'stage of the child' or the 'stage of the sage' - it means the same. Unless a man becomes utterly innocent, free from past, So free that he is not even against the past Remember it, the person who is still against the past is not REALLY free. He still has some grudges, some complaints, some wounds. The camel still haunts, the shadow of the camel still follows. The lion is there but still afraid somehow of the camel, fearful that it may come back.

When the fear of the camel is completely gone, the roaring of the lion stops. Then the song of the child is born.

I would like you to go into these three stages very deeply and very penetratingly, because they are of immense value.

The stage of the camel, assimilation, is just like a child in the womb who does nothing but assimilate, just eats the mother, gets bigger and bigger, is getting ready for the final plunge to move into the world. Right now there is no other work for the child: for nine months in the mother's womb he eats and sleeps, sleeps and eats. He goes on sleeping and eating; these are the only two functions. Even after the child is born, for months he will be just doing that - eating and sleeping. Slowly,

slowly sleeping will become less and less and eating will also become less and less. He is ready, he is ready to become an individual - and the moment the child becomes ready to be an individual, disobedience enters in. The child starts saying no, yes-saying by and by disappears. Obedience dies, disobedience is born.

The state of the camel is the state of assimilation. The camel does not know how to say no. The camel is not acquainted with the no. He has not heard the word and he has not tasted the joys of saying no. He only knows yes. His yes cannot be very deep, because without knowing no your yes cannot be very deep; it has to remain superficial. The man who has not known no, how can he really know yes? His yes will be impotent. The camel's yes is impotent. The camel does not know what is happening; he only goes on saying yes because that is the only word that he has been taught. Obedience, belief - these are the characteristics of the stage called 'camel'. Adam was in this state before he ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, and each human being passes through this state.

This is a state which is pre-mind and pre-self. There is no mind yet. The mind is growing but is not a complete phenomenon; it is very vague, ambiguous, dark, nebulous. The self is on the way but still is only on the way; there are no clear-cut definitions of it. The child does not know himself as separate yet. Adam, before he ate the fruit, was part of God. He was in the womb, he was obedient, a yea-sayer, but he was not independent. Independence enters only through the door of no; through the door of yes, only dependence. So in this stage of the camel, there is dependence, helplessness. The other is more important than your own being: God is more important, father is more important, mother is more important, society is more important, the priest is more important, the politician is more important. Except you, everybody is important; the OTHER is important, you are still not there. It is a very unconscious state. The majority of the people are stuck there; they remain camels. Almost ninety-nine percent of people remain camels.

This is a very sad state of affairs - that ninety-nine percent of human beings remain as larvae. That's why there is so much misery and no joy. And you can go on searching for joy but you will not find it, because joy is not given there, outside. Unless you become a child - the third stage is attained - unless you become a butterfly, you will not be able to know joy. Joy is not something given outside, it is a vision that grows inside you. It is possible only in the third stage.

The first stage is of misery and the third stage is of bliss, and between the two is the state of the lion - which is sometimes miserable and sometimes pleasant, sometimes painful and sometimes pleasurable.

At the stage of the camel you are parrots. You are just memories, nothing else. Your whole life consists of beliefs given to you by others. This is where you will find the Christians and the Mohammedans and the Hindus and the Jainas and the Buddhists. Go into the churches and the temples and the mosques and you will find great gatherings of camels. You will not find a single human being. They go on repeating, parrot-like.

I have heard a story:

The story is told of the medieval knight who attended a course at the local dragon-slaying school. Several other young knights also attended this special class taught by Merlin, the magician.

Our anti-hero went to Merlin the first day to let him know that he would probably not do well in the course because he was a coward and was sure he would be much too frightened and inept ever to be able to slay a dragon. Merlin said he need not worry because there was a magic dragon-slaying sword which he would give this cowardly young knight. With such a sword in hand there was no way that anyone could fail in slaying any dragon. The knight was delighted to have this official magic prop with which any knight, no matter how worthless, could kill a dragon. From the first field trip on, magic sword in hand, the cowardly knight slew dragon after dragon, freeing one maiden after another.

One day, toward the end of the term, Merlin sprung a pop quiz on the class which the young knight was attending. The students were to go out in the field and kill a dragon that very day. In the flurry of excitement as all the young knights rushed off to prove their mettle, our anti-hero grabbed the wrong sword from the rack. Soon he found himself at the mouth of a cave from which he was to free a bound maiden. Her fire-breathing captor came rushing out. Not knowing that he had picked the wrong weapon, the young knight drew back his sword in preparation for undoing the charging dragon. As he was about to strike he noticed that he had taken the wrong sword. No magic sword this, just your ordinary adequate-for-good-knights-only sword.

It was too late to stop. He brought down the ordinary sword with a trained sweep of his arm, and to his surprise and delight, off came the head of still another dragon.

Returning to the class, dragon's head tied to his belt, sword in hand, and maiden in tow, he rushed to tell Merlin of his mistake and of his unexplainable recovery.

Merlin laughed when he heard the young knight's story. His answer to the young knight was, "I thought that you would have guessed by now: none of the swords are magic and none of them ever have been. The only magic is in the believing."

The camel lives in the magic of believing. It works. It can work miracles. But the camel remains a camel; the growth is missing.

The people praying in the temples and the churches are under the influence of belief. They don't know what God is, they have never felt anything like that; they only believe. Their magic of belief goes on doing certain things to them, but that is all make-believe, a kind of dream-world. They are not out of the unconscious, out of their sleep. And remember, I am not saying that this stage is not necessary; it is necessary, but once it is complete one has to jump out of it. One is not here to remain a camel forever.

And don't be angry at your parents, or the teachers, or the priests, or the society, because they HAVE to create a kind of obedience in you - because only through obedience will you be able to assimilate. The father has to teach, the mother has to teach, and the child has to simply absorb. If doubt arises prematurely, assimilation will be stopped.

Just think of a child in the mother's womb who becomes doubtful - he will die - becomes doubtful of whether to partake of food from this woman or not, whether the food is really nourishing or not: "Who knows, it may be poisonous?" - whether to sleep for twenty-four hours or not, because this is too much, sleeping continuously for twenty-four hours, for nine months. If the child becomes a

And still, a day comes when doubt has to be little bit doubtful, in that very doubt the child wil die. imbibed, learned. Each thing has its owr season.

Listen to this beautiful poem by Carl Sandburg.

WHAT SHALL HE TELL THAT SON?

A FATHER SEES A SON NEARING MANHOOD.

WHAT SHALL HE TELL THAT SON?

”LIFE IS HARD; BE STEEL, BE A ROCK.”

AND THIS MIGHT STAND HIM FOR THE
STORMS,

AND SERVE HIM FOR HUMDRUM AND MONOTONY

AND GUIDE HIM AMID SUDDEN BETRAYALS

AND TIGHTEN HIM FOR SLACK MOMENTS.

”LIFE IS SOFT LOAM; BE GENTLE, GO EASY.”

AND THIS TOO MIGHT SERVE HIM.

BRUTES HAVE BEEN GENTLED WHERE LASHES FAILED.

THE GROWTH OF A FRAIL FLOWER IN A PATH UP

HAS SOMETIMES SHATTERED AND SPLIT A ROCK.

A TOUGH WILL COUNTS. SO DOES DESIRE.

SO DOES A RICH SOFT WANTING.

WITHOUT RICH WANTING NOTHING ARRIVES.

TELL HIM TOO MUCH MONEY HAS KILLED MEN

AND LEFT THEM DEAD YEARS BEFORE BURIAL;
AND QUEST OF LUCRE BEYOND A FEW EASY NEEDS

HAS TWISTED GOOD ENOUGH MEN

SOMETIMES INTO DRY THWARTED WORMS.

TELL HIM TIME AS A STUFF CAN BE WASTED.

TELL HIM TO BE A FOOL EVERY SO OFTEN
AND TO HAVE NO SHAME OVER HAVING BEEN A FOOL

YET LEARNING SOMETHING OUT OF EVERY FOLLY

HOPING TO REPEAT NONE OF THE CHEAP FOLLIES

THUS ARRIVING AT INTIMATE UNDERSTANDING

OF A WORLD NUMBERING MANY FOOLS.

TELL HIM TO BE ALONE OFTEN AND GET AT HIMSELF.

AND ABOVE ALL TELL HIMSELF NO LIES ABOUT HIMSELF,

WHATEVER THE WHITE LIES AND PROTECTIVE FRONTS

HE MAY USE AMONGST OTHER PEOPLE.

TELL HIM SOLITUDE IS CREATIVE IF HE IS STRONG
AND THE FINAL DECISIONS ARE MADE IN SILENT ROOMS.

TELL HIM TO BE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PEOPLE

IF IT COMES NATURAL AND EASY BEING DIFFERENT.

LET HIM HAVE LAZY DAYS SEEKING HIS DEEPER MOTIVES.

LET HIM SEEK DEEP FOR WHERE HE IS A BORN NATURAL.

THEN HE MAY UNDERSTAND SHAKESPEARE

AND THE WRIGHT BROTHERS, PASTEUR, PAVLOV,

MICHAEL FARADAY AND FREE IMAGINATIONS,

BRINGING CHANGES INTO A WORLD RESENTING CHANGE.

HE WILL BE LONELY ENOUGH

TO HAVE TIME FOR THE WORK

HE KNOWS AS HIS OWN.

Each father is faced with the problem: what to tell the son? Each mother confronts the problem: what to teach the daughter? Every teacher worries: what should be imparted to the new generation? The

past has much, many glories, many peaks of understanding, many conclusions which have to be imparted to the child.

In the first stage everybody has to be a camel, yea-saying, believing whatsoever is given, assimilating, digesting, but this is only the beginning of the journey, this is not the end.

The second stage is difficult. The first stage the society gives you; that's why there are millions of camels and very few lions. The society leaves you when you have become a perfect camel. Beyond that, the society cannot do anything. It is there that the work of the society-ends - of the school, the college, the university. It leaves you a perfect camel with a certificate.

A lion you have to become on your own, remember it. If you don't decide to become a lion, you will never become a lion. That risk has to be taken by the individual. That is a gamble. That is very dangerous too, because by becoming a lion you will annoy all the camels around you, and the camels are peace-loving animals; they are always ready to compromise. They don't want to be disturbed, they don't want any new thing to happen in the world, because all new things disturb. They are against the revolutionaries and the rebellious, and not about great things, mind you - not about Socrates and Christ; they are bringing great revolutions - the camels are afraid of such small things that you will be surprised.

I have heard

In December, 1842, Adam Thompson of Cincinnati filled the first bathtub in the United States. The news of Mr. Thompson's tub was quickly spread. Newspapers said that the new-fangled idea would ruin the democratic simplicity of the republic...

Mm, just think of it... a bathtub will ruin the integrity of the democratic republic.

... Doctors predicted rheumatism, inflammation of the lungs, etc. etc. The wise ones agreed that bathing in the winter time would result in the decline of the robust population. Philadelphia, the cradle of liberty, tried to put a ban on bathing from the first of November to the first of March; Boston in 1845 made bathing unlawful except on the advice of a doctor; Hartford, Providence, Wilmington, and other cities tried to block the bath habit with extra heavy water rates. The state of Virginia took a slap at bathing by placing a tax of thirty dollars a year on every bathtub brought into the state. But by 1922 there were manufactured 889,000 bathtubs a year. To think, in the lives of people still living, man did not even know that a bath was good for him, puts man in a class of absolute unreliability as to his judgement of thinking on any matter.

The camels are simply against ANYTHING new, it does not matter what. It may be just a bathtub and they will rationalize their antagonism.

In one section of ancient Greece it was long the custom that when a man proposed a new law in the popular assembly, he did so on a platform with a rope around his neck. If the law was passed they removed the rope, if it failed they removed the platform.

The lions are not welcome. The society creates every kind of difficulty for the lions. The camels are afraid of these people. They disturb their convenience, they disturb their sleep, they create worry. They create a desire in the camels to become lions - that is the real problem.

Why is Jesus crucified? His very presence... and many camels start dreaming of becoming lions, and that disturbs their sleep, and that disturbs their ordinary, mundane life.

Why is Buddha stoned? Why is Mahavir not allowed to enter into cities? Why is Mansur beheaded? These people disturb; they disturb their sleep, they go on roaring. Buddha has called his sermons 'The Lion's Roar'.

The first, the state of the camel, is given by the society. The second state has to be attained by the individual. In attaining it, you become an individual, you become unique. You are no more a conformist, you are no more part of a tradition. The cocoon is dropped: you become a caterpillar, you start moving.

The state of the lion has these characteristics: independence, no-saying, disobedience, rebellion against the other, against authority, against dogma, against scripture, against the church, against the political power, against the state. The lion is against everything! He wants to shatter everything and create the whole world anew, closer to the heart's desire. He has great dreams and utopias in his mind. He looks mad to the camels, because the camels live in the past and the lion starts living in the future. A great gap arises. The lion heralds the future, and the future can come only if the past is destroyed. The new can enter into existence only if the old ceases to exist and creates space for the new. The old has to die for the new to be. So there is a constant fight between the lion and the camel, and the camels are the majority. The lion happens once in a while, the lion is an exception - and the exception only proves the rule.

Disbelief is his characteristic, doubt is his characteristic. Adam eats the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge: mind is born, self becomes a defined phenomenon. The camel is non-egoistic, the lion is very egoistic. The camel knows nothing of the ego, the lion only knows the ego. That's why you will always find revolutionaries, rebellious people - poets, painters, musicians - are all very egoistic. They are bohemians. They live their life, they do THEIR thing. They don't care a bit about others. Let the others go to hell! They are no more a part of any structure, they become free from the structures. The movement, the lion's roar, is bound to be egoistic. They need a great ego to go into this.

In the East you will find more camels, in the West you will find more lions. That's why in the East to surrender seems so easy. For the Western mind surrender seems so difficult. But one thing has to be remembered: the Eastern mind finds it very easy to surrender; that's why his surrender is not of much value. He's already surrendered. He does not know how to say no, that's why he says yes. When a Western mind surrenders it is very difficult. It is a struggle for the Western mind to surrender, but when the Western mind surrenders there is great transformation, because the surrender has been hard, arduous, an uphill task. In the East the surrender is cheap, in the West it is costly. Only a few courageous people can afford it.

The East surrenders because there is no more possibility of becoming a lion. It feels very comfortable, easy to surrender, to become part of a mob, a mass. The West has created the ego. The West has paid more attention to the lion - doubt, disbelief, ego - but whenever the Western mind surrenders, there is really great transformation.

The Eastern mind surrenders, remains the camel. If the Western mind surrenders there is a

possibility for the 'child' to be born. When the lion surrenders he becomes the child; when the camel surrenders he remains the camel.

So I may appear paradoxical to you, but if you understand what I am saying it will not be very difficult and the paradox will not really look like a paradox. Each individual has to be taught the ego before he will be able to drop it. Each individual has to come to a very crystallized ego; only then is the dropping of any help, otherwise not.

The first state, of the camel, is unconscious. The second state, of the lion, is subconscious - a little higher than the unconscious. A few glimpses of the conscious have started coming in. The sun is rising, and a few rays are entering into the dark room where you are asleep. The unconscious is no more unconscious. Something is stirred in the unconscious; it has become subconscious. But remember, the change is not very great - from the camel to the lion - as it is going to be from the lion to the child. The change is a kind of reversion. The camel starts standing on its head and becomes the lion. The camel says yes, the lion says no. The camel obeys, the lion disobeys. The camel is positive, the lion is negative. It is to be understood that the camel has been saying yes so much and must have been denying the no - the no accumulates; and a point comes where the no wants to take revenge on the yes. The denied part wants to take revenge. Then the whole wheel turns - the camel turns upside-down and becomes the lion.

The difference between the camel and the lion is big, but both exist on the same plane. The cocoon is static at one place; the caterpillar starts moving, but on the same earth. Movement is born but the plane is the same. The first thing is given by the society: your being a camel is a gift of the society. Your being a lion will be a gift that you give to yourself. Unless you love yourself you will not be able to do it. Unless you want to become an individual, unique in your own right, unless you take the risk of going against the current, you will not be able to become a lion.

But if you understand the mechanism... in the very heart of the camel the lion is created. Again and again, saying yes and denying no, no goes on accumulating. And one day comes when one is fed-up with saying yes; just for the change one wants to say no. One is fed-up with the positive, the taste of it becomes monotonous; just for the change one wants to taste no.

That's how the camel, for the first time, starts having dreams of the lion. And once you have tasted the no - the doubt, the disbelief - you can never be a camel again, because it brings such liberty, such freedom.

The majority is stuck at the camel stage, the minority is stuck at the lion stage. The majority means the masses, and the minority means the intelligentsia. The artist, the poet, the painter, the musician, the thinker, the philosopher, the revolutionary - they are stuck at the second stage. They are far better than the camels, but the goal is not yet complete. They have not come home. The third stage is 'the child'.

Listen attentively: the first stage is given by the society, the second is given by the individual to himself. The third is possible only if the caterpillar comes close-by to a butterfly; otherwise it is not possible. How will the caterpillar ever think that he can fly on his own, that he can become a winged thing? It is not possible! It is impossible to think! It will be absurd, illogical. The caterpillar knows how to move, but to fly is just absurd.

I have heard about butterflies teaching the caterpillars that they can fly, and they object and they say, ”No. It may be possible for you, but it is not possible for us. You are a butterfly, we are only caterpillars! We only know how to crawl.” And one who knows only how to crawl, how can he imagine flying? That is a different dimension, an altogether different dimension - the vertical dimension.

From the camel to the lion, it is evolution. From the lion to the child, it is revolution. A Master is needed at that stage. The society can make you a camel, you yourself can make yourself a lion, but you will need a Master - a Buddha, a Christ, a Rumi - you will need a butterfly who has wings. Only with a winged phenomenon will you be able to start dreaming about wings. How can you dream about something that you have not known at all? Do you think that a very primitive tribe living somewhere in the Himalayas can dream of a car? They have not seen one, they cannot dream about it. The dream is possible only when you have seen something - when you have seen a Christ or a Buddha or a Bodhidharma, and you know that this happens. And these people look just like you, and still they are not like you. They have the same body, the same structure, and yet something from the unknown has penetrated their being. The beyond has come into them, the beyond is very very tangible there. If you approach them with sympathy and love you will be able to have a few glimpses of their inner sky. And once you have seen that inner sky you will start dreaming about it. A great longing will arise in you: how to become a winged phenomenon?

That is the infection that comes from the Master to the disciple. The third phenomenon happens through the Master. ’The child’ means creativity, interdependence.

The first stage, the camel, was dependence; the second stage was independence; but in innocence one comes to know that neither is there dependence nor is there independence. Existence is interdependence - all are dependent on each other. It is all one.

The sense of the whole is born: no I, no thou, no fixation with yes or no, no obsession either to say yes always or to say no always; more fluidity, more spontaneity; neither obedience nor disobedience, but spontaneity. Responsibility is born. One responds to existence, does not react out of the past, and does not react out of the future.

The camel lives in the past, the lion lives in the future, the child lives in the present, here-now. The camel is pre-mind, the lion is mind, the child is post-mind. The camel is pre-self, the lion is self, the child is post-self. That’s what the meaning of the state of no-mind is. Sufis call it FANA - the ego is gone, the other too. They are both together, you cannot have one without the other. I-thou are part of one energy; they both disappear.

The child simply is... ineffable, indefinable, a mystery, a wonder. The camel has memory, the lion has knowledgeability and the child has wisdom. The camel is either Christian, Hindu or Mohammedan, theist, the lion is atheist and the child is religious - neither theist nor atheist, neither Hindu nor Mohammedan nor Christian nor communist; just a simple religiousness, the quality of love and innocence.

Adam eats the fruit, becomes a lion. Adam, before eating the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, is the camel. And when Adam has vomited the fruit again, dropped knowledge, he is the child. That child means Christ. Christ says again and again to his disciples, ”Repent!” The word ’repent’ in Hebrew means return, go back; the Garden of Eden is still waiting for you. Vomit this apple of knowledge and the doors will be opened unto you.

The camel is Adam before eating the fruit, the lion is Adam after eating the fruit, and the child is Adam become Christ, returning back home. Buddha calls it NIRVANA, Jesus calls it the Kingdom of God. You can call it anything you like: Tao, DHAMMA, MOKSHA. Words don't mean much there; it is a wordless silence, a thoughtless innocence.

Now the story.

A WISE MAN, THE WONDER OF HIS AGE, TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES FROM A SEEMINGLY INEXHAUSTIBLE STORE OF WISDOM.

Each word has to be decoded.

A wise man Who is a wise man? - the child.

Wisdom does not mean knowledge. Knowledge is not wisdom, knowledge is a false coin, pseudo wisdom. It is borrowed, you have gathered it; it is dead. Wisdom is what has arisen in you, it has bloomed in you, it comes out of your own being and out of your own source; it is alive. Wisdom is knowing the truth on your own. Knowledge is collecting information from others who may have known, may not have known. Who knows? It is belief, it is memory, it is junk.

A wise man is one who has entered into God, who has penetrated the mystery of life, who has encountered reality. A wise man may not be knowledgeable, may be knowledgeable - that is irrelevant - but wisdom has nothing to do with knowledge. Jesus was not a man of knowledge; any other rabbi of his time was more knowledgeable than Jesus. Buddha was not a man of knowledge; any other Brahmin pundit was more knowledgeable than him. He knew nothing much about the Vedas but he was a man of wisdom. Knowledge comes through memory, wisdom comes through meditation. Knowledge is possible even to a machine. That's why computers are knowledgeable, but no computer can be wise. Have you ever heard of a wise computer? - knowledgeable, of course, more knowledgeable than man, more efficient, more skillful; less possibility of committing errors; very fast, quick, instant. You ask the question and the answer is there, but the answer will only be that which has been fed before to the computer. It can't be new, it can't be original, it can't be wise. It will not relate to you as a person, it will be simply. an answer to the question. Observe the difference.

If YOU come to me your question is less important, you are more important. I answer your question, in fact, to answer YOU; the question is secondary. But if you go ro a computer, to a pundit, to a scholar, you are irrelevant, the question has all the relevance. He answers the question. The man of knowledge answers the question, the man of wisdom answers the questioner. The man of knowledge will always be consistent. You ask, "Does God exist?" and the man of knowledge will always have a definite answer. If he believes yes, he will say yes. Who asks the questions will not make much difference, not at all.

Buddha was asked by a man one day, "Does God exist?" and Buddha said, "No." And the same day, in the afternoon, another man asked, "Does God exist?" and Buddha said, "Yes." And the same day, by the evening, a third man asked, "Does God exist?" and Buddha kept quiet. Now this can't be done by a computer. Either you know or you don't know. The computer simply knows the answer and supplies the answer. Why does Buddha behave differently with three people? His disciple, Ananda,

was very disturbed, he could not figure it out. Naturally, he had heard all three answers. In the night he asked Buddha, ”I will not be able to sleep. You just tell me why. The question was the same. Why did you answer differently? To one you said no, to another you said yes, to the third you didn’t say anything, you simply kept quiet. You remained silent and you closed your eyes. Why? The question was the same, exactly the same.”

Buddha said, ”But the questioners were different. I was answering the questioners. One was an atheist, he did not believe in God. He had come just to make his conviction stronger. He wanted me to say no so that his belief could become stronger - and I cannot help anybody’s belief. I have to destroy beliefs. To that man I said ’Yes, God is!’, because unless beliefs are loosened nobody comes to know.

”The other man was a theist, he believed in God. He had come to be supported by me. I’m not here to support anybody’s belief. I am here to destroy all beliefs so that mind can rise above beliefs into knowing. That’s why I had to say something else to him. I had to say no!

”And the third man was neither a theist nor an atheist, so yes or no was not needed. I had to keep quiet. I was telling him ’You become silent, and you will know. Just do what I am doing. Close your eyes and become silent and you will know.’ The question is such that it can’t be answered in a yes or no. The question is so profound that you can know only when you are profoundly silent. You will know only when the question has disappeared; then the answer will arise in your being.”

Now this is a wise man. This you can’t expect from a scholar, from a pundit, from a computer, from a machine.

A WISE MAN, THE WONDER OF HIS AGE...

And the wise man is always a wonder, because the wise man is indefinable. The wise man is mysterious. The presence of the wise man takes you on such faraway journeys, far-out journeys. The wise man helps your wonder to become stronger. He does not supply you knowledge. He destroys your knowledge and releases your wonder, makes you a child again, fills your being with wondering, with poetry, with mystery, with song.

A WISE MAN, THE WONDER OF HIS AGE, TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES FROM A SEEMINGLY INEXHAUSTIBLE STORE OF WISDOM.

And wisdom is inexhaustible. Knowledge is exhaustible, wisdom is inexhaustible - because to be wise means to be related to the infinite source of the whole. To be in God is to be wise. God is inexhaustible. The wise man is an ocean: you can take as much as you can, nothing is reduced, he remains as he was before. You cannot reduce the infinity. Knowledge is finite, it is only so much.

HE ATTRIBUTED ALL HIS KNOWLEDGE TO A THICK TOME WHICH WAS KEPT IN A PLACE OF HONOR IN HIS ROOM.

Why did he attribute his knowledge to a thick tome? - because of the camels. The camels wouldn’t understand the mysterious source of his wisdom. To make it understandable to them he had kept a big tome in his room and he used to tell them, ”All my wisdom comes from that book.”

That is understandable. If somebody says, ”My wisdom comes from the Vedas,” you understand; somebody says, ”My wisdom comes from the Old Testament,” you understand; from the Talmud, you understand; but somebody says ”My wisdom comes from nowhere” and suddenly there is misunderstanding. The camel cannot understand ’the nowhere’. The camel can understand only a certain visible source. He lives in the visible. He can understand the book, he cannot understand the heart. He can understand the theories about God but he cannot understand God Himself.

HE ATTRIBUTED ALL HIS KNOWLEDGE TO A THICK TOME WHICH WAS KEPT IN A PLACE OF HONOR IN HIS ROOM. THE SAGE WOULD ALLOW NOBODY TO OPEN THE VOLUME.

Naturally, because there was nothing in it. It was empty. It was kept very mysterious, nobody was allowed. It was guarded.

WHEN HE DIED, THOSE WHO HAD SURROUNDED HIM, REGARDING THEMSELVES AS HIS HEIRS, RAN TO OPEN THE BOOK, ANXIOUS TO POSSESS WHAT IT CONTAINED.

Look at the camels! The alive source was there, but they were not so interested in the alive source as they were interested in the book. There are millions of camels like that, who are interested in the book. They carry their Bible, they carry their Gita with themselves. They memorize their Gita. They go on repeating the same Gita again and again, they go on reading the same Gita every day. They believe in the book. Even Krishna may be there, but they will go on reading their book. They will tell Krishna, ”Don’t disturb us.” If Christ comes while you are reading the Bible you will say, ”Keep quiet. I am reading my book, come later on. This is not the time, I am praying.”

And don’t laugh; this is the situation. People believe in the book too much. The book becomes more important, the word becomes more important than the truth! The word ’god’ has become more important than God Himself!

So when the Master died, THOSE WHO HAD SURROUNDED HIM, REGARDING THEMSELVES AS HIS HEIRS

They were not! Camels can’t be heirs. Only at the third stage when you are a child can you be an heir to a Master, not before that. Camels go on saying yes, so they think that they can become heirs because they are so obedient. They cannot, because they have not yet learned the no.

There is a famous story:

A rabbi once heard that one of his disciples had been speaking cynically about the existence of God and His teachings. He called him for an interview and asked, ”Tell me, did you study all twenty-four books of the Bible thoroughly?”

The honest answer was, ”No, not all of them, and certainly not thoroughly.”
”How about the Talmud?” was the next question. ”Have you gone through all sixty volumes?”

”N-no,” was the more frightened answer.

”Then let me tell you, my son,” concluded the rabbi, ”you did not study enough to have the privileges of doubting!”

Doubt is a privilege. Unless you have been assimilating you will not be able to become the lion. To say no, to doubt, is a privilege. It is a higher stage than belief, because belief any coward can go with. For saying no and for creating doubt, courage is needed. It is almost always so: the so-called theists are on a lesser, a lower spiritual plane than the atheist. The atheist is on a slightly higher plane, although he denies. He is the lion.

These people must have followed the Master to the letter. And obviously they were thinking they were the true heirs. They ran to open the book. The Master had been there for many years with them and they never ran to open him, they never looked into his heart, they never understood him. They never drank out of his source, but now the Master is dead their first curiosity is to go to the book and see what is written there. Just see how people remain attached to the insignificant and the non-essential.

THEY RAN TO OPEN THE BOOK, ANXIOUS TO POSSESS WHAT IT CONTAINED.

The camels are camels. They are more interested in possessing knowledge than becoming knowledge. They are more interested in the containers than in the content. The content has gone, the flame is no more in the lamp, the flame has disappeared. But they were not interested in the flame, they are interested in the lamp, and they will go on worshiping the lamp forever. No light will ever be coming out of the lamp... the light was there. They have missed the Master because their whole idea of knowledge was of possession. Knowledge is not something to be possessed; you cannot possess knowledge, and if you possess it will be only knowledgeability. Unless you become a knower you don’t have knowledge. You can only pretend to have it.

THEY WERE SURPRISED, CONFUSED AND DISAPPOINTED WHEN THEY FOUND THAT THERE WAS WRITING ON ONLY ONE PAGE.

The camels are always interested in quantity,, not in quality. Their whole interest is in They would have been very very happy if the whole book had been written in and if on all pages there had been writing. They would have enjoyed that. But there was writing only on one page, and that too, only in one comer of the page, and the whole book was empty.

THEY WERE SURPRISED, CONFUSED AND DISAPPOINTED WHEN THEY FOUND THAT THERE WAS WRITING ON ONLY ONE PAGE.

Remember, the concern of the camel is quantity, the concern of the lion is quality, and the child goes beyond duality. He is not concerned with either quality or quantity. He transcends all dualities.

THEY BECAME EVEN MORE BEWILDERED AND THEN ANNOYED WHEN THEY TRIED TO PENETRATE THE MEANING OF THE PHRASE WHICH MET THEIR EYES.

And there was only a small writing, just a single line.

IT WAS: WHEN YOU REALIZE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CONTAINER AND THE CONTENT, YOU WILL HAVE KNOWLEDGE.

Just think of yourself waiting for years, curious for years, to look into the book, and then you come across this. You would have been annoyed too - that this Master was a cheat, that he had been saying ”All my wisdom comes from this book” and there was nothing in it, just this small sentence.

But this sentence is a seed. If you understand it you will understand all the scriptures of the world. This is a condensed thing. All the scriptures are condensed in it: all the Korans, all the Vedas, all the Bibles are condensed in a single sentence, a tremendously powerful sentence. Meditate over it.

WHEN YOU REALIZE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CONTAINER AND THE CONTENT, YOU WILL HAVE KNOWLEDGE.

The camels are interested only in the container; the container is all. They don’t think of the content. The lions are interested only in the content; they are very against the container. The child accepts both and goes beyond both, because the child comes to know that the content cannot exist without the container and the container cannot exist without the content. The container is a container only because it has content, and they both go together. Matter and mind exist together. God and the world exist together; they cannot be separated.

The camel thinks the container is all. That is a half-vision. Angry with the camel, the lion moves to the other extreme and says, ”The content is enough, and I will not bother about the container. Throw the container!” But if you throw the container you will be throwing the content also, because they can’t be separated.

If you throw the flower you will be throwing the fragrance too, because they are together, just like body and soul. The camel believes in the corpse; there is no soul. He has no idea of the soul. The lion believes in the ghost; he is very much against the body.

But when you have transcended both, when you are no more a yea-sayer or a no-sayer, when you are no more obsessed with theism or atheism, when you are neither traditional nor anti-traditional, when you are simply innocent of all these ideas, when your mirror is completely clean, no dust on it, when you don’t feel any identity with the camel or the lion, you are neither a reactionary nor a revolutionary, you are simply there, a silent mirror, then you come to know that the container and the content are together. Although the container is not the content and the content is not the container, but they are together. Seeing them together and yet separate, knowledge arises. One comes to know.

WHEN YOU REALIZE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CONTAINER AND THE CONTENT, YOU WILL HAVE KNOWLEDGE.

The last thing:

Because there are millions of camels, many Masters have spoken in the language of the camels - Mohammed, Moses, and people like that. They have spoken in the language of the camels so the camels could understand. There is compassion in it, but there is danger too - that the camels remain camels. Few Masters have chosen to speak the language of the lion - Christ, Buddha. As far as the expression is concerned it is better than that of Moses and Mohammed, but it will not be understood by the masses; that’s a problem. The camels will not be able to absorb it.

Jesus was killed because the camels were very angry. He was speaking a different language, utterly unintelligible. It looked nonsense to them. This man was mad! Just think, in a world full of camels, a lion comes and starts talking - no camel will understand. When Jesus was killed the disciples that he had, those twelve apostles, were camels. He was a child talking the language of the lion, they were camels; they created Christianity. And once the camels created Christianity it became a world religion.

The child has no language of its own. Innocence is wordless. Hence, the child has to speak the language of a lion out of necessity. That is the closest that he can come to expressing himself.

It happened in Buddha's time. Buddha talked in the language of the lions. The country was in such a state that there were many lions available. It was at a climax, at a peak. It was not a dark valley, it was a very sunlit peak. For thousands of years in the past India had been searching and working on truth and what it is and how to attain it. Many people understood Buddha. Buddha's disciples were not camels, they were lions. Jesus' disciples were camels. Jesus was a child talking in the language of the lion. When Buddha died, his followers were very very stubborn. They wouldn't compromise with the camels. They were bribed, they were persuaded, but they wouldn't compromise. They continued to roar. Buddhism was uprooted from India; the camels finally destroyed it.

When the Buddhists escaped from India, they had learned a lesson: that if you want to exist as a religion, you will have to speak the language of the camel. In China they dropped the Buddha's roar. In Japan, in Korea, in Ceylon, in Burma, they started speaking the language of the camel. Mahayana is 'the lion's roar'. Hinayana is a translation, in the camel's language, of the lion's roar. Then Buddhism spread all over Asia. A strange thing happened: in India Buddhism was born, but disappeared from India, and the whole of Asia became Buddhist.

There are a few who have spoken in the language of the child. They never gather many disciples; they cannot. You can gather great masses around you if you speak the language of the camel. You can gather intelligentsia around you if you speak in the language of the lion. Krishnamurti gathers intelligentsia around himself - he speaks the language of the lion. Lao Tzu or Ramana, they speak the language of the child. Nobody understands them, but they are not killed, remember; they are not crucified either. Nobody understands them, nobody follows them, nobody bothers about them. They are thought to be good people, poets, a little eccentric, crazy. People can sometimes go to them, it is beautiful to be around them, but they don't create any stir in the world. Lao Tzu comes and disappears, leaves no trace. Ramana came and disappeared, left no trace behind.

These are the three languages. I speak all the languages! So you will find camels and lions and children, all kinds of people, around me. Hence, I look very contradictory. I can't be consistent: when I talk to a camel I talk his language, when I talk to a lion I roar, and when a child comes to me, I laugh, smile, and sit silently with him.

This experiment has never been done before: nobody has spoken all three languages, because it is troublesome. One language is good because one remains consistent. With me you can never be certain, you will always remain confused. But I use confusion also as a device. If the camel is confused, he will start growing into a lion - because unless he is utterly confused he will never grow. If the lion is confused he will start growing into a child, because you grow only when you are very confused. When you see no point in being where you are, you start growing higher and you start

looking for higher peaks - maybe from there a greater vision, a bigger vision is available. I confuse you as a device. I will confuse the camels, I will confuse the lions; and children cannot be confused, they will understand. They will be able to understand that my contradictions are not contradictions at all - because I am speaking three languages, that's why they only appear to be.

Meditate over this story.

Here, being with me, don't think of words. My message is not in my words but in the pauses in between. My message is not in what I say but in what I am. My message is not reducible to theories and systems. Either you can live it with me, or you miss it. It is an alive phenomenon. Once I I am gone you will start looking into books, and you will be annoyed, and you will be angry with me, because you will feel you have missed.

While I am here, be nourished by me, get drunk with me, be absorbed. Abandon yourself into this mystery that is being revealed to you, and then there will be the possibility that you will not die in your larva, that you will become a caterpillar, and finally you will be metamorphosed into a butterfly.

Grow wings! Dream great dreams of growing wings! You have the potential. You are the seed; a great, great phenomenon is possible through you. And only when you have bloomed will you know what God is, what truth is.

CHAPTER 5

The Oasis Exists in Your Awareness

25 February 1978 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:

Question 1

YOU HAVE SAID THAT THE SUFIS ARE ON THE PATH OF LOVE. BUT THEN WHY DO THEY TEACH SO MANY TECHNIQUES?

Because of the larvae, the camels.

The camels need many methods. They can only trust in a method, they can only trust in technology. They are almost like machines, robots. They cannot have the vision of the beyond, and their hearts are not functioning yet. With the heart functioning they will become lions, and with the soul functioning

they will become the children.

It is like this: larvae or camels need many methods. Lions need only one method, either love or awareness. And the child needs no method at all. The child is already at home; he need not arrive, he need not go anywhere.

The Sufis are the people on the path of love. Love has no techniques, love is enough unto itself - but the heart has to function for it. And the camel has no heart. And the larva has no idea of what heart is, what feeling is, what love is. He has never dreamt about it. The larva has never dreamt about being a caterpillar, just as the caterpillar has not dreamt about being a butterfly.

Two caterpillars were crawling across the grass when suddenly a butterfly flew over them. They looked up, and one nudged the other one and said, ”You could not get me up in one of those things for a million dollars.”

The larva cannot trust that something is possible; nothing is possible. The larva lives in a closed world, behind the walls. Those walls have to be broken. Methods are needed to break those walls, to destroy that prison. The larva has almost to be dragged outside the prison, freedom has almost to be imposed upon it. It is afraid of freedom, it is afraid of wings, it is afraid of the sky. It keeps its eyes closed. It remains within itself, it does not relate, it does not believe that relationship is possible. And the world is full of larvae and camels.

Out of compassion, out of love, Sufis talk about other methods. If you understand, then there is no need for any method. Then either there is awareness or love. One who follows awareness needs no other method - one is enough. One who follows love needs no awareness - one is enough. Awareness cleanses the mind, cleanses the thought process, cleanses your intelligence, and you arrive. Love cleanses your feelings, cleanses your heart, and you arrive.

The child needs no method at all. The child does not even need love or awareness; the child is love and awareness.

So it depends: if the Sufi is talking to a camel he will give methods; if the Sufi is talking to a lion he will give him awareness or love; and if the Sufi is talking to a child he will not say anything about what to do. There is no need for doing. Non-doing is enough, just being is enough.

The second question:

Question 2

WHAT CAN A GURU DO FOR YOU?

The question is from Vidya’s mother, Sigrid. She must be worried about Vidya, about what is happening to Vidya here. And, deep down, she is nagging Vidya and trying to take back. It is natural, nothing is wrong in it; a mother, after all, is a mother. The mother loves, cares, and because you love and you care you become afraid also - what is happening to your child here? Hence the question, ”What can a guru do for you?”

A guru can do two things: he can undo you and re-do you. He can destroy you and give you a new life. A guru is a cross and a resurrection.

Those who come here and remain outsiders will only see the cross of the guru, because the resurrection is an inner experience. The cross is an outside thing.

Have you not watched in the story of Jesus? - when he was crucified, thousands of people witnessed it. It was simple. There was no need for any inner insight to witness Jesus being crucified. Thousands of people, ordinary people who had never seen Jesus, who had just come out of curiosity, all witnessed the crucifixion. But when Jesus got resurrected NOT EVEN HIS OWN DISCIPLES could recognize him immediately. Mary Magdalene was the first to recognize. That is symbolic: that means you need a feminine heart, an intuitive heart, to recognize resurrection.

Then Jesus went to find his disciples. They had all escaped thinking, ”Now all is finished!” They waited, hiding behind the crowds. They had waited for the moment because they were hoping that some miracle would happen. The miracle DID happen, but to see the miracle these ordinary eyes are not enough. These ordinary eyes can only see the UNdoing. To see the re-doing you will need another kind of eyes. The miracle DID happen, I say to you! - but nobody could see it because nobody was ready to see it, nobody was mature enough to see it.

Jesus went in search of his disciples after his resurrection. He found two disciples; they were going to another village. He walked with them for four miles, talked with them for four miles, and they did not recognize him. This seems to be so improbable, but it happened. He was walking with them, he was talking with them, and they could not see who had come. They thought he was a stranger. In fact, Jesus remained a stranger to these people even when he was alive. Their recognition was superficial.

So those who come here just as outsiders will simply see demolishing, will simply see undoing, will simply see that people are being destroyed, mind-washed, hypnotized - and they will see all kinds of things, all kinds of negative things. They will not be able to see the positive. For the positive you will have to become part, a participant. You will have to fall en rapport with me. You will have to come within me and you will have to allow me within you; then you will be able to see what a Master can do.

If you really want to understand it, then become a disciple! Then come closer to a Master. And I am not saying to come closer to me, but any Master! Go and find your Master, but come closer. Understanding one Master, you will have understood all Masters, past, present and future, because the work is the same. The work is to destroy the disciple so much so that the disciple disappears as a disciple and appears as a Master in his own right. That’s what a Master can do: he can make you a M aster.

The third question:

Question 3

LISTENING TO YOU, DRINKING YOU SO DEEPLY EVERY DAY, I AM GETTING RIDICULOUSLY INTOXICATED. IF EEL READY TO QUIT MY SECURE AND MADDENING JOB AND FACE AN UNKNOWN FUTURE. BUT I HAVE BEEN DRUNK BEFORE AND ALWAYS WOKE UP WITH A HANGOVER AND THE SAME OLD SHIT TO DEAL WITH. IS IT POSSIBLE I COULD WAKE UP ONE DAY AND BE LEFT WITH JUST A HANGOVER FROM YOU?

Ananda Buddha, this is a totally different kind of intoxication. It is so different that I can say to you that you are absolutely inexperienced about it.

Being intoxicated with me does not make you fall asleep, so you cannot wake up some day with a hangover. It makes you fall awake, so there is no question of waking up sometime with a hangover. Being with me is the awakening. What other awakening are you talking about?

This intoxicant drowns you only as far as the ego is concerned, but not your consciousness. It drowns you only as far as the personality is concerned, but not the individuality. It helps you to wake

up from the personality and to wake up in the individuality. Right now you are asleep about your individuality and you are awake in your personality.

Let us say it in this way: you have fallen asleep and you are seeing a dream. In the dream you are awake - you are going to the market to purchase a few things for shopping or something. In the dream you are awake. If in the dream you fall asleep, you will be REALLY awake. But in the dream you are awake; really you are fast asleep, you are snoring.

Your awakening right now, Buddha, is not real awakening. You are in a deep sleep, a slumber, and dreaming a thousand and one dreams. If you allow me to hit you you will wake up for the first time. Your dreams will disappear, your sleep will be broken, and you will come to know for the first time who you are. Once you have tasted that awakening you cannot fall asleep again. That taste is such - it permeates your whole being, it pervades you, it overwhelms you, it encompasses you. This intoxication is just to help you to fall awake.

That's why I have given you the name Swami Ananda Buddha: blissful awareness, blissful awakening. You ARE asleep, and the potential is there - you can fall awake. And the first stirrings are felt by you.

Take the risk! In your dream-world nothing is secure, not even your so-called secure job. In your so-called world nothing is certain. The dream-world cannot be certain - it is a flux, everything is changing and moving. Today you are in a secure job, tomorrow you may not be in it. Today you are living with a woman, tomorrow she is gone. Today you have a beautiful child, tomorrow God has taken it back. What is secure here?

Except awakening, nothing is secure here. All is just... hallucination, all is just... deceiving yourself, creating newer and newer mirages. The oasis exists not! This world is a desert. The oasis exists in your awareness only. Create that oasis of awareness. And whatsoever is needed for it, do. Whatsoever price has to be paid, pay. Whatsoever has to be risked, risk - because all else is going to be taken away from you anyway. Death will come, and your job and your wife and your children and your name and fame - all will be taken away. Before death comes search for awareness, because those who become aware in life, for them, death never comes. They become deathless. They know what immortality is. Because in your awareness you come to know not the body, but the one who resides in it.

The fourth question:

Question 4

EVEN THOUGH I DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS HAPPENING, I HAVE HAD ENLIGHTENING EXPERIENCES THROUGH THE USE OF HALLUCINOGENIC DRUGS. I KNOW THAT LSD IS FALSE, BUT WHAT IS, IF ANY, THE TRUTH ABOUT MUSHROOMS?

The question is from Reese Guth.

LSD is not false, LSD is as real as anything else. But the experience that is created by LSD is a FALSE samadhi. Remember the distinction that I am making: LSD is not false, but the experience that is created under the impact of LSD is a false experience.

You say, ”I HAVE HAD ENLIGHTENING EXPERIENCES...”

They were not enlightening experiences. They may have been lightning experiences, but not enlightening - flashes; you are not enlightened through them, you don’t become a Buddha through them. In fact you become more of a mess out of them. The LSD changes your body chemistry, as mushrooms do. It changes your body chemistry. It does not change you, it changes your body - just as food changes your body, air changes your body, climate changes your body, the moon, the full moon changes your body, but you are not being changed by it. All those changes happen in the body, all those changes are chemical changes - not alchemical but only chemical. What is an alchemical change? - when your consciousness changes. And the consciousness cannot be changed by ANYTHING that comes from the outside.

The consciousness cannot be changed by food, eating this food or that. The consciousness cannot be changed by non-eating, by fasting. Remember, there is not much difference between people who take LSD and the people who go on a long fast, no difference! Both are trying to change the body chemistry. The people who take mushrooms and other drugs are not doing anything different from the people who do yoga exercises, because in both ways the BODY is changed. The change is not happening in consciousness. Consciousness REMAINS BEYOND all chemicals.

If you fast long enough, naturally your body chemistry can’t be the same. A few things disappear from your body chemistry and a few things accumulate too much. Your body has a different combination of chemicals.

After a one month long fast you will feel beautiful things, but those beautiful things are created by the chemical change. Start eating and those beautiful things will disappear. You do certain yoga postures continuously, for years, pressing your body structure at certain points, certain important points, pressing your body meridians at certain junctures continuously; it changes your body chemistry. Breathe in a certain way for years, always in a certain way - it changes your body chemistry, because the oxygen and the carbon dioxide balance will be changed by your breathing.

Have you not noticed it? - when you are angry you breathe in a different way? Why? That different way of breathing releases some chemicals in your body which are helpful to being angry. If you don’t breathe in a different way you will not be able to be angry. Try it: breathe in the Buddhist way and you will not be able to go into anger, because the Buddhist way won’t allow your body chemicals to be released which are needed for the anger.

You are afraid? You breathe in a different way. Different chemicals are needed, because a man who is frightened needs to escape fast, as fast as possible. He needs flight, certain chemicals are needed so he can flee fast. When you are in sexual passion your breathing changes. Continue to breathe normally and you will not be able to achieve orgasm. For the orgasm to be triggered a certain kind of breathing is needed.

But these changes are physical; these are not going to affect your consciousness. The consciousness is the witness to all changes. Just try to understand.

You are hungry, feeling hungry: the body is hungry, the consciousness simply notes the fact that the body is hungry. The consciousness is never hungry, cannot be hungry; it has no stomach. It can only

be a witness. Consciousness is nothing but witnessing. Remember this formula: consciousness is witnessing. You are hungry? The consciousness reflects the hunger. It is like a mirror: it says ”The body is hungry.” When you have eaten and your body is satisfied, the consciousness says ”The body is satisfied.” The consciousness was not hungry and is not satisfied either. In both cases the consciousness was just witnessing - hunger/satisfaction, sexual passion/sexual contentment, anger/release of anger.

You take LSD or some other drug, and there are lightning experiences. Consciousness is simply waiting and watching. It simply says, ”Look, beautiful things are happening,” but they are not happening to consciousness.

The spiritual growth is the growth of this witnessing! The spiritual growth has nothing to do with particular experiences. The spiritual growth is not a search for novel experiences. Spirituality has nothing to do with experiences as such. In fact to say any experience is ’spiritual experience’ is utterly wrong, because all experiences are non-spiritual. THE EXPERIENCER IS THE SPIRIT. The witness is the only spiritual phenomenon. When all experiences have disappeared - of hunger, of satiety, of anger, of release, of love, of hate, of kundalini arising in you, chakras opening in you, lotuses opening in you, lights showering in you; celestial music is heard, you feel great space, you feel joy, you feel bliss, but these are all experiences - the real spiritual point is when there is NO experience, and the experiencer is left alone, utterly alone. There is no object to experience, but only this witness is there, silently witnessing nothing. Then you have arrived. This is SAMADHI. Witnessing nothing is SAMADHI. That’s why Buddha calls it NIRVANA, nothingness, emptiness.

Your question is meaningful. And the question is not only concerned with psychedelic experiences, it is concerned with all kinds of experiences. Experiences AS SUCH are non-spiritual. When all experiences have gone and you don’t feel ANYTHING AT ALL, and you have not fallen asleep either In sleep also those experiences disappear. In deep sleep, what Patanjali calls SUSHUPTI, where dreams are no more, all experiences disappear, but the experiencer is also absent. Patanjali says SUSHUPTI and SAMADHI are similar and yet very different, diametrically opposite. What is their similarity? The similarity is that in both, experiences are not found. And what is their difference? In SUSHUPTI, in deep sleep, the experiencer is also not found. In SAMADHI experiences are gone but the experiencer is sitting there silently watching nothing, witnessing nothing. This is enlightenment! Experiences can be lightning experiences, can be beautiful experiences, can give you great joy, but still they are not enlightenment.

Enlightenment is when the light is there and it falls on nothing. The light fills nothingness, no object is seen in that light - this is liberation. To be liberated from experiences is to be liberated from the world. ’The world’ means ALL kinds of experiences, what the Chinese call ’the ten thousand experiences’ - that’s what the world consists of.

You say, ”EVEN THOUGH I DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS HAPPENING, I HAVE HAD ENLIGHTENING EXPERIENCES THROUGH THE USE OF HALLUCINOGENIC DRUGS. I KNOW THAT LSD IS FALSE BUT WHAT IS, IF ANY, THE TRUTH ABOUT MUSHROOMS?”

The truth is they can give you beautiful trips, and ugly trips too. They can give you golden dreams, and nightmares too. It all depends on you.

The drug only triggers a process. Whatsoever dream is ready to explode in you will be exploded, hence contradictory experiences have been reported.

Aldous Huxley reports that he experienced heaven, and Karl Rahner reports he experienced hell. Now Karl Rahner is against drugs and Aldous Huxley is all for the drugs. If you are all for the drugs your very prejudice will help you to create beautiful experiences. You will be waiting and hoping for something beautiful to happen, your belief will do the magic. If you are against from the very beginning, suspicious, doubtful, afraid, and you know that you are going to have some hellish experience through it, it will be created.

An ancient Sufi saying says: Hell is preserved for those who believe in it. And heaven is also preserved for those who believe in it. But it's all just make-believe. There is no hell, no heaven; you create your hell, you create your heaven. If you are in a kind of negative mood then take LSD and it will give you nightmares. If you are in a positive mood, flowing, loving, it will take you to paradise.

The ancient-most drug takers have been in India. India knows more about drugs than any other country. At least for ten thousand years ninety-nine percent of Indian sannyasins have been taking drugs, from the RIG-VEDAS till today, from SOMA to LSD. India knows much, India has created technologies, techniques, methodologies of how to take a drug. The drug trip should be a very guided trip; it needs a guide. The guide creates the atmosphere, he creates the idea. Slowly, slowly he goes on hypnotizing you about what is happening. And in a drug state a person becomes very suggestible, absolutely suggestible; all reason is lost. The dream faculty starts functioning, imagination is let loose. Now, imagination can do both - either it can create hell or heaven. You need a guide. The guide slowly, slowly guides you towards heaven, heavenly experiences. He creates a beautiful dream, a poetic dream around you; and you are in a suggestible state, you simply fall a victim.

But guided or unguided, a drug experience or a fasting experience - all are false. EXPERIENCE IS FALSE.

SAMADHI is when the witness has remained alone, witnessing nothing. That is the TRUE spiritual experience, if you will allow me to call it experience. It is not experience, because in experience you need three things: the experiencer, the experienced and the experience. There are not three things left at all. There is only one witness, witnessing utter nothingness, SHUNYA, emptiness. That is true experience.

The true experience is a 'no-experience'. And when you attain to a no-experience, only then believe that it is enlightening. Otherwise lightning experiences will come and go, flashes of the mind, dream-stuff.

The fifth question:

IS TO BE A SANNYASIN A MOMENT OR A PROCESS? IS A GURU REALLY NEEDED TO BE a SANNYASIN? IF A GURU LIVES IN SOMEBODY'S HEART ALL THE TIME, THEN WHAT IS THE NECESSITY OF WEARING ORANGE AND THE MALA ALL THE TIME? WAS EKLAVYA NOT A REAL DISCIPLE?

The question is from Kartik. The question is from some Indian mind, some Indian. Many things have to be understood.

First you ask, ”IS TO BE A SANNYASIN A MOMENT OR A PROCESS?”

It is both, because it is a beginning of a great pilgrimage - so it is an event, a moment, and also a process. By becoming a sannyasin you have not arrived, you have only started arriving. It is a great moment because it is a quantum leap from your ordinary mundane world, from the search for power, prestige. You have moved to seek and search for truth. From moving outwards, into the world, you have taken a decision to move inwards. From the external your being is turning towards the internal. It is a great moment, because interiority is born in it! It is a great change in your pattern of life, in your style of life: you will never be the same again. It is a drastic change, it is a discontinuity - the past is dropped and you start creating yourself anew - but it is also a process because this is just a beginning. You have started moving inwards, but you will have to go on moving.

Lao Tzu says, ”The journey of ten thousand miles starts in the first step.” The first step is a great moment. Just thing: the larva becomes the caterpillar... a great moment, because the larva was static, and the caterpillar moves, crawls. The caterpillar is not yet a butterfly. It knows nothing of flying, it knows nothing of flowers, it is not yet a winged thing, but the journey has started. The journey of ten thousand miles - the first step has been taken. it has started crawling. If crawling is possible, then one day flying will also be possible.

The larva cannot become the butterfly, only the caterpillar can become the butterfly. The worldly man cannot arrive in his being, only a sannyasin can arrive. The sannyasin is between the larva and the butterfly, the link.
So a sannyasin is both the beginning of a journey and a process; it is a moment and a process.

You ask, ”IS A GURU REALLY NEEDED TO BE A SANNYASIN?”

You need me even to ask this question! You can’t answer it yourself. How are you going to answer greater questions? - because this is a very silly and stupid question, not of any worth. If I am answering it, it is just to respect you, to respect a camel.

If you cannot answer a silly, ordinary question like this yourself, how are you going to become a sannyasin on your own?

The caterpillar will need a butterfly. Seeing the butterfly flying around, enjoying flowers and the honey and enjoying the sunshine will be needed, is a must. That will create a desire, a longing, a thirst in the caterpillar. It will create a dream, a dream which can become a reality. Unless the caterpillar starts dreaming, there is no possibility. How will you start dreaming about unknown things? You have not known them! You can dream only about that which you have known. You can think about a thing which you have experienced in the past: how will you think about God, about truth, about NIRVANA, about SAMADHI? These are empty words for you, utterly empty of any meaning, meaningless jargon. You will have to come in contact with a person in whom SAMADHI IS alive, throbbing, beating, breathing. You will have to come in close contact with a person in whom truth is born, in whom you can have a glimpse of God; that’s all that is needed. You will have to

come in contact with someone where the disease called God can become infectious. You will have to move with a drunkard. Seeing his joy, seeing his blissfulness and his silence and his calm and his cool, you may become thirsty, thirsty for something you have never tasted before.

That's what a Master is all about. If you can do it on your own, it is so kind of you. Do it. Read American books, 'do it' books - do it yourself. But you will create more mess than you are in already. Out of your confusion, whatsoever you will do, more confusion will come.

You are already a crowd, falling apart. You cannot put yourself together. And I am not saying that it does not happen sometimes; it happens sometimes: there have been people who have put themselves together. But those people are exceptional, and they don't come here to ask questions like this.

Once a young man came to me and asked, "What do you say, Osho, about marriage? Should I get married or not? I am a seeker, a searcher for truth." I told him, "You please get married." But he said, "But this is very unexpected! Why didn't you get married? I have come to you because I knew you would say, 'No, don't get married.' Why didn't you get married?" I said, "Because I never went to ask anybody, that has not been my way. I have never asked any question of anybody."

You are tricky. You want to have the answer, you want guidance, and yet you don't want to commit yourself. You want all guidance cheaply.

I have never asked a single question of anybody. That's why when I was in the university my professors were very angry with me - because I was always answering them, not questioning. Very angry, naturally! If you answer a professor he becomes angry. I was turned out from many colleges, expelled, and the only crime that I had committed was that I was answering. Even if I was asking, the question was such that it was really an answer, not a question. The professors were angry. They wanted questions so that they could answer, because answers they knew.

If you are searching for truth, if you have moved into the search, you will need a Master. And remember, I repeat again: it is not that it cannot happen alone. It has happened to me alone, so how can I say that it cannot happen alone? Lao Tzu says, "You need not go out of your house, you need not even open your windows and doors, and all can be found there sitting inside your room." And he is right, but it happens very rarely.

You are being cunning: you want the guidance, and you don't want to bow down to a Master.

You ask me, "IF A GURU LIVES IN SOMEBODY'S HEART ALL THE TIME,, THEN WHAT IS THE NECESSITY OF WEARING ORANGE AND THE MALA ALL THE TIME?"

Then there is no necessity. Then there is no necessity even to ask this question! If a guru lives for twenty-four hours in your heart, you have become a Buddha Even to remember your guru for twenty-four seconds continuously is impossible. What are you talking about? - twenty-four hours?

Try to remember me for twenty-four seconds. Just keep a wristwatch in front of you and try to remember me for twenty-four seconds, and twenty-four thousand times you will miss. A second will pass and you will start thinking of your girlfriend, or what movie to go to today. And then you will

have to pull back. Again you will remember, ”What am I doing? - five seconds have passed. And for one second you may be able just to remember, so-so, lukewarm, and again it is lost. Just try for twenty-four seconds. If you can remember me continuously for twenty-four seconds, without a single distraction, you need not have any orange, any mala I declare you a sannyasin.

And you are saying ’for twenty-four hours’ ”If a guru LIVES IN SOMEBODY’S HEART ALL THE TIME, THEN WHAT IS THE NECESSITY OF WEARING ORANGE AND THE MALA ALL THE TIME?”

But if the guru that lives in your heart says ”Wear orange”, what will you do then? Will you listen to the guru or not? What do you think about the people who are wearing orange here? Are they very willingly wearing orange? But the guru says so! What to do? And they have fallen in love with the guru Now the guru is mad and he says, ”Wear orange!” The guru is eccentric. First you fall in love with the guru, and then the guru starts playing tricks on you. He says, ”Wear orange, wear a mala, and look like a fool! And go into the world and let people laugh!”

But if the guru lives for twenty-four hours in your heart, you will be ready to commit suicide if he says to!

And then you ask, ”WAS EKLAVYA NOT A REAL DISCIPLE?”

I will have to tell you the story first; only then will you be able to understand it.

You know of the Bhagavad-Gita, of Krishna the Master and his disciple Arjuna. When Arjuna was learning with Drona In his student days, he was with a master archer, Drona. He was the greatest master archer in those days. Arjuna belonged to a royal family, so all the children from the royal family were learning with Drona, and Arjuna was the best disciple.

Drona was a brahmin. Eklavya came; Eklavya was an untouchable, and Eklavya wanted to become a disciple also. Drona refused. A brahmin? How can he accept an untouchable, a sudra? That has been one of the greatest pathologies of the Hindu mind. The Hindu mind has been ill and unhealthy because of that. Notwithstanding so many great things that they have done, that one thing has undone all their great things. They have condemned human beings so utterly that never before, anywhere in the world, have human beings been condemned so badly. And that is done by so-called religious people who claim that they are the greatest religious people of the world. And they have been doing something which is so ugly - millions of people have been debarred from being human beings. Eklavya belonged to those downtrodden, oppressed people. But he had a beautiful body, and Drona could see - because he was a great teacher - he could see that he could become one of the most famous archers in the world. He could see directly: the way he walked, the way he talked, his one-pointed mind, his concentrated being - Drona could see that this young man could become the best archer of that age. ”But then what will happen to my disciple, Arjuna? And he’s going to be the king”... now, the vested interest. He refused. He refused for two reasons: one. ”You are a sudra and I am a brahmin; I cannot accept you. Even the shadow of a sudra is unacceptable.” Brahmins have been taking baths if the shadow of a sudra would fall on them. The shadow! He need not have touched anyone. And these are spiritual people! And the shadow is non-existential. If you are sitting and a sudra passes by and his shadow touches you, you have to take a a bath. You have been polluted by his being.

And these sudras are not sinners. They are simply poor people, exploited people, the proletariat.

”First, you are a sudra so I cannot accept,” said Drona. In saying that, he also said that he was not a spiritual man at all. He may have been a great master archer, but he was not a spiritual Master, he was not a guru. In denying Eklavya, he proved that he was not a guru, because a guru cannot deny anybody. Even if a sinner comes, the guru cannot deny. That is what he exists for.

Sometimes people come to me and they say, ”We are not worthy. We are sinners. We have done this wrong and that. Osho, will you accept us?” And I say, ”For whom do I exist here?” If the doctor says to the patient, ”I cannot accept you because you have so many illnesses,” then what is the point of that doctor? Why is he there if he accepts only healthy men?

Drona was not a guru, not a spiritual Master. He must have been a very ugly politician. It was on the surface that he said, ”I cannot accept because you are a sudra”, but deep down this was the reasoning: that if this Eklavya were accepted and he became a great archer, what would happen to his favorite disciple? ”And the favorite disciple is going to become the king, not Eklavya. With the favorite disciple my whole future is involved. If Arjuna becomes the king then I will be the master of the king, and naturally powerful, even more powerful than the king. The king will touch my feet, and my order will be THE order.” He wanted Arjuna to remain the greatest archer; Eklavya was denied.

Eklavya went into the forest, but his love for archery was such that he created a statue of Drona and started practicing before the statue. Soon rumors started coming to Drona’s school that Eklavya was attaining... alone, without any guidance from Drona. But his totality was such that even the statue was enough.

And one day the news came that Arjuna was no longer a competent archer before Eklavya. Drona went to see Eklavya, and he committed one thing which can never be forgiven. He went there and he asked Eklavya to show him, and he saw, and it was absolutely certain that Arjuna was no longer a comparison to Eklavya. Eklavya had far transcended Arjuna and all his disciples; in fact, had far transcended Drona himself. Now he said, ”You have learned through me by making my statue. You will have to give me some present, DAKSHINA.” When a disciple has learned all from the Master, just in gratitude he gives some gift to the Master, any symbolic gift. Eklavya started crying and weeping. He said, ”But I have nothing! You can ask anything!” And Drona asked for his thumb, his right-hand thumb. He cut off his thumb immediately and gave it to Drona. He asked the right-hand thumb because without it he would never be an archer again.

Now this fellow, Drona, is an ugly spot on Hindu consciousness. He was not a spiritual Master at all. He was a very, very low politician, a diplomat. He may have been a good archer but that doesn’t make anybody spiritual. First he had denied Eklavya, and now he went... what CHUTZPAH! now he went and asked that something be given to him as a gift: ”I am your Master.” He had denied his being a disciple, and now he went and said that ”I am your Master.”

Eklavya is really rare. Such a great soul; Drona is not even worthy enough to touch his feet. He didn’t say anything. He could have said,”You have denied me”, but he didn’t say that. That idea never arose in his mind. He had trusted him as the Master even if he had been denied. He had loved him and he was ready to give anything. He gave his right-hand thumb, became a cripple forever and was no longer heard of. Since that moment nothing is known about Eklavya, about what happened. He

must have gone to the forest, must have lived in his tribe, sweeping streets. He must have forgotten all about archery - a great archer destroyed.

Now this is the story.
Kartik has asked, ”WAS EKLAVYA NOT A REAL DISCIPLE?”

Eklavya was a real disciple, Drona was not a real guru.

But you should not ask this question, because you simply want to avoid the mala and orange. And Eklavya, even if denied by the Master, although rejected by the Master, went into the forest and created an image of the Master. You should not bring Eklavya’s name into it. You are just the opposite!

What is the mala? - an image.

There the Master had denied, here the Master is ready to accept you. Even though denied by the Master, Eklavya created an image of the Master and through that image attained. You should not bring Eklavya in with your question. It is contradictory, it contradicts you. It does not prove that you are right, it simply proves you are UTTERLY wrong. Even a man like Eklavya could not do without the image! It was needed, it helped, it created a certain milieu, it created an atmosphere, a climate. And if love is total then the mala is not dead. Then it is not wood, it is your heart. Then the image in the mala is not just a picture. It depends on your love: how much love you pour into it, that much life it will have. And it is needed. It creates a climate around you, and only in a certain climate will you be able to bloom.

The sixth question:

Question 5

AS ONE EVOLVES SPIRITUALLY, INTEREST IN SEX MAY BECOME LESS STRONG. SO IF I’M NOT SO SEXY THESE DAYS AM I GETTING OLDER OR CLOSER TO ENLIGHTENMENT?

There is a criterion to judge it: if your sexuality disappears and you become more loving, then it is not just old age. If with sexuality your loving quality also disappears, then it is old age.

Have you not observed it? - old people become unloving, nagging, always angry, rude, oppressing, always finding excuses to torture, condemn. What happens? The moment one becomes less sexual, juices start drying up. Once the magic of desire fades, people become desert-like. All their greenness is of their sexuality and sensuality. All their flowering is that of:sex and nothing else. So once sex becomes less and less important, their greenery starts disappearing. They become non-communicative, they are always angry, and they are very much in their egos.

Nobody likes older people, even their own children. The reason is not old age, the reason is: once the magic of desire is gone they become rock-like. And once their own desire is gone, they become very jealous of others’ desires. An old person cannot tolerate you being in love. He’s always there with condemning eyes, because he says he knows it is all nonsense, because he says ”I have lived it and I know it is all futile.” This happens to old people, this happens to old countries too.

If in Poona you find that you are condemned if you are moving hand in hand with your woman and people look with condemning eyes, that is just because the country has gone stale and old. It is a very old country, its magic of desire has died. It has no magic. It is dominated by the old people, it is non-accepting of the young. The old cannot accept the youth and the joy of youth - it hurts.

So this is the criterion: if you are simply becoming old you will not only become non-sexual, you will become dry, dull, dead, and you will start condemning other people who are still young. That's a kind of revenge. Deep down it is jealousy: "How come my own desire is gone and people are still desiring? I am dying and you are loving? Death is coming closer every moment and you are still searching for a woman or a man, still singing and dancing?" It is unacceptable to the old people.

But if old age is not just aging but wisdom too, then there will be a totally different thing. The older person will feel very, very happy with people loving each other. He will have a blessing, a benediction always flowing through him. Whenever he will see somebody in love, his eyes will have a joy. He will bless them, because he knows each desire has its own time, and one learns only through experience. Yes, now he is disillusioned, and he knows perfectly well that when he was young his father was also disillusioned but he never listened. Now he knows, "My son is also not going to listen. And it is good that he should not listen, because if he listens he will never be able to live his youth." And youth unlived penetrates old age. And when youth penetrates old age, the old age becomes dirty, ugly; it is impotent. Now you cannot live those experiences but they go on hammering inside your mind. They go on coming as dreams, desires. The body is no longer able to go into them but the mind continues. Sex becomes cerebral. And that is the most perverted state of sex, when it becomes cerebral. It should be genital, not cerebral - but the sexual mechanism is no longer functioning and the whole energy has moved into the head.

If a man has lived his childhood perfectly he will come out of it a grown-up man. If a man has lived his youth perfectly he will come out of it a grown-up old man - wise, happy, silent, calm, quiet, loving. With the disappearance of sex, love will not disappear. In fact, love will become more, because the energy that was involved in sex is no longer involved in sex; all that energy has become available for love. An old man can be as loving as NO young man can ever be, because the young have other interests.

Love is really secondary for a young man; his whole interest is sex. When a young man is telling a girl, "I love you", he's just planning how to hop into the bed. All this is nonsense, he knows, but it has to be done, it is part of the game. If you ask a woman suddenly, "How about it?" she may scream or call the police; it is so unexpected. You have to persuade. And she is also thinking - if you go on persuading long enough, she becomes bored. If you go on saying, "I love you, I love you," and there is no sign of hopping into the bed, she becomes fed-up. The introduction should not be too long. It should not be like George Bernard Shaw where the book consists of only a hundred pages and the introduction is two hundred pages. Who waits for the book then? An introduction is an introduction; it makes things easy.

The young man's interest is sex, is not love. Love is an excuse, love is politeness, love is culture, sophistication, but his real interest is sex. Love is like sugar that we coat on bitter pills - that's how the young man is interested. His real love is sex.

It is not incidental that the young people all over the world have started calling sex 'making love'. That's what their love is. Depth they cannot know. The young man is bound to remain shallow.

Sex is shallow, so a young man is shallow. Youth cannot have depth, and youth cannot have calm understanding. Youth is feverish, it is a tumultuous time. Good! I'm not saying it is wrong: it creates the possibility to grow. You have to pass through many experiences, sweet and bitter. You have to pass through many stages of feverishness, of ecstasy, of excitement; only then a moment comes when you start understanding. Those experiences prepare you, they cleanse you. You have to pass through the fire of youth to become the pure gold of old age. A really old man is wise, he has some light in him. He has lived his life, he has become ripe. He knows what life is: he knows its joys, its sorrows, its ups and downs, he knows its hells and its heavens. He has seen all. Seeing all, a great understanding has arisen in him, and a compassion and a love.

So this has to be the criterion: if with the disappearance of sex, at the same time, simultaneously, comes the appearance of love, compassion and understanding, then it is not just that you are growing old. You are Coming closer to enlightenment. But if it is not so, then you are simply growing old. Growing old is not a great qualification - everybody does it in his own time, it happens - but growing in wisdom is a qualification, certainly a qualification.

I have heard

A most attractive young girl was being interviewed by St. Peter at the Pearly Gates.

"While you were on earth," he asked, "did you indulge in promiscuity, smoking, dancing, or any other forms of wickedness?"

"Never, never!" protested the girl.
"Well, then why have you not reported sooner?" asked St. Peter. "You have been dead for years!"

Remember, don't die before your death! Remain alive.

I have also heard...

An anthropologist in Java came across a little-known tribe with a strange funeral rite. When a man died, they buried him for sixty days and then dug him up. He was placed in a dark room on a cool slab, and twenty of the tribe's most beautiful maidens danced erotic dances entirely in the nude around the corpse for three hours.

"Why do you do this?" the anthropologist asked the chief of the tribe, who replied, "If he does not get up we are sure he is dead."

Don't think that by becoming more and more dead you will be coming closer to enlightenment. Enlightenment is not a quality of death, it is a quality of RIPE LIFE, it is a quality of rich life. One who has lived his life in many, many ways, good and bad, as the sinner and the saint, one who has the experience of the varieties, of all possibilities, becomes ripe; and in that ripeness is richness, is glory.

Let this be the criterion, always judge through this criterion: if love is growing, compassion is coming, understanding is growing, then you are on the right track. If with your sexuality love is dying, understanding is dying, compassion dying, then you are on the wrong track.

The last question:

Question 6

YOU REALLY CONFUSED ME WHEN YOU TALKED ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LOVE AND LIKING. YOU SAID LOVE IS COMMITTED, BUT I THOUGHT COMMITMENT WAS ANOTHER KIND OF ATTACHMENT. THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE I LOVE BUT I DON'T FEEL COMMITTED TO. HOW CAN I PREDICT IF I WILL LOVE THEM TOMORROW?

The question is significant. You will have to be very, very understanding, because it is subtle and complex too.

When I said that love is commitment, what do I mean by it? I don't mean that you have to promise for tomorrow, but the promise is there. You don't have to promise, but the promise is there. This is the complexity and the subtleness of it. You don't say, "I will love you tomorrow too", but in the moment of love that promise is there, utterly present. It needs no expression.

When you love a person you CAN'T think otherwise. You CAN'T think that you will not love this person some day; that is impossible, that is not part of love. And I am not saying that you may not be able to get out of this love-affair; you may be, you may not be. That is not the point. But when you are in the love moment, when the energy is flowing between two persons, there is a bridge, a golden bridge, and they are bridged through it. It simply does not happen: the mind cannot conceive and comprehend that there will be a time when you will not be with this person and this person will not be with you. This is commitment. Not that you say so much, not that you go to a court and make a formal statement: "I will remain forever with you." In fact to make that formal statement simply shows there is no love; you need a legal arrangement. If the commitment is there, there is no need for any legal arrangement.

Marriage is needed because love is missing. If love is there profoundly, marriage will not be needed. What is the point of marriage? - that is like putting legs on a snake, or painting a red rose red. It is unnecessary. Why go to the court? There must be some fear inside you... the love is not total.

Even while in deep love you are thinking of the possibility that tomorrow you may desert this woman. The woman is thinking, "Who knows? Tomorrow this man may desert me. It is better to go to the court. First let it become legal, then one can depend." But what does it show? - it simply shows that love is not total. Otherwise, total love has that quality of commitment on its own accord. It has not to be brought to it, it is its intrinsic quality.

And when you are in love it comes naturally to you, not that you plan. This feeling comes naturally and sometimes in words too: "I will love you forever." This is THIS moment's depth. It doesn't say anything about tomorrow, remember. It is not a promise. It is just that the depth and the totality of love is such that it comes automatically to you to say, "I will love you forever and ever. Even death will not be able to part us." This is the feeling of total love.

And let me repeat again - that does not mean that tomorrow you will be together. Who knows? That is not the point at all. Tomorrow will take care of itself. Tomorrow never enters into the mind which is in love. Tomorrow is not conceived at all, future disappears, this moment becomes eternity. This is commitment.

And when tomorrow... it is possible you may not be together, but you are not betraying. You are not deceiving, You are not cheating. You will feel sad about it, you will feel sorry about it, but you have to depart. And I'm not saying that it has to happen; it may not happen. It depends on a thousand and one things.

Life does not depend only on your love. If it were to depend only on your love then you would live for ever and ever. But life depends on a thousand and one things. Love has the feeling that "We will live together forever", but love is not the whole of life. When it is there it is so intense, one is drunk with it. But then there are a thousand and one things, sometimes small things.

You may fall in love with a man, and in that moment you are ready to go to hell with him, and you can say so, and you are not cheating. You are utterly true and honest and you say, "If I have to go to hell with you I will go!" - and I say again, you are true, you are not saying anything false. But tomorrow, living with that man, small things - a dirty bathroom may disturb your affair. Hell is too far away, there is no need to go that far - a dirty bathroom! Or just a small habit: the man snores in the night and drives you crazy! And you were ready to go to hell, and that was true. It was authentic in that moment, it was not false, you had no other idea - but the man snores in the night; or his perspiration smells like hell, or he has bad breath and when he kisses you, you feel you are tortured. Just small things, very small things; one never thinks of them when one is in love. Who bothers about a bathroom, and who thinks about snoring? But when you live together with a person, a thousand and one things are involved, and any small thing can become a rock and can destroy the flower of love.

So I'm not saying that the commitment has any promise in it. I'm simply saying that the moment of love is a moment of commitment. You are utterly in it, it is so decisive. And naturally, out of this moment will come the next, so there is every possibility that you may be together. Out of today tomorrow will be born. It will not be coming from the blue, it will grow out of today. If today has been of great love, tomorrow will also carry the same love. It will be a continuity. So there is every possibility that you may love, but it is always a perhaps. And love understands that.

And if one day you leave your woman or your woman leaves you, you will not start shouting at her, "What do you mean now? You had told me one day that 'I will live always and always with you.' Now what? Why are you going?" If you loved, if you had known love, you will understand. Love has that quality of commitment.

Love is a mystery. When it is there, everything looks heavenly. When it is gone, everything looks simply stale, meaningless. You could not have lived without this woman, and now you cannot live with this woman. And both are authentic states.

You ask, "YOU REALLY CONFUSED ME WHEN YOU TALKED ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LOVE AND LIKING. YOU SAID LOVE IS COMMITTED, BUT I THOUGHT COMMITMENTS WERE ANOTHER KIND OF ATTACHMENT."

My meaning of commitment and your meaning of commitment are different. Your meaning is legal, my meaning is not legal. I was simply describing to you the quality of love, what happens when you are encompassed in it: the commitment happens.

Now my sannyasins are in a deep commitment, but that deep commitment does not create love, love creates it. Love is first, commitment follows it. If one day love disappears that commitment will also disappear; it was the shadow. When love is gone, don't talk about commitment; then you are being foolish. It was a shadow of love. It always comes with love. And if love is no more, it goes, it disappears. You don't go on harping on that commitment: "What about the commitment?" There is no more commitment if love is not there. Love is commitment! Love gone, all commitment is gone: this is my meaning.

And I understand your meaning. Your meaning is: when love is gone, what about the commitment? That is your meaning. You want the commitment to continue when the love is gone and love is no more. Your meaning of commitment is legal.

Always remember: listening to me, try to follow my meaning. It is difficult, but you have to try. In that very trying you will get out of your meanings. Slowly, slowly a window will open and you will be able to see what I mean. Otherwise, there is going to be confusion: I say something, you hear something else.

Listen to this small anecdote:

A want ad appeared in a newspaper: "WHITE MALE NEEDED TO SERVICE BABOON IN SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT - 1000.

Finally, after weeks, a man answered the ad, but he made three conditions. First there was to be no foreplay, second the kids had to be raised Catholic, third it would take him a while to raise the 1000.

What you understand by a certain thing depends on you. The meaning comes from your past, you supply the meaning.

Remember it - listening to me, avoid supplying meaning to it. Try to listen to my meaning too. Don't only listen to my words but try to find out my meaning too. Then there will be no confusion at all. Otherwise words are mine, meanings are yours - there is going to be a great confusion in your minds.

Being with me is a love-affair. Being with me is creating a kind of energy which I cannot create alone, by myself, and you cannot create alone, by yourself. That energy happens only when two persons are in deep love; both contribute to it. The atmosphere that is being created here cannot be created without me and cannot be created without you. You have to contribute MUCH to it. The disciple is not just there to be a passive phenomenon, he has to be actively in love. When the Master and the disciple both are active, actively moving towards each other, something of the beyond penetrates into the ordinary world.

A Buddha alone is one thing. A Buddha with his SANGHA, with his commune, is another thing. Buddha alone is a beautiful flower but almost unrelated to existence, will sooner or later disappear, fade away and will become a myth, and people will wonder whether he ever existed or not.

A Buddha with a commune is a very, very concrete reality - not just a flower, more rooted in the earth. The Master finds roots into the earth through the disciples. The Master belongs to the sky -

he can fly, he has wings, but he has no more roots. He can get roots only through you. And when a Master has roots in the earth something of immense value happens to the earth. An atmosphere, a soil is created. A new psychology is created. In that psychology many many flowers will bloom.

Love is a miracle. It is alchemy.

In THE LITTLE PRINCE this small story comes up.

He was with the fox. ”I cannot play with you,” the fox said, ”I am not tamed.”

”Oh! Please excuse me,” said the little prince. But after some thought he added, ”What does that mean, ’tame’?”

”It is an act too often neglected,” said the fox. ”It means to establish ties.”

”To establish ties?”

”Just that,” said the fox. ”To me, you are still nothing more than a little boy who is just like a hundred thousand other little boys. And I have no need of you. And you, on your part, have no need of me. To you I am nothing more than a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But if you tame me, then we shall need each other. To me, you will be unique in all the world. To you, I shall be unique in all the world ”

”I am beginning to understand,” said the little prince.

Between the Master and the disciple, the greatest tie of love happens, the greatest taming happens. If you are not a disciple, I am just one man amongst millions of men. To you, I don’t mean much. Once you are a disciple then I am unique to you, then there is nobody who can be compared to me. Once you are a disciple you are unique to me, ties are established. I start growing roots through you... the meeting of the sky and the earth. In that meeting all is possible, even the impossible is possible.

Listening to me, don’t only listen to my words. Words are needed. They are the container but not the content. And to know the difference between the container and the content is the beginning of wisdom.

CHAPTER 6

Be Total, Then You Are

26 February 1978 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:

Question 1

IN LOVE AS WELL AS IN MEDITATION THE MOMENT OF DISSOLVING, DISAPPEARING, IS SO TREMENDOUSLY BEAUTIFUL. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR A MAN WHO IS STILL NOT EGOLESS, NOT ENLIGHTENED, TO ENCOUNTER DEATH CONSCIOUSLY AND TO wELCOMEANDENJOY ITTHESAMEWAY ?Y OUAREEV ERY WHERE.BUTAFTERWEWI

It is a significant question, and very urgent too. It is from Ma Ananda Shefali. She is a very, very old woman, and she will be facing death sooner or later. And it is good to prepare, it is good to go ready into death.

The first thing to be understood about death is: if you have known love you have known death, if you have known meditation you have known death. Death does not bring anything new. It is new only for those who have not loved and who have not meditated.

Shefali need not be afraid: she has been deeply in meditation and she has loved intensely. She's the old woman I was talking about just a few days ago, who has become like a child, whose child is born, who is no more a camel and no more a lion, who has become the child. She has forgotten her body; the body does not matter. Only the body ages. The body lives in time, the innermost core is always beyond time; it is never born and never dies. The body is born and the body dies. The mind is constantly being born and constantly going into death, but there is a witness inside you who goes

on watching the whole play. That witnessing is your real being. It simply watches. It watches birth, it watches love, it watches meditation, it watches death. The only quality there is one of witnessing, pure mirroring. It simply mirrors whatsoever happens.

Shefali need not be afraid. I am absolutely happy with her work on herself. She has had great courage. To become a child again needs guts - it needs guts because the whole world will be laughing at you. The whole world will think you have gone mad. You will not find support anywhere, you will lose your respectability. People will start avoiding you; that's what happened to Shefali. When she went back to Holland she wrote to me: "It is strange. Friends are avoiding me. People whom I have known my whole life simply try not to come across me. And I have brought such joy to them, and I have brought an open heart." But who wants an open heart? Who wants joy? People are searching for misery. People hoard misery, people cling to their hell. They avoid anything that can bring joy to them as long as they can. They always find alibis, rationalizations. Bliss is condemned, misery is respected.

Whenever you see a really blissful man, the idea arises in you: "Has he gone mad?" because the so-called sane are never happy. Sanity has become almost synonymous with misery, long-face, sadness, seriousness. Sanity has become synonymous with a loaded feeling - one is dragging oneself somehow, and dragging for nothing, and there is nowhere to reach except death. Sanity has become synonymous with the idea that life is meaningless, that to be joyous one has to be a fool.

It really needs courage to go against this whole crowd of the world, this miserable crowd. Nobody knows ways of joy, nobody dances, nobody sings. And suddenly you burst into song! They all feel shocked: "Something has gone wrong." They all start improving upon you, they all start advising you. They are altogether against you. You are dangerous! The fear arises in the mind of the crowd: "Who knows? You may be right." The doubt arises. And if you are right, then they are all wrong. This is unacceptable. YOU HAVE to be wrong; only then can they feel safe that they are right. Hence, they crucified Jesus.

As Christians paint Jesus - sad and miserable If he had really been that type of man, nobody would have bothered to crucify him. People would have loved him, respected him. People would have declared him a saint. But he was a celebrating man, he was celebrating the small things of life - drinking, feasting, meeting friends. He was bringing a different quality to religion. That was unacceptable, that could not be tolerated. They had to crucify him. They had to shut him up, they had to tell him to be quiet! And he was so dangerous that to allow him to remain alive was risky; he had to be destroyed. And then they created a Jesus of their own, as they would have liked the real Jesus to be - sad, miserable, on the cross. It is not just an accident that Christianity has taken the cross as the symbol. Death as a symbol? A crucified man as a symbol? It makes you sad.

When you go into a church the whole atmosphere is sad. The atmosphere is that of a cemetery; it is bound to be so. The church is created around the cross not around Christ, remember! So I call Christianity 'crossianity', not Christianity. The space that is created in a church is around the cross. Take the cross away and Christianity will disappear. Let Christ dance and Christianity will disappear. Let him take a flute, let him play, let him sing, and all your bishops and archbishops and popes and priests will be shocked: "What is this man doing?" They will crucify him again. They can only believe in a crucified life, they can only believe in a corpse. They are against life, they are anti-life.

The people who decided that Jesus should be crucified were also bishops and priests and

archbishops. They were not called bishops and they were not called priests and they were not called popes - they were called rabbis - but they were the same kind of people, no difference at all.

Shefali has been courageous, and one who is courageous in life will be courageous in death too. She has learned that to be courageous is the only way to BE. No need for her to be afraid; she can go into death dancing. Death will only reveal that which has been revealed in love and in meditation - it will reveal it more profoundly, that's all. What has been just a glimpse in meditation and love will become an absolute reality in death. Death is the highest kind of love and the highest kind of meditative energy.

If one knows how to die, death is transformed. YOU ARE NOT DESTROYED! YOU destroy death when you know how to die - smiling, a laughter in your being, welcoming. Death is not there; it is only God, your Beloved coming to you. It is a misunderstanding when you call it death. Death, as such, exists not: one only simply changes the body and the journey continues. Death, at the most, is an overnight stay in a caravanserai. In the morning, you go again. Life continues.

Death is a rest. Death is not death at all - you are not destroyed. Life cannot be destroyed! Life is eternal, death is just an episode in it. And death is not against life either, it is complementary to life. It is a rest, it is a pause. You have been singing so much, you need a little rest - your throat is tired, your vocal-chords are tired. You have been dancing so much; for seventy, eighty years you have been dancing - your legs are tired, you would like to have a little relaxation. Death allows you that relaxation. You have been laughing and living and loving - death gives you a chance to revive again. Death vitalizes you, it does not destroy. Death is non-existential. It is just like deep sleep - a little longer, a little deeper, but just like sleep.

And if you have loved, then your love remains. If you have meditated, your meditation remains.Whatsoever you have gained in the inner world remains, whatsoever you have been hoarding in the outer world is gone. Death can only take that which you possess. Death cannot take that WHICH YOU ARE. Money you possess; it will be taken. Power you possess; it will be taken away. Meditation you don't possess. It is not a thing to be possessed by you, it is a quality of your being. It is you! Love you don't possess; it is not a possession, it is being. The interior wealth will go with you, the exterior wealth will be taken away. Because the exterior belongs to the body, the body will fall, and the whole exterior world will fall with it and will disappear with it.

Shefali can go happily. When death comes, she can go dancing, praying. She will find the Beloved in it.

Her fear is also true: she's afraid that she is not yet egoless. That is the beginning of egolessness - to feel "I am not yet egoless." The egoists never feel that; they think they are egoless. It is the feeling that "I am still with the ego" that gives the first hint, the first ray of the morning sun.

She says, "I'm not yet enlightened." That is the beginning of enlightenment. That is the first feel, the first experience - the 'I' is disappearing. When the 'I' has disappeared completely, enlightenment happens.

My feeling about Shefali is that her death will become her SATORI, her SAMADHI. I have been watching her progress towards inner being closely - just a very, very small distance is left. If she can accept death totally, that distance will be destroyed, she will take the quantum leap.

These are the three points to become enlightened: one is meditation, another is love, the third is death. And death is the greatest because death is the most natural. Love... may happen, may not happen. It is not an inevitability. Millions of people decide to live without love. They live but they never love; so it is not a necessary phenomenon, it can be avoided. And meditation - you have to go into it, you have to make efforts, you have to search and seek - it is arduous. Very few people go on that adventure. Love is more natural in that sense, because it is something built-in in your being. Meditation is not so built-in. People miss even love, so what to say about meditation? Even fewer people go in the direction of meditation.

But death is inevitable: you cannot avoid it, you cannot choose it. It is there. Each and everyone has to go through it. It is absolute, there is no shirking. All that you can do is either you can go into it dancing or you can go into it reluctant, clinging to life. If you are reluctant you will miss the experience of death. If you go joyously you will have the experience of death. To miss the experience of death is to miss God, because in death love and meditation bloom automatically. Death takes your body away - suddenly ninety percent of your life evaporates. Death takes your mind away, then the remaining ten percent is also gone. Only the witness is left - this is what meditation is. Death takes all your attachments away, all your lusts away, and when all lust and all attachments are gone love-energy is pure. It is no more a relationship, it becomes a state of being. Death simply cleanses your love and your meditativeness. Your awareness and your love are both bathed, and they come out absolutely clean and purified in death. If you go joyously death can become your SAMADHI. It can become, certainly, to Shefali.

And she asks, ”IS IT POSSIBLE FOR A MAN WHO IS STILL NOT EGOLESS... TO ENCOUNTER DEATH CONSCIOUSLY AND TO WELCOME AND ENJOY IT THE SAME WAY?

”YOU ARE EVERYWHERE. BUT AFTER WE WILL HAVE DIED, SHALL WE FIND OURSELVES IN SUCH A STATE THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR US TO REMAIN ATTUNED TO YOU WHETHER YOU ARE IN THE BODY OR NOT?”

Death makes no difference. Death is absolutely immaterial. If you have loved me, if you have been in tune with me, you will remain in tune with me. Death will simply make it more intense because the barriers will be taken away. The body is a barrier, the mind is a barrier: when all the barriers disappear there will be great melting. And the disciple comes to know his first experience of God as melting into the Master; that is the privilege of a disciple. Then the second melting happens into God. The first is melting into the Master, because the Master has been a God to the disciple, the Master has been a symbol of the divine. The first experience will be of melting into the Master, becoming one with the Master, and the second experience will be melting into God, and this is easier.

To melt from you directly into God is difficult. The enormity of it is such that you may shrink back. You need a Christ between you and God, because the Christ is human and divine - that is the dual nature of the Christ or the Master. He is like you, you can hold his hands. Once you hold his hands, slowly, slowly you find that his hands are disappearing and you have entered unknowingly into the enormous, into the infinite. But by that time you cannot shrink back, by that time you have already tasted - you are drunk.

God is like an ocean... you may feel afraid. The Master is like a small spring; you need not be afraid. You can dance with the spring, you can let the spring fall on you, you can allow the showering. But in

that very showering slowly, slowly you will be gone. And then you will be ready to go into the ocean, into the enormous, into the infinite.

The second question:

Question 2

OSHO, DO YOU EVER COMMIT MISTAKES? AND IF SO, THEN WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST MISTAKE OF LIFE?

I don't commit anything else, I ONLY commit mistakes. I live through them, I survive through them. And I don't like small things; I am simply against the small scale. I only love great things.

And you ask me, "WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST MISTAKE OF LIFE?"

Giving sannyas to you. Now I have 50,000 alive mistakes moving around the world. I will stand with them and fall with them. Krishnamurti is far safer: he stands on his own. He has not committed a single mistake in giving initiation to anybody.

I go on initiating people. Each time I give initiation to a person, now it will depend: if he becomes enlightened, then I was not wrong; if he does not become I was wrong. What will the criterion be of whether I committed a mistake in giving initiation to a person or not? - only one: if he becomes enlightened then I was right in initiating him. If he does not become enlightened then I was wrong, I initiated a wrong person.

But I am not worried about mistakes. I am going to commit even more and more and more.Who cares? Even if one person becomes enlightened out of thousands of sannyasins, it is a great blessing to the world. And remember, the same is the way of God.

Do you know that a single male can populate the whole earth? He has so many seeds of human beings - a single male! In a single lovemaking the male releases millions of seeds. Actually he will become father of, at the most, a dozen children, but he could have become father of millions of children. The whole population of the earth today can be fathered by a single man.

A single tree brings millions of seeds. All those seeds are not going to become trees, but God is always working through abundance. God is a spendthrift, He is not a miser. He knows that only a few seeds will become the tree, so what is the point of making so many seeds? He makes millions of seeds. The whole life is an overflowing life, it is not a miserly phenomenon.

God is very indulgent. Even if a single human being becomes enlightened, I am immensely fulfilled. The remaining ones will prove my mistakes. They will remain as mistakes, but that risk has to be taken.

The moment you trust me You don't know, you are not even aware that I have trusted you more than you have trusted me. I have risked more than you have risked. You have nothing to risk, really.When you say "I surrender", what have you got to surrender? Except misery, what have you got? Anxieties, anguishes, agonies - what else have you got to surrender? Your darkness, your

hell? - what else have you got to surrender? What risk are you taking? You think that you are taking a great risk in trusting me. You have nothing to lose! Really, I am taking a risk with you!

Christ took the risk when he accepted those twelve apostles, and he must still be thinking, ”Why did I accept those twelve apostles?” If he had not accepted those fellows there would have been no church, no Christianity and all that nonsense. Buddha must be thinking again and again, ”Why did I accept so many people as my BHIKKUS, as my disciples?” because they created much nuisance. But that risk has to be taken.

It is good that Jesus took the risk because without it it is certain that there would have been no church and there would have been no wars between Christians and Mohammedans and there would have been none of the ugliness that the Christian church has been doing down the ages; but there would have been no Eckhart either and no Francis either, no Jakob Boehme either. Out of the whole church-history, even if one Meister Eckhart is born it is enough, it is worth taking the risk. If Buddha had not risked, had not committed the mistake of initiating people, there would have been no Bodhidharma, no Mahakashyapa, no Nagarjuna, no Vimalkirti - and the world would have been immensely poorer.

Yes, there have been wrong things, MILLIONS of wrong things, but a single phenomenon like Bodhidharma is enough to counterbalance. All those million wrongs are nothing; a single Bodhidharma is enough!

You ask me, ”WHAT IS MY GREATEST MISTAKE?”

That is not only my greatest mistake, that has always been the greatest mistake of all the Masters: they initiate people and they take the risk. Now it depends on you. This is what I call commitment. Now this is your commitment to become enlightened, this is your commitment that you have to grow. Don’t remain stuck. Start moving. You have a great destiny, you are entitled to miracles. Don’t be satisfied with small things. You can possess the whole, so don’t be contented with small, small things and tiny things - a certificate, a medal, a degree. Don’t be stupid. Be intelligent and work diligently. Go on hammering yourself so all that is wrong is chiseled out. You will have to pass through fire. That’s why I have chosen the orange color, the color of fire: you will have to pass through fire. But only those who pass through fire become pure gold.

Let me be your alchemy. Allow me to change your baser metal into pure gold. It is a risky game. Always the greater possibility is of failure; the higher you aim, the more the possibility of failure. If you want to become a rich man you can become easily. If you want to become a politician you can become easily; intelligence is not needed.

I have heard

A politician had a tumor in the head; it was operated upon. When they were removing the tumor they felt that the whole brain had to be cleaned because the tumor had affected the whole brain system. So they took out the whole brain. The cleansing was going to take a few days. And it is an old story: in those days the anaesthesia was not so strong.

The next day the politician was lying in the bed. A man came and he said, ”What are you doing here? You have been chosen the prime minister of the country!”

He heard it, almost in a sleep - but when you hear that you have become the prime minister, no anaesthesia can work. He simply jumped out of the bed and started moving out.

The doctor said, ' Where are you going? Your brain is The man said, ”Now I won’t need one. I have become the prime minister!”

If you want to become a politician you don’t need much intelligence; in fact, the less the better. You will succeed far more easily. But if you want to become enlightened you will have to put all that you have at stake. You will have to become an intense flame of intelligence, of awareness. This is the commitment. I have risked with you, you have to risk with me. This commitment can grow into a great flowering: it all depends on you. Whether what I am doing is a mistake or not will be proved by you. Now it is out of my hands. This is my trust in you.

The third question:

Question 3

WHAT IS LOVE? WHY AM I SO AFRAID OF LOVE? WHY DOES LOVE FEEL LIKE AN UNBEARABLE PAIN?

Meditate on these lines of Raymond John Born.

What is required of us in our time is that we go down into uncertainty, where what is new is as old as every morning, and what is well-known is not known as well. That we go down into the most human where living men have vanished and the music of their meaning has been trapped and sealed. What is asked of us in our time is that we break open our blocked caves and find each other.
Nothing less will heal the anguished spirit, nor release the heart to act in love.

You ask, ”WHAT IS LOVE?”

It is the deep urge to be one with the whole, the deep urge to dissolve I and thou into one unity. Love is that because we are separated from our own source, out of that separation the desire arises to fall back into the whole, to become one with it.

If you pull a tree out of its soil, if you uproot it, then the tree will feel a great desire to be rooted back into the soil, because that was its real life. Now it is dying. Separate, the tree cannot exist. It has to exist in the earth, with the earth, through the earth. That’s what love is.

Your ego has become a barrier between you and your earth - the whole. Man is suffocated, he cannot breathe, he has lost his roots. He is no more nourished. Love is a desire for nourishment. Love is getting roots in existence. And the phenomenon is easier if you fall in the polar opposite -
that’s why man is attracted towards woman, the woman is attracted towards man. Man can find his earth through the woman, he can become earthed again through the woman, and the woman can become earthed through the man. They are complementary. Man alone is half, in a desperate need to be whole. Woman alone is half. When these two halves meet and mingle and merge, for the first time one feels rooted, grounded. Great joy arises in the being.

It is not only the woman that you get rooted in, it is through the woman that you get rooted in God. The woman is just a door, the man is just a door. Man and woman are may understand it, you may not understand it, but the desire for love really proves the existence of God. There is no other proof. Because man loves, God is. Because man cannot live without love, God is.

The urge to love simply says that alone we suffer and die. Together we grow, are nourished, fulfilled, contented.

You ask, ”WHAT IS LOVE? WHY AM I SO AFRAID OF LOVE?”

And that’s why one is afraid of love too - because the moment you enter into the woman you lose your ego. The woman enters into the man and loses her ego.

Now this has to be understood: you can be rooted in the whole only if you lose yourself; there is no other way. You are attracted towards the whole because you are feeling un-nourished, and then when the moment comes to disappear into the whole you start feeling very much afraid. A great fear arises because you are losing yourself. You shrink back. This is the dilemma. Every human being has to face it, encounter it, go through it, understand it, and transcend it. You have to understand that both things are arising out of the SAME thing. You feel it would be beautiful to disappear - no worry, no anxiety, no responsibility. You will become part of the whole as trees are and the stars are. Just the idea is fantastic! It opens doors, mysterious doors into your being, it gives birth to poetry. It is romantic. But when you actually go into it then the fear arises, that ”I am going to disappear, and who knows what will happen next?”

Remember the river listening to the whisper of the desert... hesitant, wants to go beyond it, wants to go in search of the ocean, feels that there is a desire and there is a subtle feeling and certainty and conviction that ”My destiny is to go beyond?” No visible reason can be supplied, but there is an inner conviction that ”I am not to end here. I have to go searching for something bigger.” Something deep down says, ”Try, try hard! And transcend this desert.” And then the desert says, ”Listen to me: the only way is to evaporate into the winds. They will take you, they will take you beyond the desert.” The river wants to go beyond the desert, but the question is very natural: ”Then what is the proof and guarantee that the winds will allow me to become a river again? Once I have disappeared I will not be in control in any way. Then what is the guarantee that I will become again the same river, the same form, the same name, the same body? And who knows? And how should I trust that once I have surrendered to the winds they will allow me to become separate again?” That is the fear of love.

You know, you are convinced that without love there is no joy, without love there is no life, without love you are hungry for something unknown, unfulfilled, empty. You are hollow, you don’t have anything. You are just a container without the content. You feel the hollowness, the emptiness and the misery of it. And you are convinced that there are ways which can fulfill you. But when you come close to love a great fear arises, doubt arises: if you relax, if you really go into it, will you ever be able to come back again? Will you be able to protect your identity, your personality? It is worth taking such a risk? And the mind decides not to take such a risk, because at least you ARE - under-nourished, unfed, hungry, miserable - but at least you ARE. Disappearing into some love, who knows? You will disappear, and then what is the guarantee that there will be joy, there will be bliss, there will be God?

It is the same fear that a seed feels when it starts dying into the soil. It is death, and the seed cannot conceive that there will be life arising out of death.

Love is death. And the lovers cannot comprehend that this death is only death on THIS side. On the other side this is the real birth. That's why I said yesterday to Vidya's mother, who had asked what a guru can do to you, I said, "He can undo you and he can re-do you."

To be with a Master is a great love-affair. You will have to allow him to undo you. That is painful. And fear will arise and doubt will arise, and you will escape many times, and you will say, "This is not the thing to do." The mind will say, "What are you getting into? For what? Save yourself and escape." And the mind will give a thousand and one reasons why to escape, and the mind is very clever in inventing reasons. It is a rationalizer: where no reason exists, it creates. And those will appeal to you because they will appeal to the ego.

This is the misery, the dilemma, the anguish: man wants to love and man is afraid to love. Unless you understand it and you go in spite of the fear, you will not be able to love. That's what trust is. In spite of the fear, going into a thing is trust.

The fourth question:

Question 4

HAVE YOUR SIMON PETER, PAULS, ETC. ALREADY STARTED ESTABLISHING A CHURCH FOR NON-SMELLING CAMELS?

They need not. I won't allow that. I am doing that myself - because the last time the Pauls and the Peters were allowed to create the church, they messed it up completely. This time I am to create my church myself. Peters and Pauls won't be allowed to create it. That will be far better.

Christ was not unaware of the Eastern ways. He HAD been in the East, he had learned the wisdom of the East, he had known truth here, on this soil - in India.

Christianity has not got the whole story about Jesus. It starts when he is thirty and ends when he is thirty-three - only a three year record. And what happened to the thirty years? Where was Jesus? He was travelling in Egypt, in India, in Tibet. He was working hard, he was finding ways and means to enter into his own being. When he reached back to his own people, he had become almost a foreigner - the same way as my sannyasins will feel back in the West. You will become a foreigner there. In fact, now, to be a foreigner will be your destiny. If you are in India you will be a foreigner, if you are in England you will be a foreigner, if you are in America you will be a foreigner. Joining hands with me you have become a foreigner. I am a foreigner, an outsider, not part of this mad world.

When Jesus went back to his own people, to the Jews, he had become almost a foreigner. They could not understand what he was talking about. He was not part of their tradition, although he was quoting from the tradition. But the meaning that he was giving to the quotes was totally strange. Although he was using the names of Moses and Ezekiel, those were just names. It was only the container, the content was totally different. The content was not Jewish; it was Buddhist, it was

basically Buddhist. He was pouring Buddhist wine into Jewish bottles, and if Jews became angry it was natural. And he could not live long, otherwise he would have created his own church. A three-year ministry is not much. He was very young, thirty-three, when he was crucified; he had not time enough. Buddha created his own church.

That's the reason why through the Christian church very few people have become enlightened. They can be counted on fingers. They are very few and far between, it is very rare: centuries pass, then one Eckhart or one Francis. Buddha created his own church; he lived a long life, he lived for eighty-four years. He became enlightened when he was thirty-five, he had fifty years to work. He created his own church.

When a church is created by a Buddha or a Christ it has a different quality. When a church is created by Peter and Paul, it is created by Tom and Dick - it can't have that quality.

This time I'm not going to allow that. The Peters and the Pauls can rest, they need not be worried. Whatsoever is happening here is happening according to me, ABSOLUTELY according to me, so don't throw the responsibility on others. I am responsible, for good, for bad. Whatsoever happens here, I am responsible; I am totally and absolutely responsible! And it is easy for your mind to criticize my sannyasins, it is difficult to criticize me. So you jump upon my poor sannyasins; it is easy for you to criticize them. If you want to criticize me, criticize me! Don't find scapegoats. I always like a direct communication, a direct dialogue. There is no Paul here and no Peter, and whatsoever my sannyasins are doing, they are simply obeying my orders. So if you have to find faults, find faults with me. Never find faults with my sannyasins; they have no responsibility in it. They are simply obedient, they are doing whatsoever is said.Whatsoever is given to them, they do it. They do it with totality, with intensity. That is part of their growth-work.

But don't call names. Don't say that the Peters and Pauls et cetera, have already started establishing a church. No, I have started it.

The church starts when a Master initiates. Initiate a single man and the church has started. The church exists in the relationship between the Master and the disciple. It does not exist in the temples and the churches and the organizations, it exists between the Master and the disciple. It is a very intimate phenomenon. Its vibrations will be felt all over the earth, sooner or later; it will go on becoming a tidal wave.

The church in itself is not wrong. Who is behind the church? - that is the basic thing to be remembered. Christianity went very wrong because of Peter and Paul. Buddhism never went that wrong. A few things are going to be wrong; they have to be accepted, that is the nature of things. When the water falls, the rainwater, it is pure, it is distilled water, but the moment it falls on the soil it will become muddy.

When Buddha speaks it is pure rainwater, distilled water, the purest, but when it falls into your ears it becomes muddy. It is natural, it has to be accepted. And when Buddha is gone, of course - more and more mud, more and more mud. But even if a small part of Buddha's message remains hidden in the mud, it is worth carrying the mud on your heads. It is worth carrying that mud in your heart, because that small fragment of truth can transform you.

Truth is never small. Truth cannot be small. It may be very atomic, but its explosion is always infinite.

I am going to create my own church - sannyas is the beginning of it - and I want to create it according to me. So whatsoever you feel is not according to you, you criticize me, you encounter me directly.

The fifth question:

Question 5

WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT LOVE, TEARS IMMEDIATELY START RUNNING. PLEASE SAY SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

The tears are the greatest possible prayer. Don't be worried about analyzing them, don't try to interpret them; they are beyond interpretation and beyond analysis. Words will not be adequate to say anything about the tears. Tears come from a deeper source than words. And if tears are coming, all that is needed is not to think about them but to allow them, to give them an intensity, to give them a kind of totality. You will understand those tears only when you are not hesitant about going into them, when you are not somehow holding yourself back. Go into them utterly. Become tears, and when tears come, enjoy. You are overflowing. Thinking of love if tears don't come then you were not thinking about love. Thinking of God if tears don't come then your thinking is futile, impotent. Listening to me, if your heart does not start overflowing with tears, then you were listening only through the head - which is not listening. You have been hearing but not listening. When you listen, the heart will start dancing. And the heart has only one way to express itself, and that way is the way of tears.
Meditate on these lines of an anonymous poet:

Sing until your breath crackles to the last.

Note what is caught upon the passing wind.

Laugh until the pains squeeze authority into chaotic blasts, and then into puny puffs. Cry until the peak of your tears, like the pure tips of a wave before it folds into the gulping sea.
Ah, but love when your heart beats the beat of nights full of daffodils, For then you are. If

you can allow your tears totality, then you are.

My message is of laughter and tears. It looks contradictory but it is not. Deep down in your being laughter and tears .Ire joined together, they are part of one energy. If you laugh long, tears will come. If you go on crying, you will suddenly see the change - one moment a sudden change - and the laughter has entered into you. See this polarity. Go into tears as deeply as possible until tears become laughter. Then you have really gone into the very end; from that end, the wheel moves. When you are laughing, laugh so deeply and so totally, so wildly, that laughter turns into tears and your eyes start raining. Then you will know that all paradoxes are only on the surface - deep down they are one, laughter and tears are one. And when your prayer is of laughter and tears, it is a true prayer.

You need not be worried about what it is. It is a mystery. It has to be lived, known, seen. Through knowing it, through seeing it, through living it, you will understand it. There is no other way of understanding it.

The sixth question:

Question 6

I'M ABLE TO FEEL THE DIVINE BREATH IN A SUNSET, IN A TREE, IN A BIRD FLYING... BUT I'M INCREDIBLY AFRAID TO OPEN MYSELF TO HUMAN BEINGS, TO THE CONCRETE PEOPLE AROUND ME. I CAN ACCEPT THE DIVINE ONLY BEYOND THE HUMAN LEVEL. SOMETIMES I FEEL IT REALLY A PROBLEM. PLEASE HELP ME TO FACE THIS POINT.

Bodhideva, it is always simple to love abstract things. It is more simple to love humanity than human beings, because loving humanity you are not risking anything. A single human being is far more dangerous than the whole of humanity. Humanity is a word, there is no corresponding reality to it. The human being is a reality, and when you come across a reality there are going to be good times, bad times, pain, pleasure, ups and downs, highs and lows, agonies and ecstasies. Loving humanity, there will be no ecstasy and no agony. In fact, loving humanity is a way of avoiding human beings: because you can't love human beings you start loving humanity just to deceive yourself.

Avoid abstractions.

The second thing is: it is certainly easier to love a tree, because while loving a tree the tree is almost passive, it does not respond. Loving a tree is just an imagination game on your part. It is easy; whatsoever you want to make out of it you can make. The tree is blowing in the wind and you can think that she is calling you, she is spreading her hands towards you, she is welcoming you, and the tree is blissfully unaware of you. And whenever you go to the tree you can always project your imagination on it. You don't know the being of the tree yet because you don't know even your own being. To understand a tree will be more difficult because a tree is less evolved. There is a bigger gap between you and the tree. How can you bridge it? There is not so big a gap between you and your neighbor. You are both contemporaries, equals, existing on the same plane, or almost the same plane - understanding is easier - but you say that there you don't feel at ease.

Where understanding is easier, what is the problem? You cannot project. Where there is no possibility of understanding you are free to project. You can love a rock.

In America they are selling rocks in beautiful boxes. Somebody has sent me a rock. It is an ordinary rock; it costs ten dollars. The package is beautiful, and with it come printed instructions on how to love it, how to make it a pet, how to take care of it. The booklet that accompanies it says it is very temperamental, you will have to take care. This is a game you can play. And if you project, the rock will be felt as if it is responding. You can hold the rock in your hands, and if you are really imaginative, of a poetic nature, you will feel the rock is sending vibes. It is saying "Hi! How are you? I love you, and I am feeling so immensely good in your hand." And this is simply you! It is a monologue, it is not a dialogue. The rock is simply unaware of you, but you can play the game.

With concrete human beings it is diff1cult to play the game; it costs. That's why people start loving dogs and cats, trees, rocks. They want to love, but they want love to be non-risky. To love a dog is non-risky, to love a woman is very risky. She is not just there so that you can go on projecting, she is not like a white screen that you can project anything on and she will dance to your tune, and when you come home she will wag her tail - not necessarily.

A man went to his psychiatrist and said, ”What is happening? I am in trouble. Just one year ago when I got married, my wife used to come with my slippers and my dog used to bark. Now it is just the opposite: my dog comes with the slippers and my wife barks!”

The psychiatrist said, ”But I don’t understand. You are getting the same services. What is the problem? Where is the problem?”

With a human being sometimes there is barking and sometimes there is wagging of the tail, and sometimes the wife is angry. And when a woman is angry, she is REALLY angry. No man can be that angry, because man is always half-hearted. Neither is he total in his love nor total in his anger He is calculating, he thinks what to do and what not to do. He is intellectual, he is hung-up in the head. The woman lives without the head. That’s her beauty too, and also the agony of living with her. She’s so graceful, so round, so soft - all because the head is not calculating. She lives through the heart, is more instinctive, is more animal-like. When she loves you, she loves you; she is ready to sacrifice herself. She can die for you, she will not hesitate a single moment. But when she is angry... she can kill you! She will not hesitate a single moment either.

The woman still remains total, the woman still remains primitive. And that is good, that is the only hope for humanity - that the woman is still primitive. Educate the woman, make her sophisticated, make her as clever as man, as cunning as man - as the lib-movements are doing all over the world - and the world will lose the last hope. The only hope ;s the woman, because she is still part of nature, still somehow rooted in nature, still earthly, has not yet become abstract, does not bother about abstract things. Her problems are concrete. She is a realist.

I have heard about a Chinese emperor. He wanted a painting to be made for his bedroom. He had seen a white crane flying across the full moon in a dream; he wanted that. He searched for the greatest painter. A woman was found who was the greatest painter, and the emperor said, ”You do it, and I will reward you, and whatsoever you demand I will give you. I need this painting. I have seen it in a dream - a white crane flying across the full moon.”

The woman said, ”You will have to wait.”

One year passed. The king inquired again and again, and again and again the woman said, ”Wait.” Two years passed and the king said, ”How long will it take? Just a small painting of the full moon and the crane passing it - how long will it take?”

The woman said, ”I have been watching every full moon night but not a single crane has passed. And until it passes I cannot paint it. I am not a man, I am a woman. I am a realist.”

I love the story. The woman said, ”I am not a man, I cannot do it in abstract. I cannot simply imagine about it, I have to see it. Only when I have seen it happen can I do

The king understood the point and he said, ”There is no need. You will be rewarded. No need to be worried about it, but I understand your point.”

The woman is still a realist.

I have heard

A man was laying a new concrete path. No sooner was his back turned than a crowd of children came running by, leaving footmarks all over the hardening surface. A neighbor who heard his swearing reproached him: ”I thought you liked children, George.”

”I do like them,” he replied. ”In the abstract, but not in the concrete.”

It is very easy to love people in the abstract, the real problem arises in the concrete. And remember, unless you love human beings, concrete, real human beings, all your love for trees and birds is bogus, just ho-hum.

If you can love human beings, then only a point will arise in your consciousness where you can love birds and trees and mountains too; but that is only later on. If you cannot penetrate a reality that is so close by, how can you penetrate the reality that is so far off? How can you commune with a rock? - there exists no common language. Either you have to become a rock or the rock has to become a human being. Otherwise the distance is so vast, unbridgeable. Bridge it with people first.

And I know it is possible to love a tree, but that is only when you have loved human beings so deeply, so totally, that you have found trees in human beings - then only; that you have found animals in human beings - then only; that you have seen birds in human beings - then only. Because a human being has been all these things, he still carries the marks in his unconscious, or collective unconscious. You have once been a tree, a bird, an animal, a rock. You have been all things, you have been millions of things, and all those experiences are still inside you. The only way to connect with the outside tree is to first connect with the tree that is inside a human being.

Fall in love with human beings. Take the risk, be courageous. Suffer the pains of love and the ecstasies. Go deeper into human beings and soon you will find no human being is just a human being; a human being is human being plus the whole existence, because a human being is the ultimate evolute. All that man has been in the past is still there, layer upon layer.

Have you not felt it sometimes in the woman - that she is a cat? Have you not looked into the eyes of a woman and suddenly felt the cat inside? Without being a cat, no woman can be a woman. And you will find the bitch too. And so is the case with the man - you will find the wolf.

All that exists, man has evolved through it. It is just like you were a child, then you became a young man; do you think your childhood has completely disappeared? It is there. It has gathered a layer of youth around it but it is there, it can be provoked. In a certain situation and milieu you can again become a child. If you come to see your childhood friend, suddenly you forget that you are young, you again become a child. You start thinking of those days, and the nostalgia and the memories and the sweet things and the joys and all that. You forget.

You may have become old. Has youth simply disappeared from you? It is there; you have gathered another layer. Just cut a tree and you will find layers upon layers in the tree. That’s how the age of the tree is judged: if it is sixty years old then there are sixty layers. Each year it drops the bark and a new layer arises. If you cut a rock, the rock has layers. If you go deep into human beings you will find layers, like trees and rocks. The deeper you go, the more you will find strange things happening. While making love to a woman, if you can abandon yourself totally, you will be making love to animals, to birds, to trees, to rocks, to existence itself.

Each single individual is a small world. A microcosm contains all; it contains the whole, the macrocosm. But you cannot avoid human beings. You cannot say, ”I will love trees but not human beings.” Then your trees will be false, you have not approached them rightly. First, they have to be loved in human beings, first they have to be found in human beings. Then only will you know their language.

The last question:

Question 7

WHEN A REAL LION MEETS A REAL MASTER,, HE RECOGNIZES HIM AND HE DECIDES TO BE DEFEATED AND DECIDES TO HAVE HIS EGO BROKEN BECAUSE HE KNOWS THAT THIS IS THE PATH AND WILL LEAD HIM TO MORE EASE. NOW, I’M AFRAID THAT IT IS STILL MY EGO DECIDING FOR ME. PLEASE EXPLAIN.

Carlo, the decision to take sannyas has to be of the ego. But it is a decision to commit suicide. These two things have to be understood.

When a man decides to commit suicide, life is deciding for death, in favor of death. When a man commits suicide, what happens? He has lived and found something is lacking in life, it is not worth living; he moves in the opposite direction, of death. He searches for death.

The same happens in sannyas too: it is the ego deciding to take sannyas. Sannyas means the suicide of the ego.

The ego has lived and found only agonies. The ego has searched, groped in the dark, and never has anything happened to it, only tension, anguish, misery. The ego has lived through hell. The ego is hell!

Jean-Paul Sartre says ”The other is hell” - that is absolutely wrong. The ego is hell! Not the other, but the I is the hell. And when you have felt this in the very guts of your being, in your bones, in your blood, in your marrow - when the ego has utterly failed you, the ego decides to commit suicide. That’s what sannyas is.

But once you take sannyas a totally different world, a totally different vision, starts in your being. You start living egolessly, and suddenly you are surprised. It is not life that was wrong, it was the ego that was wrong. Life is immensely fulfilling, it is SHEER joy, it is made of the stuff called bliss. It was ego that was a barrier and was not allowing you to live. Once you surrender, even for a moment if the window opens in that surrender And that’s what sannyas is, initiation is looking into the eyes of the Master, for a moment you disappear. For a moment you start seeing through the eyes of the Master. For a moment you are not separate, you vibrate with the Master. You take his color, you take his vibration, you pulsate with him, you breathe with him. It is a single moment, but in that single moment you have come across the gap from where the door opens, and you can see a totally different world. The same world, but yet in a totally different perspective.

This is initiation - looking through the Master’s eyes. You have looked through your eyes and you have not found anything. Now you close your eyes and you look through the eyes of the Master.

This is obedience, this is surrender. This is trying to put aside your past patterns, and learning of something new. It is an unlearning process, unlearning as far as the ego and its ways are concerned, and a learning process as far as the ways of non-ego are concerned.

The Master is one who has no ego. The disciple is one

who has come to understand that the ego and its ways are false, they lead only into cul-de-sacs. The disciple is one who is ready to drop the ego and wants to know, ”How to drop it?” He has suffered long with it, he has carried the burden long. Now he’s tired of it! He wants to be unburdened. He does not know how to put it away, how to throw it. He has been clinging to it for so long that he has forgotten that it can be put aside. He comes to a man who has put his ego aside, looks into those eyes, starts trembling in a new way. A new streaming energy is felt, and suddenly a link is broken between the ego and you.

This is what initiation is. It is just a beginning certainly, much will have to be done later on; but if you have taken one step, half the journey is complete. Yes, I say half the journey is complete, because the first step is the most difficult step. All other steps are going to be the same, repetition of the same step again and again.

Carlo’s question is significant.

He says, ”WHEN A REAL LION MEETS A REAL MASTER, HE RECOGNIZES HIM ”

That is true. Camels cannot recognize a Master. The camels have to be persuaded. And sometimes a camel comes to me and I persuade really hard.

Just a few days ago, I was persuading a woman really hard. I could see that she could become a lion, but she persists to remain a camel. I could see the potential, that just in a single step she could become a lion. Ordinarily I don’t persuade too much, because persuading a person for sannyas too much can become a barrier. The person can start thinking that he or she is so important, that’s why I am persuading. That feeling of importance can enhance the ego. But when I see that somebody is just on the verge, a push IS needed. I go out of my way to give a push. But it is always moving into the unknown. One never knows how the person is going to react.

I persuaded her. She became a sannyasin, but missed the point. While looking into my eyes, she was not looking into my eyes. She was still afraid, she was clinging to the camel. A great opportunity was given to her, she missed it. I have given her a message that she can drop sannyas, because really it has not happened. She wants to remain a camel, so let her be happy as a camel. A camel cannot recognize, a camel is blind. The camel is the larva, a stagnant pool.

But a lion can recognize. That’s why almost always it happens that those who have any kind of courage in them immediately take the jump into sannyas. Not that they will not have to face the world, not that they will not have problems - they will have problems, but that is secondary. Those problems can be tackled, that world can be faced. But when a moment arises when one has to take the risk, the lion takes the risk. The lion recognizes the Master.

The camel cannot recognize, the camel has to be persuaded, goaded into sannyas. The lion can recognize and accept sannyas, ask for it, take the jump on his own accord. And in that very jump the lion starts moving to the third stage: the child.

In surrender you become a child, you become soft, feminine, you allow the Master to penetrate you deeply. You allow the Master to make you pregnant, you become pregnant with the divine. And the state of child is really a state of pregnancy. You die and you are born anew as a child, out of your own womb.

It is the greatest miracle in the world - man being born out of his own womb.

But the decision is going to be of the ego. Just as suicide is the decision of life, sannyas is the decision of the ego. But once you have decided the ego starts disappearing, the ego has committed suicide. In fact, sannyas and suicide are very similar. Suicide is a false sannyas, sannyas is a real suicide - because in suicide only the body dies and you will be born again. In sannyas the ego dies, and if you work it out totally, you may not be born again.

CHAPTER 7

The Mad King's Idol

27 February 1978 am in Buddha Hall

THERE WAS ONCE A VIOLENT, IGNORANT AND IDOLATROUS KING. ONE DAY HE SWORE THAT IF HIS PERSONAL IDOL ACCORDED HIM A CERTAIN ADVANTAGE IN LIFE, HE WOULD CAPTURE THE FIRST THREE PEOPLE WHO PASSED BY HIS CASTLE AND FORCE THEM TO DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO IDOL-WORSHIP.

SURE ENOUGH, THE KING'S WISHES WERE FULFILLED, AND HE IMMEDIATELY SENT SOLDIERS ON TO THE HIGHWAY TO BRING IN THE FIRST THREE PEOPLE WHOM THEY COULD FIND.

THESE THREE WERE, AS IT HAPPENED, A SCHOLAR, A SAYED (DESCENDANT OF MOHAMMED THE PROPHET) AND A PROSTITUTE.

HAVING THEM THROWN DOWN BEFORE HIS IDOL, THE UNBALANCED KING TOLD THEM OF HIS VOW, AND ORDERED THEM ALL TO BOW DOWN IN FRONT OF THE IMAGE.

THE SCHOLAR SAID, ”THIS SITUATION UNDOUBTEDLY COMES WITHIN THE DOCTRINE OF ’FORCE MAJEURE’. THERE ARE NUMEROUS PRECEDENTS ALLOWING ANYONE TO APPEAR TO CONFORM WITH CUSTOM IF COMPELLED, WITHOUT REAL OR MORAL CULPABILITY BEING IN ANY WAY INVOLVED.” SO HE MADE A DEEP OBEISANCE TO THE IDOL.

THE SAYED, WHEN IT WAS HIS TURN, SAID, ”AS A SPECIALLY PROTECTED PERSON, HAVING IN MY VEINS THE BLOOD OF THE HOLY PROPHET, MY ACTIONS THEMSELVES PURIFY

ANYTHING WHICH IS DONE, AND THEREFORE THERE IS NO BAR TO MY ACTING AS THIS MAN DEMANDS." AND HE BOWED DOWN BEFORE THE IDOL.

THE PROSTITUTE SAID, "ALAS, I HAVE NEITHER INTELLECTUAL TRAINING NOR SPECIAL PREROGATIVES, AND SO I AM AFRAID THAT, WHATEVER YOU DO TO ME, I CANNOT WORSHIP THIS IDOL, EVEN IN APPEARANCE."

THE MAD KING'S MALADY WAS IMMEDIATELY BANISHED BY THIS REMARK. AS IF BY MAGIC HE SAW THE DECEIT OF THE TWO WORSHIPPERS OF THE IMAGE. HE AT ONCE HAD THE SCHOLAR AND THE SAYED DECAPITATED, AND SET THE PROSTITUTE FREE.

God cannot be reduced to an image: that is one of the fundamentals of Sufi experience - I will not say Sufi philosophy, because there exists nothing like Sufi philosophy. It is an experience, not a speculation. It is a vision.

The Sufi vision says: God cannot be reduced to any image, metaphor, symbol or sign, although the human mind has been trying down through the ages to reduce God into something which man can worship, which man can handle, which man can cope with. That has been one of the oldest desires of the human mind: to put God in human categories so that God can be managed, manipulated, so God can be in your hands.

The Sufi experience is that this is sacrilege, this is sin. The very effort to reduce God to an image is to falsify reality.

In the first place, why do we want God to be reduced to an idol? The very enormity of existence baffles us. The very infinity, and we feel we are falling into an abyss. Out of fear man creates a God, a small God, small like man. Out of fear man creates God in his own image and then he feels at ease.With the enormity of existence, to feel at ease you will have to disappear. Either disappear into the infinity of existence or create a manageable God. Create a temple in your home, let God be reduced to an image - then you can forget the enormity, the hugeness, the immenseness.

Because of the eternal silence of existence, man wants to create a song to sing. The song may be of the Vedas or of the Koran; it doesn't matter. The sound is consoling, the silence frightening. The image feels human, part of our world. The imageless God is superhuman, it is beyond us. Unless we go beyond ourselves, we cannot meet the true God. To avoid that meeting, to avoid that transcendence, we create a small God of our own. We start having dialogues with our created God, man-made, manufactured by the human mind. We worship, we pray, we do rituals and we are happy. It is a kind of dream, it is not entry into reality. Your temples are barriers to God, not doors. They pretend to be doors, but they are not. And your ideals, your images, your philosophies, your continuous effort to fill the emptiness of existence with words, philosophies, systems, are nothing but creating a false security around you.

God is insecurity. To be with God is to be constantly in danger. To move into God is to move into the unknown and the unknowable. That frightens, that scares. One starts losing oneself. One wants to hold back. One wants not to look into the enormity. Then those small Gods created by yourself or by your priests out of your cunning, cleverness, skill, are of great help. They are false because you have created them.

The true God is one who has created you, the false God is one that you have created. This is one of the fundamental insights of Sufism: that the temple has to be empty, empty of all that is man-made. The prayer has to be silent, silent of all that man has fabricated in words. The prayer can only be a dialogue - wordless, silent - with the infinity. It can only be a disappearance on your part. You can only dissolve, melt, merge. Then you are transplanted, taken up, transported. Then the winds take you beyond the desert, beyond the wasteland of mind.

But to be ready for that, great courage is needed. And man is always happy with toys. All your idols are toys - beware of the fact. And man is so cunning: he can create great philosophies around his falsities. He can defend, he can argue, he can rationalize. He can almost create such clouds of logic that you can be lost in those clouds. That's how humanity is lost. Somebody is lost in Christian clouds, somebody is lost in Mohammedan clouds, somebody is lost in Hindu clouds. But if you go deep down into them, they are all speculative, logic-chopping, philosophizing, about and about. But the truth does not reflect in them.

Truth reflects only in a meditative consciousness, not in a speculative consciousness - never. The moment you think, you go astray. Truth reflects only when you are in a state of no-thought, when nothing stirs within you. When there is not even a ripple in the inner lake of consciousness, then truth reflects in you, and that truth has no image. That truth is formless, nameless. All names are our efforts to communicate with the eternal silence, but they all fail.

Sufis have a hundred names for God - not exactly a hundred, but ninety-nine. I call them the ninety-nine names of nothingness. The real, the hundredth, is empty. What it is is not said; it is not provoked, it is left. Ninety-nine names are given; where is the hundredth? That is the true name - which cannot be pronounced, which cannot be uttered. To utter it would be a profanity. How can the ultimate be uttered? And once uttered, how can it remain the ultimate?

Lao Tzu says, "I don't know His name - nobody knows - hence I will call Him Tao." It has to be called something, but no name is a true name. When all names disappear from your mind and you are there just watching, being, doing nothing, you have the first glimpse, the first penetration of the infinite into the finite. You become pregnant. The first penetration of the sky into the earth, and your seed is broken, and you start growing. And that growth is a kind of happening - nothing that you do, you simply allow it. This is the first thing to be remembered.

But even Mohammedans, who have been against all kinds of idol-worship, have created their own idols. It seems the human mind cannot avoid the temptation. Now Kaaba and its black stone have become the idol. Now people go to Kaaba for HAJJ, for pilgrimage. Poor people gather money their whole lives to go just once to kiss that black stone. Now what is it? It is the same.

I have heard

A Sufi seeker who later on became a great Master, Bayazid of Bistam, was going for a HAJJ, for a pilgrimage. He came across a Master by chance - at least by chance on his part. It was not chance on the part of the Master. The Master was waiting for Bayazid, but Bayazid was unaware. He had just stayed for the night by the side of the Master, and the Master was sitting under a tree.

In the morning, the sun was rising, and it was beautiful and cool and birds were singing, and the pilgrims started moving, and Bayazid was also getting ready. And the Master called him close by

and said, ”Look into my eyes,” and he looked into those eyes - something enormous opened, he was transported to some different dimension. When he came back the Master was laughing, and he said, ”Now you can do the pilgrimage around me and go home. You have come to Kaaba. There is no other Kaaba. Forget all about that black stone.” And Bayazid understood it. He moved around the Master as people move around the Kaaba stone, kissed the feet of the Master, and went back home.

And when people gathered together, the villagers, and they asked, ”Have you been to the Kaaba?” he said, ”Yes, to the REAL Kaaba. I have seen the enormous, I have seen the undefined.”

And once seen, it is never forgotten. It enters into your very existence. It is no more a memory in the head; every cell of your body resounds it, every part of your being dances in tune with it.

Sufis are not liked very much by the Mohammedans; they cannot be. The real religious persons are never liked by the people who have created a false consolatory religion for themselves. How can you like a person who calls your toy a toy? He destroys your joy. You cannot forgive a person who calls a spade a spade. It is impossible to forgive him, because you were imagining, you were creating a hallucination for yourself, and here comes a man and he simply says that you are a fool, that the idol that you are worshipping is nothing but stone, that the scriptures that you are reading are nothing but rubbish: ”Burn it and throw the idol. Get rid of all this unnecessary baggage and enter into silence.” Only through silence will you come to know that which is. Only through a state of no-mind will you enter into the real temple.

The real temple is not outside, the real temple is you. If you can enter into your own being you will be entering into existence itself. There is no need to go anywhere, not even a single step is needed. And you need not create a God, because whatsoever you create will be false.

I have heard

There was once a child who lay before a fire and scribbled on a sheet of paper. His father came to his side and said, ”What are you drawing there, son?”

”God,” said the child.

Out of his greater knowledge the father then told the child, ”But no one has seen God at any time, son. Nobody in all the world knows what He is like.”

The child answered, ”Well, I haven't finished yet.”

And that is not only so with children, that is so with great philosophers too. They all think that once they have drawn, painted, described, the whole world will know.

Millions of philosophies have existed and disappeared and ignorance about God remains the same. In fact, there is no way to know God, so to call it ignorance is not right.

Let me explain it to you: you can call something knowledge. If knowledge is possible then the state before knowledge is ignorance, but if knowledge is impossible then the state before it cannot be called ignorance. Ignorance is ignorance only compared to knowledge.

Sufis don't call the state of man ignorance, they call it innocence. And the innocence is destroyed by knowledge. You don't become a knower, your innocence is simply destroyed - which is a loss, not a gain, because God can be felt through innocence, never through knowledge.

Don't think that you are ignorant. You are simply innocent. And God cannot be reduced to knowledge. God is not just the unknown, God is really unknowable. The unknown will be known sooner or later; only time is required. Something was unknown yesterday, today it is known. Something is unknown today, tomorrow it will be known. It is only a question of time; between the known and the unknown the distance is of time. But God is not unknown, God is unknowable, intrinsically unknowable. God is a mystery. You cannot de-mystify existence. In fact, the more you know it, the more you feel knowing is impossible. The more you know the less you know. And when you really come to know, all knowledge simply disappears. You become again ignorant, innocent, like a child.

The camel is very full of knowledge, hence he is called 'the camel' - because he accumulates, assimilates. The lion throws the knowledge but becomes anti-knowledge, gets hooked by the opposite. The child is free from both polarities - knowledge, anti-knowledge, philosophy, antiphilosophy. The child is simply free of all dualities. The child is innocent; he knows nothing of knowledge and he knows nothing of ignorance. He simply is.

That state of a child is the Sufi state of consciousness.

Knowledge is almost a deception, not only to others but to yourself, because you go on repeating the borrowed.

A sailor who had been abroad for some years came home on leave, and as he had some time to wait for his train, entered a hall nearby where a conjurer was entertaining. The sailor had a parrot with him, and knowing that he could not stay very long, sat near a door at the side of the hall so that he could slip out just before his train was due.

The sailor found the conjurer very entertaining and remarked every now and then, "That's a very pretty trick. I wonder what he will do next." Presently the sailor thought he would like a smoke, so he lit a cigarette and threw the match through the open door.

Now there was a gas leak outside the hall, as it happened, and the next thing was a tremendous explosion, a wrecked hall, and a few minutes later, a very bedraggled parrot remarked from its perch on a church spire about a mile away, "That's a very pretty trick. I wonder what he will do next?"

The knowledgeable person is just like that parrot: he's simply repeating something he does not understand. He is repeating something because he has heard it being repeated. He is repeating without any meaning in it.

When a Buddha speaks there is meaning, when a Buddhist scholar repeats the same words they are parrot-like. When Mohammed sang the Koran there was great significance in it. It was not in the words, it was in Mohammed himself. It was imparted by Mohammed's being to those words. Those words are ordinary, ANYBODY can learn them, everybody knows them. Mohammed was not a very, very educated person; in fact, not at all educated, an uneducated person, an innocent person. He

had no idea of any knowledge. He was so immensely humble in his innocence that when for the first time, meditating on the mountain, no-mind happened to him, when SATORI bloomed, when he opened up to existence, when this world disappeared and the other started becoming real to his being, he was very afraid. He heard somewhere deep in his being, "Recite! Recite! Recite the name of Allah!"

From the word 'recite' comes the word 'koran'. 'Koran' means recite. That was the first thing that he heard from his innermost core: Recite! Recite! Recite the glory of God! He was entering into a glorious universe, he was entering into the splendor of life and being. His whole heart was dancing. But he knew that he was an uneducated man. He said, "But I am absolutely uneducated! I don't know language. How can I recite? How can I read? How can I say anything which will be relevant? I am an ignorant man." But the voice continued, "Recite!" And he became so frightened, he had a great fever.

He went home, told his wife that he was suffering from a great fever. The wife said, "But just before you left you were perfectly healthy. What has happened? And I see something very mysterious around you. You are not the same! Your eyes have such a depth I have never seen, and you have such passion on your face, such fire. You are aflame with something! What has happened? You tell me! This is not ordinary fever. You have stumbled into some truth."

Mohammed confessed. He said, "Yes, something has happened." And actually what he said is beautiful. He said, "Either I have gone mad or I have become a poet." Either I have gone mad or I have become a poet... both are really synonymous. Unless you are mad you can't be a poet, and unless you have the capacity to be a poet you can't be mad either.

He said, "But don't ask any more, because what has happened It will take time for me to recapitulate. The immense has happened! I cannot contain it, I cannot understand it. And why should it have happened to me? I am not a scholar, I am not an ascetic. I have not been in any way a knowledgeable person. I have never been educated, never been to the school or college. I am a simple man, what they call an ignorant man. Why should it happen to me?" But it has always been happening to those who are innocent. It has always been happening to those who are humble. It has never happened to the knowledgeable. Let me repeat: sinners have been known to know God, but not pundits, not scholars, not theologians.

Then the greatest sin is the sin of knowledge. And of what exactly does the sin called knowledge consist? It consists in reducing God to a metaphor, in reducing God into a sign, in reducing God into a symbol, in reducing God into an idol. The idol can be in stone, in wood, in words - that doesn't matter - but if you think God can be represented by anything whatsoever, then you are creating an idol.

God is all. And there is no way to represent the all, because there is nothing except it.

I say to you: I am God, you are God, trees are God, rocks are God. Only God is. Isness and Godness are not two phenomena, just ways of saying the one thing, different ways of saying the same thing. In fact to say God is, is repetitive, because God means is. The table is, the house is, the tree is, the man is, but to say 'God is' is not right. Because one day the tree is, another day it is gone; its isness is temporary. Even the mountains will disappear, but God always is. God cannot be 'is not'. So God is isness, God is pure existence.

This totality cannot be represented by anything except the total. The total is the only metaphor for the total, the total is the only sign for the total. The whole is the only image of the whole; there is no other way to create any other image. All images will be false because they will be small, they will be inadequate. They will say something but will not say the whole thing. And whenever truth is partial, it is more dangerous than the lie.

Those who have known have always remained silent about defining God. They say ten thousand other things - they inspire you for the journey, they provoke you, they seduce you for the journey, they create a great thirst and longing in you for truth - but they never define what that truth is. It has to be tasted, it has to be seen to be known, it has to be lived.

Religion cannot be anything apart from life. Either life can be religious or irreligious, but you cannot have religion apart from life. You cannot say, "For one hour every day I become religious. I go to the temple or to the mosque and I pray," or, "Every Sunday I go to the church and I pray." Religion cannot be a 'Sunday religion'. Either your full life, your whole life is permeated by a kind of religiousness That aroma surrounds you always, day-in, day-out. Even when he is asleep a religious man has a different quality than the non-religious. If you enter into the room where a religious person is fast asleep, you will find a totally different kind of vibration. Even in his sleep he is religious, because even in his sleep he's relaxed in God. In fact a religious person does not relax into sleep, he relaxes into God. When he moves he moves into God, when he sits he sits in God, when he sleeps he sleeps in God. He eats God, he drinks God, he looks at God. If all is God, then all has to be Godly.

Sufis insist that God should not be represented by anything. There should be no idol, no image. Idols and images have created false religions in the world.

This story:

THERE WAS ONCE A VIOLENT, IGNORANT AND IDOLATROUS KING. ONE DAY HE SWORE THAT IF HIS PERSONAL IDOL ACCORDED HIM A CERTAIN ADVANTAGE IN LIFE, HE WOULD CAPTURE THE.FIRST THREE PEOPLE WHO PASSED BY HIS CASTLE, AND FORCE THEM TO DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO IDOL-WORSHIP.

Now it is very rare to find a king who is not violent, not ignorant, not idolatrous. If a person is not violent, he will not be a king, he cannot be a king. Even if he finds himself accidentally born as the son of a king, he will renounce it. Buddha renounced, Mahavir renounced. Only a violent man can be a king. In fact, only a violent man is interested in political power. All power is violence, and remember it! - even if you are interested in spiritual power, then you are violent. Any interest in power is violent. Power means power over others in some way or other. It may be political, it may be financial, it may be religious or spiritual .

So many people, in the name of religion, are only hiding their inner politics. They are searching for kundalini power or searching for how to levitate - foolish and stupid desires; they don't transform your life. Even if you can start flying in the sky nothing will be transformed. So many birds are already flying in the sky, and they are not saints and they are not spiritual. If you start living in the deepest ocean, like a fish, you will not become spiritual. So many beings are already living there as fish; they are not spiritual either. Even if your spine vibrates with great energy you will not become spiritual. Spirituality has nothing to do with power. Even if you attain magical powers, miraculous

powers, and you start playing like a magician, that is not going to make you spiritual either. That is sheer nonsense. That is an absolute indication that there is a foolish mind behind.

Whenever you see a man who is trying to do miracles, know well he is a politician. He cannot be a religious person. And I am not saying that miracles don't happen around a religious person; they happen, but they are not done. They happen on their own accord. The religious person is not interested in doing them, the religious person is not a showman. The religious person is not interested in impressing others: "Look, I can create holy ash", "Look, I can produce Swiss watches through miraculous power." Now that man is on a political trip, an ego-trip, and those who become interested in him are also somehow interested in politics. They also want to gain power. They will hang around such a person. Thousands hang around such people just in the hope that some day they will also learn the trick - they will have SIDDHIS and they will also do miracles.

Miracles happen around a religious person. Those miracles are not visible, those miracles are concerned with transformation of energies - but they are not done, never done. Whenever a person is doing something he is a magician, a politician.Whenever something happens on its own accord around a person, in the space that is created around him, in the hollow that is created around him... in that hollow, miracles happen, people are transformed, people are transported into new realms of being. That's another matter. But all political search, all search for power, is ugly and violent.

THERE WAS ONCE A VIOLENT, IGNORANT AND IDOLATROUS KING. ONE DAY HE SWORE THAT IF HIS PERSONAL IDOL ACCORDED HIM A CERTAIN ADVANTAGE IN LIFE...

Remember, whenever you go to worship an idol you are not concerned with God, you are concerned with some advantage in life. All your prayers are worldly prayers - you are asking for something. The real prayer never asks for anything. The real prayer, on the contrary, pours everything into God, asks nothing. The real worshipper is one who goes and cries out his heart and says to God, "Accept me. I am not worthy, still accept me. Take me away from myself. Dissolve me, destroy me, annihilate me." He does not go to ask, "Give me money or give me power," or give me this and that. The really religious person goes to GIVE, not to get. This has to decide the quality of your prayer: if in your prayer somewhere, apparent or hidden, is a desire to get something, then it is not religious prayer.

And because of these kinds of prayers, man had to create false gods. A false mind creates false gods. A false mind needs false gods.

Now this king ONE DAY... SWORE THAT IF HIS PERSONAL IDOL ACCORDED HIM A CERTAIN ADVANTAGE IN LIFE

And remember, God is impersonal. Idols are personal: the Hindu has his own, the Christian has his own, the Buddhist has his own. And not only that, but each worldly person has a certain idea of God and an idol of God which he wants to possess totally. The worldly mind is possessive.

I have heard about a Buddhist nun who used to carry a small, golden Buddha with her, a personal idol of Buddha - because she was very much averse to worshipping public Buddhas. In a temple a Buddha is public - everybody worships, thousands of people pray to him. The woman wanted to possess her own Buddha. It was a small Buddha but it was her own Buddha; she would worship only her Buddha.

Once she was staying in a temple. The temple had ten thousand Buddha-statues, the whole temple was full of Buddhas. And there were colossal Buddhas! The whole mountain was carved with Buddhas, but she was worshipping her own Buddha. Then an idea came to her mind: she used to burn incense, but now you cannot possess incense; once you burn incense then the fragrance spreads, it may go to other Buddhas - the whole place was full of Buddhas, crowded - so she made a small pipe, maybe a hollow bamboo, fixed the pipe to the nose of her personal Buddha and then burned the incense there, so it was carried through the pipe to HER Buddha's nose.

And don't laugh. This is what is happening all over the world. This is human stupidity. It is very common, it is almost universal.

She was very happy that she had found a way: now no other Buddha would be sharing her worship, her prayer. When in the morning she woke up and started praying to her small statue when she removed the pipe she started crying, because the Buddha's face had become black.

The Master of that temple, a Zen Master, who was watching all this stupidity laughed uproariously. He said, "Look! Not only are you drowned, your Buddha is also drowned with you. You have destroyed your Buddha!"

The moment you possess, you destroy. Possessiveness is destructive. God cannot be personal. In fact, to know God, you will have to disappear as a person. And you do just the opposite: you reduce God, the impersonal, into a person. Rather than you dissolving and becoming impersonal, you reduce God to your status. These are the two ways: one is to become like God, become impersonal - then you have a meeting; the other is to reduce God to a person, make an idol of Him, give Him a face and a form and a name. Then He is like you, then there is a possibility of having a dialogue.

Your personality is false. You are not really a person. It is just an illusion that you are a person. The deeper you go into yourself, the more you will find the universal. You are the whole universe, just as each wave is the whole ocean. If you dig deep into the wave you will find the ocean, not the wave. Exactly the same is the case with every person: a person is just a wave. God is waving in you in one form, waving in me in another form, waving in still another way in other forms. All forms are His. Go behind the form, go deeper, pull the curtain, and you will find one impersonal existence.

The right way to have a dialogue with God is to drop your personality. The wrong way to have a dialogue with God is not only not to drop your personality, but to create a personality around God. That's what idol-worship is: make God a Rama, a Krishna, a Christ, a Buddha, then relate with the Rama, with the Krishna, with the Christ. Now you are creating a dream. It is your own work, it has nothing to do with God.What goes on in the name of God has nothing to do with God, and what goes on in the name of religion has nothing to do with religion. There is only one religion, and that religion is: the art of disappearing as a person so that you can commune, become one with the impersonal force, the impersonal energy, the impersonal existence.

ONE DAY HE SWORE THAT IF HIS PERSONAL IDOL ACCORDED HIM A CERTAIN ADVANTAGE IN LIFE, HE WOULD CAPTURE THE FIRST THREE PEOPLE WHO PASSED BY HIS CASTLE, AND FORCE THEM TO DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO IDOL-WORSHIP.

Now this too is something to be understood. He is asking for some advantage, and if it is fulfilled then he is going to catch three persons - three innocent persons who have nothing to do with the

deal, who have no part in it - he is going to force those three persons to worship. This has always been done, in many ways.

These Sufi stories are just indicative of many things.

For example, in India and in other countries also, millions of animals have been sacrificed to God. Now what do those animals have to do with your God? Because your desire is fulfilled, you sacrifice an animal. That animal has not desired, has not prayed, has not said anything. He has nothing to do with it! If you want to sacrifice, sacrifice yourself.

Buddha came across a ceremony which was on, a great crowd had gathered. He asked, "What is happening?" and they said that the man who was worshipping had asked for something. It had been fulfilled: now he was sacrificing a. bull, he was killing a bull; it was a religious ceremony.

Buddha said, "But what has the bull to do with it? If that man feels that God has given something to him, has been favorable to him, he should sacrifice himself."

Buddha entered into the crowd, asked the man, "What are you doing? Why are you being violent to this poor bull? And he has not done anything!"

The man was a brahmin, a scholar, a knower of scriptures. He quoted scriptures and he said, "You don't know. I am not being violent to the bull. The scriptures say, the Vedas say, that if in a religious ceremony an animal is crucified, killed, murdered, butchered, the animal-soul goes to heaven directly. I'm not being violent to him, he will go to heaven."

Then Buddha said, "Why don't you kill your father or your mother or yourself? Why are you missing the opportunity to go to heaven? This bull may not want to go to heaven. If this is certain, then kill your father or kill your mother - or kill yourself! The best thing is to kill yourself!"

The brahmin listened to Buddha. His presence made it so clear to him: he dropped the weapon there, he renounced all that religious ceremony and he asked Buddha, "Now you tell me how to be religious, because I have been doing all these things my whole life. You have shocked me, but you have made me awake too."

If you search around the globe there have existed thousands of religions with this stupid idea: that God has favored you. Now you are favoring God by finding three innocent people to worship your idol.

SURE ENOUGH, THE KING'S WISH WAS FULFILLED...

All wishes that are fulfilled are just coincidental. If you go on asking God a few wishes will be fulfilled - God has nothing to do with fulfilling them - a few will not be fulfilled. When a wish is not fulfilled the worshipper thinks "I have not been praying rightly. The rituals have not been done rightly. The scripture has not been followed rightly. My performance was not exactly as it should have been. The mantras were not chanted as they should have been chanted. There must have been something wrong" - if the wish is not fulfilled. If the wish is fulfilled, then "God has been so favorable to me. Now I have to give something as a gift to show my gratitude."

God has nothing to do with your wishes. In fact, God is experienced only when you have no more wishes left in you. Only a desireless consciousness comes to know what God is, and only a desireless consciousness becomes divine. All desires are worldly, fulfilled or not fulfilled; it is your game. This is how it goes on happening around the world.

You go to a saint and your wish is fulfilled. Then you go again; if it is not fulfilled you go to some other saint. Some day, somewhere, the coincidence will happen and your wish will be fulfilled. Then that saint becomes your God, because your wish is fulfilled there. Just try it. It is just a gamble. If you throw a coin, fifty times is the possibility that it will fall on this side, fifty times is the possibility that it will fall on that side. And if you throw the coin millions of times, then it will come closer and closer to fifty percent - but it is just coincidence. But people are very deeply exploited. Beware of this.

SURE ENOUGH, THE KING'S WISH WAS FULFILLED, AND HE IMMEDIATELY SENT SOLDIERS ON TO THE HIGHWAY TO BRING IN THE FIRST THREE PEOPLE WHOM THEY COULD FIND.

THESE THREE WERE, AS IT HAPPENED, A SCHOLAR, A SAYED (DESCENDANT OF MOHAMMED THE PROPHET) AND A PROSTITUTE.

Three persons, and Sufis have much to say about these three types. The one is the scholarly type, the pundit, the knowledgeable man; the second is the virtuous type, the pious type; the third is the sinner, the prostitute. Try to understand the story deeply because there is a great message in it.

HAVING THEM THROWN DOWN BEFORE HIS IDOL, THE UNBALANCED KING TOLD THEM OF HIS VOW, AND ORDERED THEM ALL TO BOW DOWN IN FRONT OF THE IMAGE.

THE SCHOLAR SAID, "THIS SITUATION UNDOUBTEDLY COMES WITHIN THE DOCTRINE OF 'FORCE MAJEURE'. THERE ARE NUMEROUS PRECEDENTS ALLOWING ANYONE TO APPEAR TO CONFORM WITH CUSTOM IF COMPELLED, WITHOUT REAL OR MORAL CULPABILITY BEING IN ANY WAY INVOLVED." SO HE MADE A DEEP OBEISANCE TO THE IDOL.

This is how the knowledgeable man reacts, responds to reality. He can always find ways to do whatsoever he wants to do. He is clever enough - he can always find jargon and can always find a loophole. His is the way of the legal expert. If he wants to do something wrong he will find a way. If he does not want to do something right, he will find a w ay. He's never in the wrong, he always supports himself; he has a great body of knowledge to support him. He is argumentative, and arguments are just a game with words. You can find a for and against for whatsoever you want to find it for. The argument has no commitment to anything. The argument is not committed to truth, the argument is just sophistry.

In ancient Greece there was a great school of Sophists. Their whole teaching was that there is no truth and no untruth. If you are clever you can prove anything to be true, if you are clever you can prove anything to be untrue. It all depends on your cleverness. the only thing that counts is cleverness: there is no truth, no untruth. They used to teach sophistry, they used to teach how to argue. Argument was all.

This kind of sophistry has existed in all the countries of the world. It still exists, and it is such a game that you can be lost in it and you can forget what you were searching for. Sophistry is a way to defend your ego.

Now this man is faced with a problem. This man must be a Mohammedan - the story comes from a Mohammedan country. His religion does not allow him to worship an idol. And now this mad king forces him, and he knows if he does not worship he will be killed. He has to find a way.

HE SAYS TO HIMSELF, "THIS SITUATION UNDOUBTEDLY COMES WITHIN THE DOCTRINE OF 'FORCE MAJEURE'."

Now he finds a doctrine for it, an explanation, support from the scripture.

"THERE ARE NUMEROUS PRECEDENTS ALLOWING ANYONE TO APPEAR TO CONFORM WITH CUSTOM IF COMPELLED, WITHOUT REAL OR MORAL CULPABILITY BEING IN ANY WAY INVOLVED."

"If this mad king wants me to bow down to this idol, I can bow down without really bowing down to it. I can only pretend. I can deceive. I have to save my life."

But rather than seeing the fact: "I am more interested in life than in religion. I am more interested in saving myself than searching for God. I am more interested in protecting myself out of fear" - rather than seeing this exactly as it is, he starts creating a cloud of jargon around himself. And you can always find ways, and you can go on playing the game of words for millions of lives; there is no end to it.

This is what is happening in actual life too: you never see the reality, you hide it. You are afraid and you will say something else.

Just the other night somebody was here. Sannyas creates a fear, deep fear, but nobody accepts that. They don't say, "I am afraid, that's why I cannot take sannyas." They say something else. They say, "But what is the point of wearing orange? What is the point of changing the name? Can't we remain in ordinary dress? Can't we remain sannyasins without declaring it to the world?" "And the real thing has to be inner," they say. "Why should it be outer?" And all the things that they are saying look beautiful, but this is not the truth. Deep down they are simply afraid of what people will say. People will think you are a fool or a mad-man. People come to me and they say, "Here it is okay, but when we go to the West then there will be trouble." But very rarely does a person come who says it exactly as it is, authentically as it is. He finds ways and means.

There are people who have taken sannyas - cunning people. Then they go to their countries and they simply don't tell anybody that they are sannyasins. They simply hide their orange, their malas, and they continue as they were. And whenever they come across a sannyasin and he asks, "What has happened? Have you dropped sannyas?" they will say, "No, but we have heard the inner voice: Bhagwan has said to us 'I make you free'." Rather than being true, they bring me also into their game - that I have made them free.

When they come back to India they are again in orange. Then maybe again I have said to them, "While in India, don't be free." They hear the inner voice.

Remember, it is good to be authentic, it is good not to be a hypocrite; it helps your growth. All falsities that you go on protecting are poisonous - they will destroy your inner being. And the arguments can be very logical, and the arguments can be very convincing, yet if they are not authentic, they are all rubbish. The real thing is not the validity of the argument as argument, but the truth.

Now this man could have seen the simple truth: "I am afraid to die, that's why I will do it." And that would have been a great religious act. To see the truth would have helped him. Or maybe, seeing the truth that he was a coward he may have resisted, and he would have said, "Okay, you kill me, but I am not going to bow down." Either he should have bowed down out of fear - but then he would have become more humble, knowing that "I am a coward" - or maybe, seeing the fear, he may have stood his ground and may have said, "Okay, I am not going to be a coward. You kill me, but I am not going to do something that has no appeal for me." Now arguing in a roundabout way he has saved himself. But saved from what? - saved from God, saved from truth. He has been cunning. A cunning mind is a suicidal mind.

THE SAYED, WHEN IT WAS HIS TURN, SAID, "AS A SPECIALLY PROTECTED PERSON, HAVING IN MY VEINS THE BLOOD OF THE HOLY PROPHET, MY ACTIONS THEMSELVES PURIFY ANYTHING WHICH IS DONE, AND THEREFORE THERE IS NO BAR TO MY ACTING AS THIS MAN DEMANDS." AND HE BOWED BEFORE THE IDOL.

Now the so-called virtuous: the man who thinks that he is protected, that he is special, that he is one of the chosen few, he belongs to the chosen few. Now what does Mohammed's blood have to do with it?-Blood is blood. Just because you are born in the same line does not make any difference. You may have the blood of Buddha in you and you may be the most stupid man on the earth. Many must have the blood of Buddha, knowingly or unknowingly. Many must have the blood of Krishna, many must have the blood of Moses - but what has that to do with it? Your blood makes no difference, your heritage makes no difference, your tradition makes no difference. Unless your awareness comes in nothing makes a difference.

Now this man protected himself with the idea, "I am special, specially protected, a descendant of the Holy Prophet, Mohammed. God must be protecting me. And whatsoever I do becomes pure because it is done by me." He has an even deeper cunningness than the scholar. The scholar may have some doubts, but he can't have any doubts. His deception is total.

Remember, nobody is protecting you - neither Christ nor Mohammed nor Krishna. Nobody can protect you except yourself. Don't throw the responsibility on the other. People are doing it all the time.

A Christian missionary came to me and he said, "Jesus was born to liberate all from sin." I asked him, "Are you liberated from sin - because Jesus has been here. How many people are liberated? And you go on saying that 'Jesus was our salvation', as if salvation has happened and all are liberated. Who is liberated? And how can Jesus liberate you?" This seems to be so illogical. You create the bondage and Jesus comes to liberate you. Why should HE? He has no responsibility. And if you are bent upon remaining in bondage, how can he liberate you?

It happened... one man was asking Sri Aurobindo, "You are so cool and so indifferent to things that sometimes a problem arises in my mind: if you are standing on the bank of a river and somebody is

drowning, you will not save him." Aurobindo said, "No, I will not save, UNLESS he asks to be saved." That man said, "But this seems to be hard, uncompassionate." Sri Aurobindo said, "I can save him, but he will again drown himself. If he is bent upon drowning himself, he will find another river, he will find another bank, he will find another time and he will re-drown himself. I can un-drown him but he will re-drown himself, so what is the point? Unless he asks he cannot be saved."

And in spiritual growth, asking is being saved. If you ask, you are saved; not that Jesus saves you. Remember those beautiful words of Jesus: "Ask and it shall be given. Knock and the door shall be opened unto you."

Those doors are really open, they are just waiting for your knock. In fact, God has already given to you, but because you have not asked you have not recognized the gift yet. The gift is already given. You have the gift with you, but because you have not asked you cannot recognize it. The moment you ask you will recognize it.

Nobody can save anybody else - and it is good that nobody can save anybody else. Otherwise even your liberation would be a kind of enforcement. It would be as if you have been forced to enter into heaven - two persons following you with naked swords and forcing you to enter into heaven. What kind of heaven would it be? - it would be hell. Hell is when something is forced upon you; what it is does not matter. Heaven is when you ask for something and you grow in it. Whatsoever it is, it is salvation.

Just being a descendant of Mohammed makes no change, no difference. Just by being born a Christian you are not saved. Just by being born in this land, in India, you are not saved. The Indians have the idea that this land is the Holy Land: just being born in India and you are saved. They have the idea that if you go and die in Varanasi, you will go directly to heaven - just by dying in Varanasi!

Kabir lived his whole life in Varanasi, and when he was on his death-bed he suddenly jumped out of bed and told his disciples, "We have to rush out of Varanasi!" Those disciples said, "But why? And you are so ill, and you are on the death-bed, and the physicians have said that it is only for a few hours that you will be alive, that you cannot be alive even for one day." He said, "That one day has to be used. Rush and run as far away from Varanasi as possible!" But they said, "Where? And why? People come to Varanasi to die." People go and live in Varanasi in their old age, just to die there, because that is the holiest spot on the earth, the city of Shiva, the ancient-most city, the holiest of the holy. There you die? - that's enough, your sins are no longer counted. Your very death in Varanasi is a purification - you are saved, you go immediately, direct, to heaven. Kabir said, "I will go to Maghar" - a small village near Kashi. And they said, "Out of all places, Maghar?" - because there is a tradition that says that if you die in Maghar you will be born a donkey. "Out of all places, Maghar? Have you gone mad? You must be mad! You are dying, you have lost all your senses!" They tried to hold him in Kashi but he wouldn't listen. He left Kashi and went to Maghar and died there. And when they asked, "But why Maghar?" he said, "If I die in Maghar and go to heaven then it is something. If I die in Varanasi and go to heaven it is pointless. That heaven is not of worth. If I die in Maghar, where it is said that people dying in Maghar are born as donkeys, AND go to heaven, then it is something of my own, authentically my own. I depend only on myself."

And dying, he said to his disciples, "Depend on yourself. Don't think that just because you follow Kabir, you will go to heaven. Heaven is not so cheap."

THE SAYED, WHEN IT WAS HIS TURN, SAID, "AS A SPECIALLY PROTECTED PERSON, HAVING IN MY VEINS THE BLOOD OF THE HOLY PROPHET, MY ACTIONS THEMSELVES PURIFY ANYTHING WHICH IS DONE, AND THEREFORE THERE IS NO BAR TO MY ACTING AS THIS MAN DEMANDS." AND HE BOWED BEFORE THE IDOL.

THE PROSTITUTE SAID, "ALAS, I HAVE NEITHER INTELLECTUAL TRAINING NOR SPECIAL PREROGATIVES, AND SO I AM AFRAID THAT, WHATEVER YOU DO TO ME, I CANNOT WORSHIP THIS IDOL, EVEN IN APPEARANCE."

The prostitute has nowhere to hide her head, and that is her authenticity, her beauty. The prostitute has no intellectual jargon. She knows she cannot hide herself behind scriptures; she knows nothing of the scriptures. She knows she is not virtuous, she knows she does not belong to Mohammed's family, she has no holy blood in herself. She knows she is a sinner. Knowing this - that she is a sinner, unprotected by any prerogative, unprotected by any intellectual, philosophical argumentation - she's vulnerable, she cannot be false. Because she cannot find any argument, any protection to be false, she cannot defend. She will never feel happy with herself if she bows down to this idol. She will never be able to forgive herself.

The scholar will not feel any guilt: he knows that scriptures allow, that there are precedents. The Sayed will forget all about it, but the prostitute cannot forgive herself if she does something false. A strange story... that it is the sinner who is authentic.

And this is my own experience too, this is my observation: sinners are more authentic than the so-called virtuous. Ignorant, innocent people are more true than the so-called sophisticated and cultured. Civilization only makes people cunning. They lose all innocence and they lose all fragrance that comes only out of innocence.

Remember Mary Magdalene? She seems to me the only true follower of Jesus. Her authenticity, her daring, is immense. Jesus had come to her house and she poured precious perfume on his feet, washed the feet with the perfume, then wiped the feet with her hair. She was sitting there crying tears and tears, and naturally the virtuous were offended. And somebody said to Jesus, "This is not right. She is a sinner, and she should not be allowed to touch you!" This is how the egoistic, the virtuous, the intellectual has always behaved.

Judas was also not happy with this. Judas seems to be a communist or a socialist. He said, "This is wastage. This perfume is so costly, why waste it? People are starving. The perfume could have been sold; it is rare. We could have fed a few people." It looks logical. You will tend to agree with Judas rather than with Jesus. What Jesus said is very illogical; he said, "But the poor will always be there - when I am gone then you can take care of them. You don't understand the heart of this woman. I cannot say no to her! Let her do what she wants to do. Let her unburden herself, let her cry, let her touch me. Let her pour the perfume - costly, not costly, that is irrelevant. I cannot say no to her. I can see a great feeling arising in her heart. This is prayer, she is in a prayerful mood. I cannot disturb her prayer."

Jesus understood that Mary Magdalene had a beauty of the heart. She was the first one who recognized Jesus after the resurrection. There were only three women there when Jesus was taken down from the cross - one was Mary Magdalene. All those great apostles had disappeared. And

you must remember, Judas was the ONLY scholar of Jesus' followers, the only professor, the only intellectually well-equipped, the only scholarly person. And he betrayed. It is symbolic: intellect betrays.

Mind is cunning. Mind always creates conspiracies against truth. Let Judas be a symbol of mind. He was the most intellectual, the most articulate person. If he had not betrayed he would have become the founder of the church. Why did he betray? Mind betrays, logic betrays. Your mind is against your being.

The prostitute had no mind. She had lived a very simple existence of selling her body. She knew nothing of the scriptures, she had no time to read them. She could not have the ego of a virtuous person. How could she have? She was simply humble, crying. She couldn't have any ego, and that is the door to the divine.

THE PROSTITUTE SAID, "ALAS, I HAVE NEITHER INTELLECTUAL TRAINING NOR SPECIAL PREROGATIVES, AND SO I AM AFRAID THAT, WHATEVER YOU DO TO ME, I CANNOT WORSHIP THIS IDOL, EVEN IN APPEARANCE."

I have been with saints and I have been with sinners. My own observation is: that the so-called sinners are the most authentic persons in the world, and the so-called saints the most inauthentic persons in the world. The saints are just pseudo; the sinner has a reality. And out of that reality, the quantum leap is possible. Only the authentic can go to the authentic. The false remains false, cannot have any meeting with truth.

So remember, the greatest barrier between you and God is your ego, and the ego feeds on knowledge, and the ego feeds on virtue, and the ego feeds on respectability - name, fame, power. Remember it, and don't feed the ego.

Become more humble. See your limitations, see your mistakes, see your errors and become humble. That very seeing will make you humble. In that humbleness prayer arises on its own accord. And great courage arises out of that humbleness! Humbleness is strong, ego is very weak. You will think this is a paradox; it only appears so. Ego is weak! In fact, ego is the effort of a weak person to protect himself. Ego is an armor: the person knows that deep down he is very weak; the ego is an effort to protect his weakness. The weakest person will have the biggest ego. They are complementary - the weaker you are the bigger ego you need to protect yourself. The really strong person need have no ego. He needs no protection, he can live unprotected. He can live insecure, he can live vulnerable.

The scholar was a weak person, so was the Sayed. This prostitute had a strength, the strength of a roseflower - vulnerable, soft, delicate, yet so strong. Have you not watched a roseflower in the morning playing with the winds? - so delicate yet so strong, having a love affair with the sun; so delicate, raising its head high, delicate and yet strong. Lao Tzu calls it the strength of water.

The ego has the strength of a rock, the humble person has the strength of water. And Lao Tzu says, "Become like water" - 'the Watercourse Way'. Become soft like water and you will win, finally. Remember, hardness brings defeat. Your very resistance to life sooner or later destroys you. It is your own hardness, your own ego, that becomes poison to you.

See a waterfall falling on a great rock, and the rock cannot even think that this humble water, soft, feminine, is going to destroy it. But one day will come when the rock will be gone, will have become sands, and the water will continue to go on in the same way. Rocks die out of their own hardness. The ego is like a rock, humbleness is like a roseflower. The ego seems to be strong - is not - and the humbleness seems to be weak but is not. Don't be deceived by the appearances.

The prostitute said, "Whatsoever you do you can do. I'm not going to be false, not even in appearance." This strength of humbleness, this purity of sin, this power of a roseflower, did something like a magical phenomenon to the king.

THE MAD KING'S MALADY WAS IMMEDIATELY BANISHED BY THIS REMARK.

What happened? - he could not believe his eyes, it was such a shock. He had forced the great scholar, and he was lying down in deep obeisance. He had forced the Sayed, the descendant of the Prophet Mohammed . And a prostitute? He could not have ever imagined that the prostitute would stand so strong. Such a delicate woman, such a sinner; from where does such power arise in her? - out of innocence. She had no pretensions, she was unguarded.

THE MAD KING'S MALADY WAS IMMEDIATELY BANISHED BY THIS REMARK.

He had a SATORI it seems. He could not believe it, it was so shocking. His eyes opened.

AS IF BY MAGIC HE SAW THE DECEIT OF THE TWO WORSHIPPERS OF THE IMAGE. HE AT ONCE HAD THE SCHOLAR AND THE SAYED DECAPITATED, AND SET THE PROSTITUTE FREE.

This is a symbolic story. These stories are parables, these are not historical facts. The parable is saying that before God you will be reduced to nothing if you carry falsities, you will be decapitated, that you will be thrown unto dust. You will not be able to stand before God. Your untruth will kill you... AND SET THE PROSTITUTE FREE. And before truth, only that power that comes out of humbleness, that knowing that comes out of innocence, only that is set free, only that is liberated.

Freedom is for those who are free of the ego. There is no other kind of freedom. Freedom means freedom from the ego. That is MOKSHA, NIRVANA. And even a prostitute can attain to that freedom, and even a great scholar can miss it. Even a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed can miss it. Only one thing is decisive: if you are defending your ego, you will miss God. If you are ready to drop your ego, you will find Him. In that very dropping is the finding.

"Man and God are not two" say all those who know. But then why are they separate? From God's side you are not separate, only from your side are you separate. And why? - because you think you are separate. Your thinking makes you separate. You are not really separate; it is a make-believe, it is an auto-hypnosis. You have been thinking and thinking that you are separate, hence the idea has become a fixed phenomenon in you.

This is the ego: thinking yourself separate from existence is the ego. Thinking yourself one with the existence is trust.

Don't protect yourself. Protection means you have believed the false idea that you are separate. Don't push the river. Go with the flow of existence. While alive, be alive; while dying, be really dying; while dead, be dead. Waking, wake. Sleeping, sleep. Let there be no separation between you and the life that surrounds you.

And don't act out of a state called knowledge; that is creating the separation. Always act out of no-knowledge, act out of no-mind, act out of no-past. Act in the present and act authentically. And whosoever you are - you may be a prostitute - if you can act out of the present:, if you can respond to reality truly, authentically, sincerely, then there is no barrier between you and God.

The only thing that helps you merge and meet with the divine is an authentic response in the present, a truthful response to life. That's what I call prayer.

CHAPTER 8

There is no Ladder

28 February 1978 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:

Question 1

EVERY DAY YOU TALK ABOUT THE 'EARTH' AND ABOUT THE 'SKY' - ABOUT THE POTENTIAL AND ABOUT THE ULTIMATE. BUT WHAT IS THE 'LADDER' IN BETWEEN? WHAT IS THE PROCESS THAT HAPPENS IN BETWEEN? WHY DO YOU NOT TALK ABOUT THE 'LADDER'?

The ladder exists not. There is no ladder. There is no in between. There is not any gap, it is all one. The earth and sky are not disconnected. They are already joined together. They are in a deep union, communion. The very idea of the ladder arises because we have been taught that there is a gap between this world and the other. There is none. It has not to be bridged. The other shore is

in this shore. You are not to go anywhere, you are not to do anything. The potential is actual, and the first step is the last step. But the mind boggles down, the mind cannot conceive it. Mind always wants to have steps, ladders.

Mind can cope with a ladder, mind cannot cope with a quantum leap. Mind can cope with evolution, mind cannot cope with revolution. That's why mind is never revolutionary; it is always orthodox, it is always conventional. Mind cannot be revolutionary by its very nature.

You have been taught again and again that the body and soul are two, that God and the world are two. And you have been taught that you have to find God against the world, you have to go beyond the world to find God.

I am giving you a totally new message you are not to go beyond, you are to go within. The beyond is within, and the within is the beyond. All is herenow. In this very moment the whole existence is present in all its possibilities. It is only a shift of consciousness, not a ladder. It is a change of gestalt, not a ladder. Nothing changes, all remains the same - just a leap happens within you. Suddenly you start seeing things which you were not seeing but they were already present; they have always been present.

Have you looked in some gestalt psychology books? - there are pictures. A famous picture is one picture where there is an old woman, and also, hidden in the same lines, is a young woman. You can see the old woman; if you go on looking and looking and looking, suddenly a moment will come and the consciousness will shift to another gestalt and you will start seeing the young woman. If you go on looking at the young woman long enough, suddenly something will change and you will start seeing the old woman again. When you have seen both and you know perfectly well that both are there, even then you cannot see both together. Because the old woman consists of the same lines, the young woman also consists of the same lines, you can see only one at one time. At another time you can see the other, but you cannot see both together, simultaneously.

If you see the world, you cannot see God, that's true - but God is not opposite to the world, it is just another gestalt. If you see God the world disappears. It doesn't mean that you have transcended the world. It is the same world, just your vision has made a new gestalt. That's why you will find it again and again, down the ages, Charavakara, Epicurus, Karl Marx - all the materialists of the world say that only matter exists, consciousness is a by-product, an epi-phenomenon. Consciousness is illusory, the real thing is matter: this is one gestalt. They are not wrong.

Then there is another tradition: Shankara, Vedantins, Berkeley, they say the world exists not, only God is, only consciousness is. Matter is illusory, MAYA. They are also not wrong; that is another gestalt - but no one is absolutely true either.

The real man of understanding will say that God can be looked at as the world, the world can be looked at as God.

William James is reported to have said, "Mind is one way in which the world is assembled and things put together; matter is another" - just ways of putting and assembling things together. Neither does matter exist against mind, nor does mind exist against matter. You are body - this is a gestalt; you are soul - that is another gestalt. There is no ladder in between, because these are two gestalts.

Remember the picture again: is there a ladder between the old woman and the young woman? There is no ladder because they consist of the same lines. Nothing changes, the picture remains the same and you don't go anywhere... but a shift, a flick in consciousness. You see things in one way, you assemble things in one way, then you see things in another way, you assemble things in another way. Neither are materialists right, absolutely right - they are not, they are partially true; nor are Vedantins right - they are partially true. They both suffer from partiality. That's why their argument can continue forever, it will never be decisive.

Just think of two persons arguing: "In this picture there is a young woman", and another man says "There is an old woman." They can go on arguing forever because they have partial truth, and it can never be decisive. They will never be able to commune with each other, they will never be able to

understand what the other is saying, because how can one who has seen the young woman believe that the old woman exists there in the picture? and vice versa. The materialist and the spiritualist go on arguing.

I am neither. I am simply saying to you that which is. Both exist, but both are not separate. We call them two because we can see them in two ways.

You ask me about the ladder - there is no ladder. I am not proposing any gradual, slow progress for you here. That's how you have lived for many lives: thinking that gradually, gradually, slowly, slowly, you will attain. If you see my point you attain right now!

But you are looking for a ladder.

Somebody has asked, "OSHO, THESE TALKS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE ON SUFISM, BUT YOU ARE NOT SAYING ANYTHING ABOUT SUFISM. YOU ARE SAYING MANY BEAUTIFUL THINGS BUT THEY ARE NOT SUFISM."

I am not talking about Sufism, that is true. I talk Sufism, not ABOUT Sufism! I am a Sufi, so whatsoever I say is Sufism. I am not giving you steps to move to the beyond, I am simply making my own experience available to you. I am simply sharing my being with you. This is not a message, it is a sharing. It is not a teaching, it is imparting. Being with me can reveal to you that nothing has to be achieved, that all goals are false, that all is already achieved.

I don't want you to BECOME enlightened. I declare that you are enlightened! But you are not courageous enough; you say, "How can I be enlightened? I will have to wait. Some day I will become enlightened." You are so cowardly - that's why you need time even to recognize your Godhood. You have condemned yourself so much that you cannot conceive that you can be a God. Because you cannot conceive that you can be a God, you cannot conceive how Buddha can be a God, how Christ can be a God.

When Christ declares "I am God", he's simply saying to you "You are God. Look! I have the courage to declare. You also participate. See the point. I am as much of the flesh as you are, I am as much the body as you are." There is nothing special about Christ; the only special thing is his courage. Otherwise he is just like you. I am just like you; the only thing is that I respect myself and you don't respect yourself, I love myself and you don't love yourself.

You are also very suspicious. That's why I call myself Bhagwan. There are questions: "Why?" Because I am! And you are also, but you are not courageous. This Buddhafield is being created so that you can gather courage, so that you can become bold, so that you can say things as they are and you can see things as they are.

I'm not supplying you with any ladder. You would like it very much, because then you can postpone. I am simply saying to you, jump... and be! Have a quantum leap!

There are not stations between you and God. The moment you are concentrated in your courage, suddenly the gestalt changes - God is revealed in millions of forms. And the moment you become God, the whole existence becomes God. If somebody says "I am God and you are not God", then he is a cheat, he is a charlatan, he is playing a game, he is on an ego-trip.

The second question:

Question 2

SINCE RETURNING TO POONA TWO WEEKS AGO I FEEL MYSELF BECOMING ATTACHED TO YOU. BEFORE, I NEVER GAVE MUCH THOUGHT TO HOW LONG YOU WOULD REMAIN IN YOUR BODY AND NOW I AM WANTING YOU TO STAY A LONG TIME. I AM THINKING OF YOU IN MY FUTURE AS I HAVE WITH SO MANY OF MY OTHER ATTACHMENTS. I FEEL VERY STRONGLY THE DESIRE TO BE IN YOUR PHYSICAL PRESENCE RATHER THAN FEEL YOU WITH ME IN THE WEST. IS THIS A STEP A DISCIPLE GOES THROUGH IN COMING CLOSER TO A MASTER, OR IS SOMETHING GOING WRONG THAT I NEED BE AWARE OF?

Sambodhi, to be attached to me is the beginning of disciplehood. And this is not the kind of attachment that you have known before. Those attachments were a kind of bondage. You were attached to your chains, now you are becoming attached to freedom. To be attached to a Master is to be in love, to fall in love with freedom.

A Master is one who makes freedom available to you. Be attached; don't be worried. Just because of the word don't be deceived, don't think that you have known this attachment before. All those attachments were just on the way: they come and they go, they are momentary. This attachment will not go. You will go before this attachment. You will disappear. This attachment is going to kill you, to destroy you, to annihilate you. All those other attachments were not to annihilate you, they were to strengthen you. You fall in love with a man or a woman and you are attached, very much attached, because it enhances your ego. It gives you a sense of significance - you are somebody. You are attached to money because money enhances your ego. You are attached to power, respect, respectability, knowledge, because all those things give you a sense that you ARE.

To be attached to a Master is to commit suicide.

This is the right beginning, Sambodhi. Now you are really turning into a disciple, and I know this is happening.

Sambodhi has come here accidentally. She has come because of Amitabh, she has been in deep attachment with Amitabh. When Amitabh moved here, she came. Amitabh became a sannyasin so she became a sannyasin. But she was joined to me through Amitabh. Now, for the first time, I have seen the glimpse in her eyes that she is approaching me directly. Hence, this problem of attachment is arising. But this attachment is to something vast, something enormous - you will be lost in it.

This is new, radically new, and fear will arise, and the mind may rationalize that this is again an attachment. And the mind has never been against other attachments, remember. The mind was never afraid of other attachments, the mind was really always FOR attachments. Now, for the first time, the mind will say, "What are you doing? You are getting into attachment." Now the mind will become a saint and sermonize to you that "This is attachment. Don't get into this attachment. Beware, you are falling into a trap."And this mind has never said this same thing to you. In fact it was always taking you into deeper attachments. Mind exists through attachments.

Now this is a totally different kind of attachment - mind is afraid. The mind will say, "If you take this step, then this will be suicidal." The mind will create new rationalizations, philosophize.

Sambodhi, you say, ”Since returning to Poona two weeks ago ” It is not only that you have become aware. Two weeks ago when you came here and when I saw you for the first time, I had seen your eyes: they are turning towards me for the first time without Amitabh in between. This is a good sign. Now you have REALLY become a sannyasin. Now the initiation is happening. The first time it was so-so. I had initiated you because I knew the potential. I had seen the potential, that sooner or later you would fall in love with me, so for the time being, hang around. Any excuse would do - Amitabh is a beautiful excuse.

And this will be helpful to Amitabh too, because he will be unburdened. He wanted deeply that Sambodhi should be directly related to me, not through him. He was feeling a little embarrassed. He w ill be happy that the thing has happened.

Now don’t hesitate.

”SINCE RETURNING TO POONA TWO WEEKS AGO I FEEL MYSELF BECOMING ATTACHED TO YOU. BEFORE I NEVER GAVE MUCH THOUGHT TO HOW LONG YOU WOULD REMAIN IN YOUR BODY AND NOW I AM WANTING YOU TO STAY A LONG TIME.”

Disciplehood is born.

And the Master is not only his soul, he is his body too. And when you come close to the Master, the first thing that starts changing you is his body. You will be surprised to know this, I have never said it before: his very matter starts changing your matter. His very matter becomes contagious. Your soul will be changed later on, it cannot be changed in the beginning. Things have to move from the outer towards the inner, from the exterior towards the interior. First the temple has to be changed, only then the deity. So there is naturally a deep attachment with the Master’s body. It is not just accidental that many Master’s bodies have been protected down the ages. In Tibet they have protected ninety-nine bodies down the ages. The very matter, the very body where enlightenment has been recognized and has happened, transforms its quality. It vibrates in a new rhythm. To be close to it is to be permeated by its vibration. To touch the body of the Master is to partake of his body. That is why Jesus says, ”Eat me, drink me.”

A Master has to be eaten, drunk. A Master has to be digested, chewed, so he enters into the deepest matter of your being. The body is the beginning and the beginning has to be transformed. Only a transformed body will know a transformed being. Only in a different rhythm of the body will you know God, because the gestalt will change.

So it is very natural that disciples become attached to the body of their Master. Even when the Master is gone the body will be worshipped. Just a hair of Mohammed is kept in Shrinagar, in a mosque - just a single hair! - and it has tremendous effect on those who know how to be in the presence of that single hair because that single hair has the same vibe as Mohammed. It continues to vibrate in the same way. It contains the subtlest message: the real Koran is contained in that hair.

The tree under which Buddha became enlightened has been preserved for twenty-five centuries, because the tree has a different vibe. No other tree in the whole world has that vibe. It is unique, it has seen something happening. When Buddha was transformed, naturally the tree absorbed all those vibrations. It drank. Those vibrations penetrated into the very fibers of the tree. The tree still

vibrates in the same way. Still, to sit under the Bodhi Tree is a tremendous experience - but only if you know. If you are aware and alert and in love with Buddha, then the secret of the tree will be revealed to you.

Even while a Master is alive only those who are perceptive, feel; but those who are really perceptive go on feeling even when the Master is gone. Any small thing from the Master's body - the room in which he lived, the tree under which he became enlightened - has some quality, something of the beyond.

Enlightenment is as contagious as any disease. And when a great Master exists the disease starts taking epidemic proportions. You are not here just to hear me, because that you can do by reading books, by listening to the tapes. You are here to partake of my being, you are here to partake of the matter that has become transformed with me. So it is a natural desire, nothing wrong in it.

"BEFORE I NEVER GAVE MUCH THOUGHT TO HOW LONG YOU WOULD REMAIN "

You were not concerned with me, now you are concerned. You were not involved with me, now you are involved. You were not committed to me, now you are committed. Now somehow my destiny is going to be your destiny too.

"NOW I AM WANTING YOU TO STAY A LONG TIME."

If you need me... even if a single person needs me I will be staying a long time. It will depend on your need. How much you need me, that much I can stay. My own needs are fulfilled, I can go any moment. There is nothing more left. All that has to be done has been done and all that has to be experienced has been experienced. I am fulfilled. This moment I am ready to go, or the next moment any moment is perfectly okay now.

But if you need me, your very need will sustain me in the body. If you desire me and my presence, if your thirst is strong enough, that can keep me in the body. ONLY that can keep me. My own roots in the body are no longer there. But your need, your desires, your longing, your search for truth - if it is strong enough, big enough, it is possible for me to stay long enough. It all depends on you.

So don't be worried that you are falling into some wrong kind of desire. This is absolutely natural.

"I FEEL VERY STRONGLY THE DESIRE TO BE IN YOUR PHYSICAL PRESENCE RATHER THAN FEEL YOU WITH ME IN THE WEST."

There is no problem; then just be here, Sambodhi. I am creating this Buddhafield for all those who need to be with me, who want to be not only spiritually connected with me but materially too. I am a material spiritualist, or a spiritual hedonist. Any paradox will do to describe me.

The third question:

Question 3

YOU SPOKE TODAY OF LOVE AND DEATH AND THE IMPORTANCE OF EXPERIENCING LOVE TO PASS CONSCIOUSLY INTO DEATH. I HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED DEEP LOVE,

ONLY SUPERFICIAL ATTACHMENTS. I DO NOT LOVE EVEN MYSELF SO HOW CAN I LOVE ANOTHER? I KNOW THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO REGARDING THIS IMPASSE AS THERE IS A SEASON FOR ALL THINGS AND AT THE RIGHT TIME WHAT IS NEEDED HAPPENS. IS THERE ANYTHING MORE I CAN DO THAN WAIT?

First, don't console yourself. Consolation is not the way to real understanding. It is true that there is nothing that you can do, but this can be just a consolation, a kind of defeatism. Then it is untrue. Even a truth can be used as a lie; it all depends on you. This is just in your mind: "What can I do? So I have to wait." But your waiting will be impotent because it will be out of a kind of defeatism, out of a kind of pessimism.

There is another kind of waiting which is not impotent, a waiting which is aflame, a waiting which is passionate, a waiting which is prayerful, a waiting which does not come as a consolation but comes as an understanding.

What is understanding? Understanding is: "I cannot do on my own, but God can do through me." And any time is the right time, and any season is the right season. There are not seasons when enlightenment happens, just as it happens that in the spring all flowers bloom. If there were seasons when enlightenment happened, then many people would have become enlightened when Buddha became enlightened, then many people would have become enlightened when I became enlightened. There are not seasons. As far as enlightenment is concerned, it is always spring, it is always the right season. But why is it not happening to you?

And I say waiting is the only thing that can be done - but remember, it has to be a waiting full of prayer, full of longing, of a great intensity; not impotent, not lethargic; waiting with a very, very active energy, not just passivity. And these are two different kinds of waitings.

When you wait for your beloved there is not passivity: you are all aflame, you are full of energy. In fact you are never so full of energy as when you are waiting for your beloved. You are all awareness. Just a dead leaf moves in the wind on the road, and you rush, and you open the door - "Maybe she has come?" A postman passes by and his footsteps are heard, and you run - "Maybe she has come!" Everything, every sound, becomes her sound. The wind comes and knocks on the door, and you run - "So she has come!" It is not lethargy, you are not lying down on your bed. You are very, very actively waiting.

My feeling is that the questioner is in a kind of defeatism, pessimism, lethargy. If you are waiting in lethargy it will not happen. Then no season is spring.

The energy has to be totally there, vibrating, pulsating, streaming - and yet you are waiting, you are not doing anything. What can you do? What can be done? Man as himself is tiny, but man can pray, man can cry and weep.

Let your waiting be full of tears, let your waiting be full of prayers. Let your waiting be not just passive but immensely, intensely active. That is the doing that is needed. You will have to make the distinction very clearly.

The real opposition is not between waiting and doing. The real opposition is between active waiting and passive waiting. Active waiting and passive waiting are the enemies. Doing and non-doing are not the enemies.

You say, ”YOU SPOKE TODAY OF LOVE AND DEATH AND THE IMPORTANCE OF EXPERIENCING LOVE TO PASS CONSCIOUSLY INTO DEATH. I HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED DEEP LOVE - ONLY SUPERFICIAL ATTACHMENTS.”

The reason may be that because you called those attachments superficial, that’s why you have not been able to experience deep love. You condemned. To call anything superficial is to prevent yourself from going deeply into it. Nobody wants to go into anything superficial. But the word is significant. What does superficial mean? It simply means that you are just touching the surface of it. If you go deep into it, it will become deep. Every superficiality has a depth in it, otherwise it would not be superficial either. The surface of the ocean is possible only because the depth of the ocean is there. The surface contains the depth and the depth cannot be there without the surface. Just see the point.

Anything superficial can become deep, it depends on you; and anything deep can remain superficial, that too depends on you. And people have been taught to condemn all superficial things. That’s why they are debarred from experiencing the depth of life. Everything is superficial. You fall in love with a woman - this is superficial. You have a friendship - that is superficial. You love flowers - that is superficial, because flowers are momentary. And your religions go on saying, ”Search for the eternal. Don’t fall in love with the momentary.” And the momentary contains the eternal! The moment is eternity. Because the wave contains the ocean, if you condemn the wave you will never know what the ocean is.

Drop condemnations. Forget all these words - superficial, momentary, temporal, worldly - these are all dangerous words. Once you start using them, once you get accustomed to them, you are prevented from every depth. It is like you condemn the door: you say, ”A door is a door. I am in search of the temple.” But wherever you will go you will find the door first, and then the temple. And you are against the door, so you go on moving and you never reach any temple. The door belongs to the temple. It is as divine as the deity within.

Learn to respect the momentary and soon the eternal will knock on your doors. Love the superficial too! Love the physical too! Be sensuous, be sexual. Don’t condemn, because these are the doors. Only through these doors will you enter into something which is non-sexual, non-sensuous. This is the mystery of life: that sensuality leads to non-sensuality, sexuality leads to non-sexuality. The body leads into soul, and the world becomes the door to the divine, to God.

”I HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED,” you say, ”DEEP LOVE.”

How can you experience deep love? First, all that you experience you call superficial. Second, you have not experienced deep love but you must have some idea what a deep love is supposed to be - a perfectionist ideal that deep love has to be ’like this’. And you will never find it, because in life everything is mixed. In life the sky and the earth are mixed: you will never find pure sky and you will never find pure earth either. You will be surprised to know that all the great religions spread into the world by the same routes from where all great epidemics spread; the same routes have been followed by religions too. The same route that the plague spreads by is the route Christianity moves on. But you cannot condemn just because the same route has been followed.

Everything is mixed in life. You have to learn that life has a multiplicity in it, and you have to start decoding different things in life. Decode the surface and you will reach to the profound depth. Get

into the body and how long can you avoid the soul? People have great ideas about love, how love should be; they have impossible ideals about love. Then they cannot fulfill that ideal and they feel condemned.

Drop all ideals of love. You don't know what love is! All that you know you call superficial, and all that you don't know you gather from poets and philosophers - who may have gathered from other poets and from other philosophers, and this goes on and on. You don't know what profound love is. You know the superficial. So it is perfectly good, for the moment. Go into the superficial, go totally into it, and by going totally into it you will come across the deep, the profound. And then you will be surprised that it has NO connection with the ideals that people are carrying. It is so indefinable that no definition has ever been just and fair to it. And it is so mysterious that no explanation is possible. It cannot be reduced to any theory. Accept the ordinary; the extraordinary is hidden in it.

And your waiting seems to be just a dull, passive, dead waiting, a kind of great lethargy. God will not happen, this is not the waiting for God. Only death will happen. Out of this kind of waiting only death happens, nothing else.

And don't postpone, don't play games. These are mind games.

You say, "I KNOW THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO "

How do you know? How do you know that nothing can be done? Have you done ALL that can be done? Have you come to this point by your own experience, that nothing can be done? Then you would not have asked the question: "Is there anything more I can do than wait?" You are still searching to do something. This is not your experience; there is still some desire to do. There is something still groping in the dark, but you are consoling yourself that "There is a season for all things and at the right time what is needed happens."

This is cliche. Drop it. You have heard it repeated too often, it has entered into your mind. This is just consoling yourself. This consolation will become poison. This is a way for the mind to postpone. The mind never wants to get into anything - it only desires, it lives in desiring. In fact if what it desires happens the mind is immediately frustrated with it.

There is a beautiful poem of Rabindranath Tagore:

"I searched for God for many, many lives, and I saw Him always far away, somewhere passing by the side of a star. And my longing became greater and greater and greater, and I searched and searched. And I was very happy in my search, immensely happy in my search. Then one day it happened: I reached the house where God lived. I read the nameplate. I was thrilled, I was all joy - so I have arrived! I was just going to knock on the door, then the mind said, "Wait a minute. Think about it twice. You may really find Him there. Then what? If He is really there, then what will you do? How will you live? You live through desire for Him, you live through desire. You are a seeker, a searcher; that is the only way you know how to be. If you have found Him you will be stuck. Then what will you do?'" And Rabindranath said, "I really became frightened. All joy disappeared." Yes, this was something very, very important to be considered - "If I knock on the door and He opens the door and embraces me, then what? Then where do I go from there? Then I am stuck in His embrace And He may be beautiful, but that is the end of me and my world and the ways that I have

always known, and it has been so beautiful searching and seeking." He says, "I took my shoes off my feet and carried them in my hands down the staircase because I was afraid He might hear the noise, 'Somebody is there,' and He might open without my knocking. Then I escaped, and I ran as fast as I have ever run before. Since then I have been running from Him, and I don't look back. I have again started searching and again started asking people 'Where is God?' And I again see Him sometimes, somewhere there, far away in the stars. I start searching and I go on searching, and all the time I know where He lives so I avoid that house. I go everywhere else."

Mind exists in desiring. And the best way to continue desire is to lie down in a deep lethargy and wait for the right season to come. It never comes - because the right season is always there. Only when you are intensely aflame does it come; otherwise it is there. When you are aflame, when you become spring, you are immediately in contact with the spring which is eternally present. Don't be lethargic.

I have heard

The frogs who had been out on the tiles were suffering from a terrific hangover. "Oh dear," remarked one, "I wish we had some aspirin." At that moment a tortoise who had ambled by overheard his remarks and said, "I say, you fellows, I will go down to the village and get you some aspirin, if it will be of any help."

"Ah, my dear fellow, would you really? That's most kind of you to offer," replied the frog. And the tortoise started off.

Well after about two weeks there was no sign of any aspirin or the return of the tortoise. So one frog said to the other, "I say, do you think that tortoise can be relied upon? He has been gone an awfully long time."

At this remark the tortoise, who had been having a quiet rest behind a boulder, said, "If you speak like that behind my back, I jolly well won't go and get that aspirin. So there!"

You can live in a kind of lethargy for ever and ever; nothing will happen to you. And I am not saying that God does not happen to those who wait. He happens only to those who wait! but waiting has a different quality. Waiting has to be aflame, only then does God happen. Every fiber of your being should be awake, alert: any moment it is going to happen, how can you fall asleep?

Jesus is reported to have said again and again to his disciples, "Be awake. Don't fall asleep." And he tells the parable where a Master told his servants, "I am going on a pilgrimage but I may return any day, any moment, day or night. You have to be awake for twenty-four hours because I may come at any time, and I will come without informing you."

This is the situation: the servants have to keep watch day and night. They have to be alert, the Master can come at any moment.

God can come at any moment - you have to be alert, watchful. Your waiting should be alert, watchful, intense. That is your doing. Waiting is not against doing. Waiting is the highest kind of doing, the subtlest kind of doing. Waiting is the greatest art of doing.

The fourth question:

Question 4

WHY IS IT SAID THAT LIFE IS STRANGER THAN FICTION?

Because life is! Fictions are only reflections of life; how can they be stranger than life? Fictions are only parts of life. Life is a very complicated whole: it does not begin, it does not end. Your fiction starts and ends.

I know a person who always reads his novels from the middle. I asked him, ”What is the point?” He said, ”This way you remain more in suspense - the end is not known, the beginning is not known. If you start from the beginning you are only curious about the end. I am curious in a double way. I enjoy it more totally!”

Life is like that - it is always in the middle. You are always in the middle, the beginning is not known. Religions have tried somehow to supply the beginning. All those philosophies on how the world began are just nonsense, because the world never began. It has always been in the middle. That is the mystery, but the mind hankers for the beginning.

And then there are people who supply the answers. They say, ”On a certain day God created the world.” And what had He been doing before that? Just sitting there stupidly? And how long had He been sitting? Christians say, ”God created the world EXACTLY four thousand and four years before Jesus - on a certain Monday He started, and ended by Saturday evening, and rested on Sunday.” Then what w as He doing before that? - immense eternity! He must have got bored. In fact Eve must have committed suicide or must have gone mad.

The world never began. How can there be a beginning to the total? Because even if the beginning is conceived you will need a few things before the beginning, and then it will not be the beginning. You will need space. God says, ”Let there be light! ” But where? THERE IS needed. Time will be needed. How can Monday start suddenly without time? It needs a Sunday before it, otherwise how will you call it Monday? It will be so absurd.

No, the world has no beginning and the world has no end. It simply goes on and on and on, and everything is so complicated and everything is so intertwined with everything else that nothing is separate. I am in you, you are in me. You are in the trees, trees are in you. Rocks are in you, you are in the rocks. The farthest corner - if there is any - is connected to you. Touch a small pebble and you have touched the whole of existence. Kiss a woman and you have kissed the totality, because that woman is part of totality. When you kiss a woman you have kissed her mother too, and the mother’s mother. You may not like it... but nothing can be done about it - millions and millions of mothers-in-law, standing in a queue behind your woman, from the very beginning. And you have also kissed the child that is going to be born to the woman, and the children’s children, and the whole future. Because the woman will go on reverberating, she will live in the daughter, and the daughter’s daughter, and she will go on living in millions of ways.

When you kiss a woman you have kissed the whole past and you have also kissed the whole future. Touch reality anywhere and you touch the total. And the total is so immense, immeasurable.

Life is very strange because it is a great mystery.

I have heard about a certain Doctor Smartass.

Once upon a time there were two young men who became close friends. While sitting and talking at lunch one day, much to their surprise they discovered that they were both in treatment with the same psychotherapist, Doctor Smartass. As they compared notes, they agreed that the doctor was competent and helpful. He was also maddeningly composed and pompously sure of himself. If only there was some way to shake him up, to make him feel as unsettled as he made them feel.

Gleefully they hit upon a scheme to unhorse the good doctor. Together they made up an elaborate dream, rehearsing the telling of it until each could present it as his own. That Monday would be the day of reckoning. The first young man would go in for his appointment in the morning and tell the therapist 'his' dream. His friend would repeat the performance in his own session that same afternoon. Let's see how Doctor Smartass would handle that one.

On Monday the first young man went to his session and told his carefully rehearsed dream. He hid his secret glee as he had the therapist work on interpreting the dream. That afternoon, his friend gave a brilliant straight-faced performance as he too recounted the dream as if it were his own. Every detail of the second telling was the same as the first.

He was delighted to see an uncharacteristic look of bewilderment come across the therapist's face. "God, that's strange," said the doctor. "That's the THIRD time today I have heard that exact same dream."

Life IS strange. Things really happen here.

Life is unexplainable. All explanations fall short. All explanations are stupid, silly. The real people who understand the mystery of life don't give you any explanation about it. They help you to experience the mystery but they don't de-mystify it. That's where science and religion depart from each other. The whole effort of science is to de-mystify existence, to explain everything - and whenever a thing is explained the wonder is lost. Then love becomes nothing but hormones, then falling in love is nothing but chemistry. Then all that you do and all that happens to you becomes very mundane, very ordinary, very superficial, not worth doing really.

Just think... you are falling in love with a woman because of your chemistry. Because certain chemicals are released in your body, certain hormones are moving in your blood, that's why you are feeling sexual, attracted. If those hormones are taken out, if that chemistry is changed, you would not feel attracted. All love will disappear. The moment you think of the chemistry of love, love disappears. Then there is only chemistry - two chemistries getting attracted to each other - almost victims of chemistry. The joy, the gladness, the glory, the splendor - all are gone.

The scientist tries to supply answers, although the scientist has failed - but people have not yet heard about it. This century has seen one of the greatest phenomena: the scientist has failed, UTTERLY failed! - because the scientist has come closer and closer to truth, and the closer the scientist comes to the truth the more bewildered he becomes. The closer he comes to truth the more the truth seems to be more and more mysterious, unknowable.

Albert Einstein said before he died, ”The world to mc is now more unknowable than it was when I started my work. I had started with the idea that I would find a few explanations, I would make things better explained, a little bit, but I would help to create a few explanations. But all those explanations that existed in my youth are no longer there. I am simply bewildered. I am dying not as a physicist but as a mystic. And next time, if I am to come back, I would like to be born as a plumber rather than as a physicist.”

A great statement... because the plumber knows more about the mystery, lives it, enjoys it. By ’plumber’ he means, ”I would like to be an ordinary person, a very ordinary person - a farmer, a gardener, a plumber. I would not bother about de-mystifying existence. I would rather live it, experience it. I would rather sing about it and dance about it.”

Life IS strange, and that is the basic contribution of religion to the world. Religion helps you to go into the mystery without de-mystifying. That’s where theology goes wrong. Theology is NOT religion. Theology is again the same endeavor as science - trying to find explanations. Zen Masters are right when they laugh at your questions, and Sufis are perfectly right when they answer your questions in absurd ways. The answer does not relate to the question at all. If you become puzzled, it is a great step. If you forget your knowledge, if you unlearn your explanations, it is really a great step towards God.
Live without explanation and you will live a religious life.

The fifth question:

Question 5

I FEEL A RAPPORT WITH YOUR WRITINGS - ALMOST LIKE A CONTEMPORARY. SURELY THIS FEELING WILL CHANGE IF I BECOME A SANNYASIN. WILL THIS CHANGE BE BENEFICIAL?

To feel en rapport with my writings is one thing, to feel en rapport is totally another. To be convinced by my writings will not change you, it will simply add to your knowledge. To fall en rapport with me will destroy you, annihilate you, will transform you. When you are reading you are the master, you own the book, and you can go on finding ways and means to defend yourself against the book. And the book cannot do much; you are free to interpret it in your own ways.

That’s what you must be doing. That’s why you are saying, ”I feel a rapport with your writings - almost like a contemporary.” Your ego is being fulfilled through them.

What is actually happening is you are not being convinced by what I say, you are really convinced that whatsoever you have been thinking before is right! - ”Osho also agrees with me.” That’s what you think falling en rapport is. It is not you getting into agreement with me, it is me getting into agreement with you. And with a book, that you can do very easily: you can forget those portions that don’t agree with you or you can interpret them in such a way that they start appearing to be in agreement with you. The book is dead. You can do anything to the book.

I am alive. And I am SO contradictory. I relish contradictions. That is my nourishment - that if you agree with me today, tomorrow I will create trouble. If you agree with me again, next day I will create

trouble again. By and by you will relax and you will forget agreeing with me: ”What is the point? This man goes on contradicting himself every day.”

This is a device so that you stop agreeing with me through the mind. Then arises a different kind of agreement - a conversion - you start agreeing with my being. That is true rapport.

Sannyas is nothing but a gesture from your side that you are ready to go with me into the dark unknown, that you trust me, that now you are ready not only to listen to my thoughts, you are ready to listen to my silence too. The book can give you only the thoughts, it cannot give the pauses in between. And they are really valuable, they are really significant, not the words.

Looking into my eyes is more significant than reading my books. Sitting close to me, feeling me, being overwhelmed by me, opening your heart towards me - that is the real thing. The book has only one work to do: it can bring you to me, that’s all. Then its work is finished. The book is not the end, the book is just the beginning. Don’t get stuck there.

You must be feeling very good; that’s why you say, ”almost I feel like a contemporary.” You are not! - because to be contemporary with me you will have to exist in no-time, because I exist in no-time. I don’t exist in the twentieth century. I am not a thinker. You can be contemporary with Bertrand Russell. If you think in the same way, with the same logic, with the same conclusions, you are contemporary with Bertrand Russell - but to be contemporary with Buddha is a totally different phenomenon. You will have to go deep into silence because Buddha exists in silence, Buddha exists in no-time. He exists in eternity. That’s why even TODAY you can become a contemporary with Buddha, even today you can become a contemporary with Lao Tzu, and for centuries to come you can at any time become contemporary with a Christ. Whenever you transcend time you become contemporary with enlightened people.

Just by agreeing with my thoughts you will not become my contemporary. You will be contemporaneous to my thoughts, that’s all - but not to me. And I am not a thought but an experience.

You ask me, ”SURELY THIS FEELING WILL CHANGE IF I BECOME A SANNYASIN.”

Surely. It is going to change, it has to change. You will feel totally differently. The ego will start disappearing. It will hurt.

Becoming a sannyasin means you have become a disciple. Now you will put your mind aside, now you will get more and more in tune with my vibe. This in the East WE call SATSANGA: to be in the presence of the Master, to see the Master, to touch the Master, to be touched by the Master, to be seen by the Master. It is not a verbal communication. Verbal communication has its own purpose. Because you cannot start without verbal communication, that’s why I have to go on speaking. If I had been totally silent here you would not be here. You are here because I have spoken.

But if you remain here only just to hear me you miss the whole point. Then you will gather only words; those words will turn dead in your hands. Howsoever alive and warm they are when I release them, the moment they get into your clutches they will be cold, dead stones. Unless you become contemporaneous with my being... and that can happen only in meditation. Meditation is the bridge between the Master and the disciple.

You will change, surely you will change. But YOU HAVE to change! Are you not yet bored with yourself? Only a dull person can remain happy in the ordinary way, only an insensitive person can remain happy in an ordinary way. A sensitive person, sooner or later, starts feeling, ”I am moving in a rut,” that ”I am moving in a vicious circle.” The more sensitive you are, the sooner you recognize that there is a need to be transformed, radically transformed, that there is a need to go through a revolution, that one needs a breakdown and a breakthrough.

The sixth question:

Question 6

I HAVE HEARD THAT AT THE TIME OF GIVING SANNYAS TO YOUR MOTHER, YOU HAD STEPPED OFF YOUR CHAIR AND TOUCHED THE FEET OF YOUR MOTHER. THIS UNIQUE SITUATION HAS THRILLED ME. PLEASE QUENCH MY DESIRE FOR KNOWING SOME MORE. WHO IS GREATER - MOTHER OR GURU?

They are greater than each other.

Asking that question is wrong. The very formulation: it is just like asking, ”Which is greater - the hen or the egg?” You don’t understand. You divide hen and egg; they are indivisible. The hen is a state of the egg, the egg is a state of the hen.

To ask: Who is greater - mother or guru, mother or Master? is possible only if you don’t understand what a mother is and what a Master is. Both are to be respected for a certain thing that is common to both: they both give birth. That’s why they are respected. The mother gives birth to the physical being, the first birth is through the mother. The second birth is through the Master. The Master is a mother! Becoming a disciple means getting into the womb of the Master. A Buddhafield is a womb. To enter into the womb of the Master, to enter into his milieu, to become part of his energy - the second birth happens. You become a twice-born, a DWIJA. This is what Jesus means when he says,,”Unless you are born again ”

A second birth is a must, otherwise you will live only as a physical being. The mother has given you just the physical being. The temple has been created by the mother, the deity has to be born yet through a Master.

The English word ’mother’ and the English word ’matter’, both come from the same root. They both come from the same Sanskrit root, MATHRA. It is beautiful that mother and matter both come from the same root. What does it mean?

The mother gives you matter, she supplies you with matter. The mother is your matter, she is your body. The mother is the earth, the Master is the sky. But remember, without the earth the sky cannot happen. Without the temple the deity is not possible. So the mother has given you an opportunity. but that is only an opportunity. You will have to find a Master to transform the opportunity into a realization.

Now this is a problem: who is more respectable, who is greater?

Without the mother you would not be here, and the Master could not work. Without the Master you would be here but your being here would be pointless. In fact, respecting the mother and the Master are both for the same reason - because they both give birth. Naturally, the higher birth is given by the Master, so the Master is greater. But the foundation is laid down by the mother, so the mother is greater. That's why I say they are greater than each other.

And you have asked, "I HAVE HEARD THAT AT THE TIME OF GIVING SANNYAS TO YOUR MOTHER, YOU HAD STEPPED OFF YOUR CHAIR AND TOUCHED THE FEET OF YOUR MOTHER. THIS UNIQUE SITUATION HAS THRILLED ME. PLEASE QUENCH MY DESIRE FOR KNOWING SOME MORE."

It is a strange phenomenon. Very rarely does it happen that a mother comes to become a disciple of her own son. Mary never became a disciple to Christ, and Christ was angry about it. He wanted, because he wanted all that he had become to be shared with the mother. But the mother never became a disciple; that's why the strange statement. Jesus was surrounded by a crowd and Mary came, and somebody in the crowd said... the crowd was too much and she could not enter, and she wanted to have a talk with Jesus... somebody said, "Your mother is waiting for you outside the crowd. She wants to see you." And Jesus said, "I have nothing to do with that woman." It looks ugly. Those words on Jesus' lips don't fit. But why does he say "I don't have anything to do with that woman"? She remained a woman. Jesus was angry, and his anger can be understood. It is out of love that he was angry. He wanted his mother to be transformed. He was sharing his light with strangers, and his own mother and his own father would remain in darkness. He was sad about it. His sadness showed in his anger.

When my mother came to be initiated by me, I touched her feet because she proved to be a rare mother. To bow down to your own son is really arduous and hard. It is almost impossible to touch the feet of your own son - it needs great courage. It needs great risk to drop all your ego. I touched her feet not because she is my mother, I touched her feet because she dared! I touched her feet for the same reason, for the SAME I say, that Jesus was angry. The reason is the same: I was immensely happy. It is rare, happens only once in a while. And I touched her feet also for another thing: because after that she would not be my mother and I would not be her son. The account has to be closed as beautifully as possible.

It was a drastic step. She had always thought about me as her son. Now, no more. Now she would be my disciple and I would be her Master. Up to then she had been giving advice to me, she had been directing me - "Do this and don't do that." Now all that is not possible. Now I will be directing her, I will be giving advice to her, I will be ordering her to do this or that. The whole situation is going to be radically changed.

She risked.

I respected her courage, I respected her egolessness. And the account has to be closed beautifully: this was the last time I would be a son to her; it will remain in her consciousness forever. Since that moment all the ties have been broken. It was the beginning of a new relationship. I touched her feet not only because she is my mother. I touched her feet because she dared, she dared a lot. She dropped her ego.

And the last question:

Question 7

IT IS TRUE THAT IN A VERY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WHEN ONE 'PLAYS' THE GOOD, UNDERSTANDING, CALM AND RELAXED ONE, IT IS ONLY LEFT FOR THE OTHER TO BE NERVOUS, TENSE AND ANGRY? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

Yes, a certain kind of balancing always happens in relationship. If one is playing very calm and quiet and cool, the other will have to do all the work of being angry, nagging, miserable, fighting.

Just a few days ago Chaitanya Hari had asked a question, "Why did Socrates continue to live with this naggy-daggy woman, Xanthippe?"

The question is relevant, because he is also living with a naggy-daggy woman, Krishna. But remember, Socrates was responsible. He was playing too cool, too philosophical. Xanthippe was not as bad as she appears. If you go into the psychology of it, she was the victim of a philosopher. She had to do all the work, the poor woman.

And so is the case with Krishna! Krishna was saying to me, "Osho, do you think this Chaitanya Hari is a saint?" He is not! He only pretends! Now Chaitanya Hari is also responsible if Krishna turns out to be a Xanthippe. She alone will not be responsible.

There is a kind of balancing. Whenever two persons are together a balancing happens. Don't try to play cool, otherwise the other will have to become more hot than needed. Don't try to play like heaven, otherwise the other will become hell. Be natural, be normal. It is sometimes good to be angry and sometimes good to be sad, and sometimes to be hellish and sometimes to be heavenly.

Then both remain natural, then both remain normal. A normal relationship is a hell-heaven relationship. When one is - pretends to be - heavenly or hellish, then the other is not left with anything else. The only role left is to do the opposite. This has to be understood. This is one of the greatest problems in the world.

I have heard

Once Avicenna, an Arabian physician and philosopher, hearing of the spiritual fame of Abel Hasan Khargani, visited the Master at his home in Khargani. At the time the Master was absent from his home, having gone to the nearby jungles to fetch firewood at the request of his wife. When his wife was asked by Avicenna where the Master was, she replied hotly, "Why do you wish to see that lunatic and imposter? What business have you with him?" And she went on at length criticizing and belittling the Master, and disparaging his spiritual status.

Avicenna was greatly perplexed. What she said contradicted what he had previously heard, and he felt disinclined to continue his search for him. However, seeing he had come so far just to see the Master, he finally decided to do so. On going towards the jungle he was astounded to see approaching him the Master returning from the jungle with a great bundle of firewood loaded on the back of a tiger.

The philosopher, after paying respects, inquired of the Master the meaning of and difference between what he had been told by the wife and what he had seen with his own eyes.

The Master replied, ”There is nothing amazing about it. It is a mere question of labor. When I put up with and bear the load of suffering from the wolf (read ’wife’) in my house, then automatically this tiger from the jungle carries my load for me.”

The Sufi Master is saying ”There is a kind of balancing in existence too.” Not only is there a balancing between Xanthippe and Socrates, there is a balancing between this couple and existence too. Socrates was immensely respected by people; disrespected by the wife, tortured by the wife, but respected by the people.

This story is beautiful. Khargani is saying, ”It is a mere question of labor, there is nothing amazing about it. When I put up with and bear the load of suffering from the wolf in my house, then automatically this tiger from the jungle carries my load for me.”

Always remember, life can exist only in balance. It has always been so. Good women always find bad husbands, and good husbands always find bad women, bad wives. It is such that there is no exception to it. There cannot be any exception to it.

One man went to Socrates and asked, ”I would like to be married. I am young. What do you suggest, because I have heard so many stories about your married life? You are the most experienced person about marriage. I have come for your advice. What should I do? Is it right to get married, or is it good to remain a bachelor? Which is more blissful?”

Socrates said, ”You better get married.”

The young man said, ”You puzzle me.”

Socrates: ”There is nothing to be puzzled about, it is simple. If you get such a woman as I have got, you will become a great philosopher. I have had to become! This is sheer necessity! Just to survive I have had to become tranquil and meditative and silent. This has helped me immensely. And if you get a good wife you will be happy, if you get a bad wife you will become a philosopher. In both ways you will be profited. Get married!”

But I cannot say that Socrates is not responsible in Xanthippe’s behavior. And I cannot say that Sufi Master Abel Hasan Khargani is not responsible in his wife’s behavior.

That’s why in the East many seekers of truth have remained bachelors. There is a reason for it. The reason is, the fundamental reason is - not that you cannot attain to truth with a wife - because of compassion, because if you become too meditative living with a wife, you will destroy her being. She will start balancing, she will become ugly, she will become negative. If you are all positivity she will become negativity. Then you will be committing a crime against her, and you will be responsible for it. Down the ages, in the East, seekers of truth have remained bachelors. It is just out of compassion: why destroy another human being?

Socrates was so silent, so meditative, so involved in his search for truth: the wife simply felt neglected, ignored. She wanted his attention. I can see it happening - pouring the kettle-bottle on him she was simply asking for attention. He must have been too cold, so she was making him a little hot. He must have been in a kind of dispassion, she was trying to create some passion in him. If he could be angry, then he could be loving too.

But he was not angry. He used it as a device: he became even more calm and quiet. He allowed that hot water to burn his body, but he remained a witness. Now this must have driven the wife more crazy. How can you forgive such a husband who will not jump and hit you back? If he had hit the wife back the wife would have become cooler.

If you are married it is better to remain normal. Your search for truth should be interior. In your relationship with the wife or with the husband you should remain a normal human being. Otherwise you will be committing a crime, a sin: you will destroy the woman or the man. Then meditate when you are alone. And sometimes if it is needed, be angry! Just in play, act it, even if it is not needed, because once you have decided to live with a woman or a man you have certain responsibilities to fulfill. You have to be angry sometimes too - that is your responsibility.

If Chaitanya Hari does not understand, then Krishna is going to become a naggy-daggy woman, and half of the responsibility will be his.

Now he sits silently and meditates upon music - and in the middle of the night! Krishna jumps on him and beats him. No wife can tolerate this, no woman can tolerate that she is there, alive, warm, full of love, wants to be hugged, cared for, caressed - and you are sitting there thinking of music? It can't be allowed, it is too much. I have all sympathy for Krishna. All that she wants is, "Come to bed. Hug me, be with me. It is enough. The whole day you have been thinking about music and meditation, there is a time to relax too."

If one decides to be in a relationship one has to take care not to destroy the other, not to throw the other to the polarity too much. Life balances itself. If you are all positive the other becomes all negative. So be fifty-fifty, negative-positive both, so the other also remains fifty-fifty, negative-positive both. And when both are both, there is a kind of beautiful relationship, a beauty arises. There is great music and harmony. They become an orchestra.

If it is not happening it is better to be a bachelor, it is better to be alone. At least you will not be disturbing any other human being.

The East is right: if you are a seeker after truth it is better to be alone. And if you are already in a relationship and then the search for truth has started, then at least you can act. There is no need to be really angry, you can act and that will do. You can be hot sometimes. At least you can show it -
that much you owe to the other.

A story... Krishna and Chaitanya Hari have to meditate over it.

Wearied from the long drive, the model stopped at a motel, only to be told that the last room had just been rented, but if she didn't mind, there was a couch in one room which she could use provided the male occupant of the room had no objection.

The model knocked on the door and said to the man, "Look, you don't know me, I don't know you, we don't know them, they don't know us. Can I please bunk on your couch for a while?"

"Sure," he said - and went back to sleep.

A little while later, the model woke him up and said, ”Look, you don’t know me, I don’t know you, we don’t know them, they don’t know us - do you mind if I just sleep on the edge of the bed?”

”Okay,” he said, and fell asleep again.

A short while later, the model again woke him up and said, ”Look, I don’t know you, you don’t know me, we don’t know them, they don’t know us, so what do you say we have a party?”

”Look,” said the man, ”if I don’t know you, you don’t know me, we don’t know them and they don’t know us - then who in hell are we gonna invite to the party?”

CHAPTER 9

Experience is the Heart of the Matter

1 March 1978 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:

Question 1

IF INDIA IS SUCH AN UNSPIRITUAL COUNTRY, WHY ARE SO MANY ENLIGHTENED BEINGS BORN HERE?

Spirituality is individual. It has nothing to do with the social, the collective. No society is spiritual, no nation is spiritual. There are spiritual beings - because there is no social soul, the soul manifests through the individual.

You ask, ”WHY ARE SO MANY ENLIGHTENED PEOPLE BORN IN INDIA?”

That too is propaganda; it is not true. They have been flowering everywhere - in China as much as in India, in Japan as much as in India, in Israel as much as in India. They have been flowering everywhere. You don't have a right perspective for seeing world history. History is created by people according to their prejudice.

One thing is certain: India has been very articulate, it knows how to say things. It is one of the ancient-most cultures, the first country where writing happened in the beginning and people became articulate. They were pioneers in thinking, in philosophizing, so they are very articulate people. They can say things as they should be said. The Chinese are not so articulate, they are more trusting in silence. Their trust is not in words but in silence, hence you don't know much about Chinese enlightened Masters. And then, China has remained almost a different world from the remainder of

the world. It is not only the China Wall; there exists a certain subtle wall too which has kept China away from other countries.

In Tibet so many enlightened people have existed, but nothing much is known about Tibet. Tibet has remained a remote, faraway land, exists somewhere in clouds. The very name has become a symbol for mystery.

India is articulate. Amongst all the Eastern countries, India is the most articulate. It has been speaking about spirituality for at least five thousand years. That has created an idea in the whole world that India is spiritual. No country is especially spiritual; spirituality has been coming to all kinds of people and all races.

What do you know about the dark continent of Africa, about how many enlightened people have existed there? What do you know about primitive tribes, about how many Buddhas have existed there? They don't have any record, they don't write anything, they don't have a written language, so it is difficult.

India has great records. India has been interested in philosophizing - it does not write history, it writes philosophy. It does not write ordinary things of life, it writes myth. It is not interested in history at all, its whole interest is in mythology. And naturally, five thousand years is a long time: if you go on doing a certain thing you become very, very clever at it.

But there is something to be understood: there is a difference between the Eastern and the Western approach, and India has become the representative of the East.

There are two possibilities in approaching reality: one is to be logical, to be masculine, to be yang, aggressive. That's what the West has been doing. That is the Western choice. The Eastern choice is just the opposite: to be feminine, to be intuitive. More emphasis is given to feeling than to thinking, more emphasis is given to the inner than to the outer. These are the two gestalts reality can be reduced to. If you look outside it becomes matter, it appears as matter; it is the same reality. If you look inside it appears as consciousness; it is the same reality. The East has been searching more in the inside, the West has been searching more on the outside. Naturally, in the West, science has developed immensely, technology has developed greatly. When you look into matter science develops, technology develops. When you look inside science does not develop but philosophizing, poetry, religion. But both are halves, and both, because they are halves, are wrong, lopsided.

Try to understand me: when I say a man is spiritual I mean he is as easily flowing on the outside as he flows inside. He is whole. Neither has the East been spiritual nor has the West been spiritual. The West has been materialist and the East has been spiritualist - but not spiritual. The West believes in the philosophy of the outside, the East believes in the philosophy of the inside.

The spiritual person is one who has come to that ultimate synthesis between the outer and the inner, between matter and consciousness, between body and soul. In the real spiritual person East and West meet and disappear. The really spiritual person is neither of the East nor of the West; he is global. Where he exists is not the point. His approach is global because his approach is total. He's whole, that's why I call him holy. Neither is the East whole nor is the West whole; both have suffered.

Nobody has chosen the total reality as it is. The total reality is enormous, it contains contradictions - that's why nobody has chosen it. If you choose the inside you are afraid to choose the outside because they look to be opposite. You start feeling inconsistent. If you choose the outside, naturally you start denying the inside because they don't fit. You learn one kind of language - the outer or the inner - and you deny the other kind of language.

Who is a spiritual person? Whom do I call enlightened? I call that man enlightened who is not afraid of this contradictoriness of life, who accepts it, and in that acceptance transcends East-West, transcends matter-mind, transcends all kinds of dualities.

A Buddha is not Eastern, cannot be. Christ is not Western, cannot be. They have come to that peak of consciousness from where the whole earth is one.

Do you know? - when man walked on the moon, what his greatest experience was? It was not of the moon. His greatest experience was of the earth! From that space, from that distance, they could see earth as one. Boundaries disappeared, nations disappeared. There was no India and there was no Germany and no England and no America; it was all one earth. That was their greatest experience when they were standing on the moon. For the first time ordinary human beings could feel that the earth is one.

Exactly the same happens when you reach to the inner peak of consciousness. From there, the vision is even MORE clear than it is from the moon, because that is the greatest peak. From that perspective you see life as whole.

I call that man enlightened who sees life as whole. They have been blooming, flowering, everywhere. Flowers bloom in the valleys of the Himalayas too, where nobody goes and sees them. Don't think that they bloom only in your garden. They bloom in primitive societies too. Of course, they don't have the word 'enlightenment' or 'buddha'. They have their words.

If you look into the Old Testament you will not find the word 'enlightenment', you will not find the word 'buddha'; that is not there. That is a different kind of language. But who are these prophets? In a very primitive society the enlightened person may be called 'the magician', and it looks very absurd to call Buddha a magician. But that is their language and that has its own beauty - because. this is the greatest magic there is, and the man has performed the greatest miracle: he has transformed himself.

The word 'magician' comes from a very, very enlightened person, Magus. The people around him must have felt the same way as they felt around Buddha. The vibe of the person was miraculous. To be around him was enough to trigger something inside you that took you far away, far, far away from your ordinary places, which brought you to a new place inside your being, which gave you an experience of a new space. People must have wondered what he had done.

Primitive societies call their enlightened people 'the magicians'. Languages differ. Those who understand should not bother too much about languages. They should break all the barriers of languages, concepts, and they should look directly. Then you will be surprised: flowers have been blooming all over the earth, God has been coming all over the earth. God has been descending everywhere, in every time, in every kind of place. God is not partial, but every race would like to declare that God is partial.

Jews say they are the chosen people: all that is beautiful and all that is great has been happening to them, all the prophets belong to them. Just listen to the Jews: they will say ”Who else has so many prophets?” Of course in India they are not called prophets, in China they are not called prophets - ”Who else has so many prophets?” And the Jew is right, because they have a long, long line of prophets.

If you ask the Christians, of course they are the chosen people. They follow the ’only begotten Son of God’. Christ has come to them. Who else has such a phenomenon as Christ? It is their property, their possession: Christ belongs to them.

In India the enlightened person is not called Christ, but the Christ-consciousness is the same as Buddha-consciousness. In China the enlightened is neither called a prophet nor is he called a Buddha, but he is called ’the sage’. The Chinese can say, ”So many sages are born here, nowhere else.” And every race has its own ego, so China thinks itself the greatest land on earth.

When the first travellers from the West went to China and they went to see the emperor, they were thinking that they had come to very primitive people. And what were the Chinese thinking about them? They were thinking, ”These people look like monkeys!” The Chinese records say that ’monkeys have come from the West’. And the Western traveller writes that ’these people are very primitive, barbarians’.

Germans think they are the real Nordic aryans, that they are meant to rule over the world, they are the superior-most people. And the white thinks he’s the superior-most, and how can the black man even claim that he is a human being? - he is not. All egos and nothing else.

So these so-called Indian MAHATMAS who go on travelling around the world and teaching people that India is the only spiritual country, the only religious country, are nothing but chauvinists, racists; they are not religious at all. Because a religious person how can he claim that God has been happening on only one spot on the earth? God is happening everywhere! God IS everywhere! He is not concentrated somewhere more and somewhere less; He’s impartially showering all over existence. It is His existence, it is His creation.

So this idea has to be dropped. No country is spiritual, no country is special. And the day will be a day of great jubilation in the world when we can drop all these stupid ideas of Indians, of Germans, of Chinese, of English. of Hindus, of Christians, of Mohammedans. When a pure human being arises who belongs to the whole earth, who is a citizen of the whole, who is universal, that will be the beginning of something spiritual. A spiritual man is a whole man. His vision knows no divisions, his vision is indivisible.

You ask, ”If INDIA IS SUCH AN UNSPIRITUAL COUNTRY, WHY ARE SO MANY ENLIGHTENED BEINGS BORN HERE?”

There are a few things more to be understood. One is: in the day, the stars disappear. What happens? Do they go and hide somewhere? They are there, exactly where they have always been, but the sunlight is too much, you cannot see them. When the sun has gone down they will start appearing again. Not that they start coming; they have been there the whole day, but great darkness is needed for them to shine.

Lao Tzu says that there was a time when people were so religious that there were no religions at all. There was a time when people were so innocent that they had not even heard the word 'innocence'. They were so simple that they knew nothing of simplicity. They were so trusting that they had not heard anything about faith, belief, trust. There was no religion because people were religious! Just think of that time, if it ever was. Then there cannot be any enlightened person, because ALL were in that kind of ocean, in that place called enlightenment. A Buddha can be seen only when there is darkness all around. If there are millions of Buddhas, Buddha will disappear. Not that he will not be there! He will be there but how will you see him? How will you find him? In a really spiritual world, again there will be no enlightened people. Not that there will not be enlightened people; but enlightenment will be so natural, so spontaneous, that you will not be able to find who is Buddha. All will be Buddhas!

Enlightened people can be seen only against the darkness.

In India enlightened people have existed against the darkness. The society is very unenlightened. People are dark holes. Amidst such darkness, whenever a star is born it is brilliant, it is bright. You can see it, you cannot forget it for centuries and centuries! You worship it because it is so rare.

One thing to be remembered: for an enlightened person to be recognized as enlightened, great masses of unenlightened people are needed, but the vice versa is not true. I am not saying that if in a certain society no enlightened person exists, that it means that the whole society is enlightened; the vice versa is not true. But this is absolutely true: that an enlightened person can be recognized only against the unenlightened. The rich person can be recognized only against the poor, and the beautiful person can be recognized only against the ugly. If all people are beautiful, as plastic surgeons think that soon it will be possible - all people will have beauty - then beauty contests will disappear. There will be no beauty queens anymore. The beauty queen can exist, Miss Universe can exist, only amidst great ugliness. Otherwise it is not possible. If all people become meditators, if all people become silent, how will you feel a Buddha? Not that Buddha will disappear; Buddha will be there. And Buddha will be very happy because no work is left for him, he can rest and relax. But he will not be recognized at all.

You can count your enlightened people on fingers: a Buddha, a Christ, a Krishna, a Lao Tzu. Why? - because the greater mass of people have remained immensely dark, immensely ugly, immensely barbarian.

Remember this: a Buddha, his existence, does not make a country enlightened. The people start repeating his words easily but the people are not enlightened. It is like this: Edison discovered electricity; now everybody uses electricity, but everybody is not an Edison. And even when you use electricity what do you know about it? Just pushing the button, you think you know much about electricity? You can put it on and off - do you think you know much about electricity? In fact Edison himself had said that he does not know what this electricity is. He had stumbled upon its utility but its inner reality remained a mystery.

You can drive your car; that does not mean you know everything about its mechanism. You live in the body; what do you know about the body?

People learn words, they can use words. Buddha has said many things, now you can repeat. The whole country can become parrot-like. That's what has happened in India: it is a parrot-like country,

everybody repeats. They know the Vedas, they know the Upanishads, they know the Gita, they know the Dhammapada, and they have memorized it, crammed it, and they go on repeating it. But when a parrot repeats anything, do you think it means anything? It does not mean anything at all. A parrot repeating has no sense of meaning, he simply mechanically repeats. Man simply learns words.

Yes, India knows many more religious words than any other country, that is true, but that is not very significant. It is all jargon. Unless that meaning has been experienced, nothing matters. In fact, all this knowledge will be a barrier. Buddhas have existed here, they have existed everywhere else, and people have learned their words. Those words have beauty, those words have poetry, those words... just to repeat them is also a wonderful experience. Not even knowing their meaning they have a certain kind of vibe. You can repeat and you will feel good, but that 'feeling good' is not being spiritual. Unless you have seen with the same eyes as Buddha, unless you have experienced the whole existence just as Buddha experienced it, you are not an enlightened person.

And that is the whole emphasis of Sufism: experience and experience and experience. All that matters is experience. Experience is the heart of the matter! Everything else is futile. Avoid knowledge, knowledgeability. Get into the feel of things.

The second question:

Question 2

I KNOW YOU USE PARADOXES AND CONTRADICTIONS, BUT MY MIND IS STILL VERY LOGICAL, SO I HAVE DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING. IF THE TAO SAYS " THE ONE WHO KNOWS DOES NOT TALK", AND IF YOU SAY ONCE YOUR WORDS ARE UTTERED THEY ARE DEAD, AND IF YOU SAY THAT ONE CANNOT MAKE AN IMAGE OF THE DIVINE, THEN WHY AM I WEARING AN IMAGE WHICH IS A SYMBOL OF YOU AS A MALA, WHICH INEVITABLY FORCES ME TO TALK ABOUT YOU? I FEAR THAT I AM PARTICIPATING IN THE CREATION OF A TRADITION.

The question is from Ma Prem Dassana.

A few things have to be understood. They will be helpful to each of you, because this question will arise to many people.

First, she says, "I KNOW YOU USE PARADOXES AND CONTRADICTIONS, BUT MY MIND IS STILL VERY LOGICAL."

Mind will never be anything else: that is the first thing to be understood. Mind is logic, they are synonymous. You can't have an illogical mind - that doesn't happen, that is not possible. That will be like having enlightened darkness. That will be like having a healthy disease. That will be a contradiction in terms. Mind is logic. Don't say mind is logical because that creates the fallacy. Mind is not logical, mind is simply logic! Logic is called mind! So you can never have a mind which is more than logic, mind will remain logical.

You can go beyond the mind, you can enter into the transcendental, but mind will have to be left behind. That's the function of using contradictions, paradoxes. What is the function of a paradox?

The function is to baffle your mind, to shatter your mind, to destroy its roots, to shock it, to shatter its logic. And it will not leave easily, it will try to find its roots again. It will gather itself together again. It will pull the fragments together again. It will do it again and again.

And I have to be contradictory continuously, because what I am saying to you is not a teaching, it is a WORK! It is not teaching, it is action. Let it be remembered: talking to you is my action upon you, it is an operation. See the distinction!

A teacher has some teaching to impart, a Master has some work to do - he has no teaching. That's why it doesn't matter to me whether I am speaking on Zen or Yoga or Tantra or Sufism. It doesn't matter, that is only an excuse. How does it matter whether I have a hammer which is made of gold, or made of silver, or made of iron or steel, or painted black or green or red? It doesn't matter.What matters is that I hammer your head with it! The color of the hammer is immaterial, the make is immaterial. The ACTION is the thing.

Listening to me, you are under an operation. It is not a teaching, it is penetrating into your being. And the mind is logical, so I have to be illogical. If I am also logical then mind will perfectly agree with me. It will become my contemporary. It will say, "Right! Perfectly right! This is what I have always been thinking. You are saying the things that I have always been thinking to say but could not say. You are saying them better than I could have said them, but they are the same things." Then you have missed me. It is not a question of agreeing with me or disagreeing with me. It is a fight between me and you. I am here to KILL you, and the only way to kill you is - the beginning of it - that I have to hammer on your head, again and again, SUCH illogical statements that the mind cannot cope with it, that the mind by and by starts feeling tired and exhausted, weary of it all. In that tiredness, in that exhaustion, the first glimpses of the beyond will come to you. The clouds will part and you will have some moments, sunlit moments. Once you have tasted those sunlit moments then there is not much of a problem. Then you know that you are something more than the mind. Then the journey has started. Before that, there is great struggle.

Now Dassana is a new sannyasin. My old sannyasins don't ask such questions. They have become accustomed to my illogicalness. They understand that there is some action behind it. They have learned it, they have experienced a few moments, they have seen that this hammering helps. In fact, nothing else helps. But for new sannyasins it will always be the problem: you start creating a system around me. You want me to be consistent. If I am consistent it is very comfortable to you, because then there is no problem, we are agreeing. But agreeing too easily will be too cheap. I will not allow you to agree with me so easily. I will go on saying things which will disagree. I will go on saying things which will create, again and again, the conflict between me and you. I will go on saying things and you will not be able to find out a way to cope with them. I will go on making my contradictions bigger and bigger, heavier and heavier. This is how I tire your mind, this is how I let your mind feel its impotence.

One day, listening to me on Sufism, you will agree, and then another day, listening to me on Zen, you will disagree. If you agree with what I said in the name of Sufism, you will disagree when I say something in the name of Zen. And then I will be speaking on something else.

For example, Dassana is worried because I say that once your words are uttered they are dead. Naturally, the idea arises: "Then why do you say them?" And I go on speaking. In fact, nobody has

said so much as I have been saying, and I am going to continue it. If words are dead, then why? This will be logical: if words are dead then become silent - and you will feel comfortable with me because your mind will be able to cope with it - or, if words can say and I am using words, then don't speak against words, then use them. That too will be okay. You will agree with me: "This man believes in words, and believes that words can say something, and says them" - so there is no problem.

But I am not going to settle so cheaply. I don't want your agreement with me to be so cheap. I will allow you only to agree with me when understanding has arisen in you, not thinking. I don't want to agree with your thinking because that will be agreeing with your mind. And then I will not be of any help to you; I will be strengthening your mind. I'm not here to strengthen it. I have to uproot it, I have to destroy it, root and all.

So one day I say nothing can be said, and I go on speaking. Now this will baffle you.

You quote Lao Tzu. You say "TAO SAYS, 'THE ONE WHO KNOWS DOES NOT TALK."' But do you think Lao Tzu was silent? Then who said this?

To say that the one who knows does not talk is saying something, something of immense importance. You would not have heard of Lao Tzu at all if he had not said something. And there are millions of ways of saying. Even when you go to a Zen Master and you ask a thousand and one questions and he keeps silent, and then suddenly says, "Have a cup of tea," that is his way of saying it. But he is saying something all the same.What is he saying? He is saying, "Drop all this nonsense!" When he says, "Have a cup of tea," that is his way of saying something of great importance: he is saying, "All this is nonsense that you have been talking about. It is better that you become a little more alert." That is the symbol in tea - "Have a little tea. Have a cup of tea." In Zen a cup of tea means: have a little meditation, have a little more awareness.

Tea was discovered by Bodhidharma, the founder of Zen. The story is beautiful.

He was meditating for nine years, facing a wall. Nine years, just facing the wall, continuously, and sometimes it was natural that he might start falling asleep. He fought and fought with his sleep - remember, the metaphysical sleep, the unconsciousness. He wanted to remain conscious even while asleep. He wanted to make a continuity of consciousness - the light should go on burning day and night, for twenty-four hours. That's what DHYANA IS, meditation is - awareness.

One night he felt that it was impossible to keep awake, he was falling asleep. He cut his eyelids off and threw them! Hm, now there was no way for him to close his eyes. The story is beautiful.

To get to the inner eyes, these outer eyes will have to be thrown. That much price has to be paid.

And what happened? After a few days he found that those eyelids that he had thrown on the ground had started growing into a small sprout. That sprout became tea. That's why when you drink tea, something of Bodhidharma enters you and you cannot fall asleep. Bodhidharma was meditating on the mountain called Ta, that's why it is called tea. That TA can be pronounced in two ways in China, either TA or CHA. That's why in Hindi it is called CHAI, or in Marathi, CHAH. It comes from that mountain where Bodhidharma meditated for nine years. This is a parable.

When the Zen Master says, ”Have a cup of tea”, he’s saying, ”Taste a little of Bodhidharma. Don’t bother about these questions: Whether God exists or not? Who created the world? Where is heaven and where is hell? And what is the theory of KARMA and rebirth?” When the Zen Master says, ”Forget all about it. Have a cup of tea,” he’s saying, ”Better become more aware, don’t go into all this nonsense. This is not going to help you at all.” But don’t think that he is silent. He’s speaking, he’s speaking with a hammer!

Lao Tzu says, ”The one who knows does not talk.” Then what about Lao Tzu? - because he has talked, whether he knows or not.

It will be a problem. It will baffle you.

What really is meant is: the one who knows talks and knows well that it cannot be talked about. Still he talks! That which he has cannot be talked about, but the people who are in the world CANNOT connect with him in any other way than by talk, because people know only one bridge. All other bridges have been broken. There is only one bridge between people and that is of intellect, that is of language. All other bridges are broken. Feeling has disappeared, intuition has disappeared, instinct has been repressed and killed. Man has become paralyzed! Only one thing still lives: language, mind, thought. The man who has attained knows that what he has attained cannot be delivered in thoughts. He also knows another thing: that only if something is delivered in thoughts will you listen. Otherwise you will not listen. Then what is he supposed to do? He will talk and still keep you alert: ”Don’t just go on gathering my words, because these words are dead.”

Then what is the function of the words of a Master? These words are to provoke you, to seduce you for a journey of wordless silence. And that is my situation too.

I’m like Carlyle, who they say wrote fifty volumes on the value of silence. Silence is so vast; even fifty volumes won’t do justice to it. Five hundred volumes; even that will not be enough. Five thousand volumes and then too nothing has been said. Silence is so vast.

Can you paint the sky? Yes,, you can paint it, but the painted sky will be a very, very tiny portion. You can go on painting and you can go on painting, but you cannot exhaust the sky, because to exhaust the sky you will need a canvas as big as the sky - which is not possible. Where will you keep that canvas? You will need another sky, and there is none.

So is truth: no word can contain it. But words are the only communication left between man and man. So the Master has to use words and still he has to continuously remind you that words are meaningless.

You say, ”I KNOW YOU USE PARADOXES AND CONTRADICTIONS, BUT MY MIND IS STILL VERY LOGICAL, SO I HAVE DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING.”

Mind never understands. With mind there is no understanding. Understanding is a totally different phenomenon in you: it happens only in no-mind. Mind pretends to understand and understands nothing. Mind is a great pretender. You can understand only when you can start seeing, feeling; you can understand only when you realize something. You will have to put the mind aside. That is the meaning of being a sannyasin: you put your mind aside, you start slowly, slowly moving towards something which is not mind at all.

What is mind? - the past, the learned, the knowledge that has been fed into you. Mind is a computer. The society has used it, the parents have used it, the politicians, the priests have used it. They have put a thousand and one things in you - that is your mind. That is not you! And this mind can be put aside, because it is not you! You are the witness. You are not the thought, but the one who sees the thought flick by. Watch... when a thought arises in you, are you the thought?

You are feeling anger, or love, or compassion, and thoughts are arising in you - thoughts of anger, thoughts of love or compassion, and there is a crowd of thoughts passing by, the traffic of thoughts. Are you this traffic? Then who is the seer? Then who is looking at this traffic? The onlooker cannot be part of the traffic, the onlooker has to be transcendental to the traffic. You cannot be the thing that you are seeing. The seer can never be the seen. The meditator can never be the meditated upon. When you start watching your mind, your thoughts, a totally new awareness arises in you: you become a witness, you become a mirror. That mirror understands. Understanding is part of that mirror.

Mind is a pretender. It is a hypocrite, it is a deceiver, it is a cheat. Without understanding anything it goes on saying to you, ”I understand. Look, I know this. I have read this. I have thought this over.”

You say, ”... SO I HAVE DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING.”

You will always have if you don’t drop the mind. The mind has to cease for understanding to be.

”IF THE TAO SAYS THE ONE WHO KNOWS DOES NOT TALK, AND IF YOU SAY ONCE YOUR WORDS ARE UTTERED THEY ARE DEAD, AND IF YOU SAY THAT ONE CANNOT MAKE AN IMAGE OF THE DIVINE...”

Yes, I say one cannot make an image of the divine.

”... THEN WHY AM I WEARING AN IMAGE WHICH IS A SYMBOL OF YOU AS A MALA, WHICH INEVITABLY FORCES ME TO TALK ABOUT YOU?”

This will have to be understood.

What is an image? An image represents something. If you understand that it represents something, that it is not the thing represented, then there is no problem. The moment you forget that it represents something and it becomes that something itself, then the problem arises.

For example, you see a milestone. On the milestone is written Delhi, and an arrow towards Delhi - 50 miles. That milestone is not Delhi, although Delhi is written on it. That milestone is simply saying, ”Go ahead. Delhi is fifty miles ahead.” If the statue in the temple is just a milestone, there is no problem. IF YOU THINK IT IS GOD, then the problem arises.

The mala around your neck is not me! If you understand that - that it simply represents me, it is a symbol, a metaphor - then there is no problem. If you forget that and you start talking with the mala, and you start listening to the mala, and you forget all about me - because then there is no need to come here; if you have the mala you have me - then you have fallen into a trap. You have become an idolator. Then you are getting into a very, very neurotic state. The symbol has become truth itself.

The word 'fire' is not fire; you cannot cook on it. Or can you cook on it? When you want to cook, you don't write the word 'fire' and put your tea-kettle on it. It won't do. But symbols tend to become realities.

The word 'god' is not God; if you remember this the word 'god' is beautiful. The moment you start thinking the word 'god' is God, then you have fallen into a trap. Then the word will not be a symbol anymore, the word has usurped the reality itself. The word 'love' is not love. You know it! But if you think that the word 'love' is love, and without feeling any love you go on loving people because you say "I love you", you will never know what love is. That is the problem.

There is no thing in the world which can represent God as God is. It can be a symbol, can be a metaphor, can be a sign - then there is no problem. But man is so stupid: either you want to make your symbol the reality, or you want to throw the symbol completely. Both are stupid attitudes. There is no need to burn the statue, there is no need to burn the temple, because the one who goes to burn the temple is as foolish as the one who goes and worships in the temple. The temple is just a symbol to remind you that the market-place is not all, that the shop and the office and the factory are not all. The temple is standing there just in the middle of the town to remind you that there is still something which you have not explored. It is a milestone. Hence, it is made just in the middle of the town - the church, the temple, the mosque - so people passing by, coming and going, are reminded again and again that there is something they have not explored yet. "I have explored money, I have explored power, but I have not known yet for what this temple stands." This temple is a constant reminder: "I am also here. Sooner or later death will take you away. Enter in me, experience something of the beyond, because through me it is possible to transcend death."

The mala around your neck is not me, but it reminds you of me. It is beautiful if it reminds you. If you start thinking it is me then you are getting into trouble.

I have heard...

Renoir, the great French impressionist, was once asked how he knew when a nude portrait was finished. Replied the master, "When I stop painting and feel like pinching, I know it is finished."

Yes, that happens - a picture can fascinate you so much. And you know that the picture is just a picture, just paint on canvas, but it can become flesh and you may like to pinch it. But then you are becoming foolish.

This happens every day. You go to the movie, you see a film, and you know perfectly well that the screen is empty and behind you is a projector, and on the screen there are only shadows and nothing else - no woman, no man, nothing is happening there, all is empty - but many times you get into that place where you forget, where the symbols on the screen become realities. You start crying, and later on you will laugh: "How foolish it was." It is good that in the movie houses it is kept dark; it helps people to relax. Otherwise it would be hard. If somebody saw you crying it would look so childish. Or sometimes you become so excited! Some scene can take such a grip on your soul that you cannot rest in your chair, your spine goes straight, your eyes become fixed, your heartbeat stops. You start living the film, you become part of the movie. You are no more a seer, you have become the seen. The observer is lost in the observed.

Reading a novel you can become very much excited. There are books which you cannot read alone in a house in the middle of the night, books about ghosts, detective stories, murders. If you are alone in the house and it is dark, you can become so fascinated with the novel you may start feeling that things that are happening in the novel are happening around you too. The wind comes and knocks on the door and you were just reading about a ghost... and you forget completely. Then you are losing awareness.

The picture on the mala is not me; please don't pinch it! It is simply a representative. And it helps, because you are so unaware. It reminds you.

So is the orange color: just to remind you again and again. Wherever you go people look at you with a shock - their shock reminds you that you are in orange, that you are a sannyasin. You were just going to say something, or hit somebody, and you see your orange and something stops exactly in the middle. You feel frozen. A great awareness has happened in that moment - of that old rotten habit of saying something ugly, that what you are doing is stupid. You were just going to say it and suddenly, the remembrance. The mala comes in between, or the orange. And those small moments of remembrance can be of great transformation. This is not idolatry.

Idolatry is when you keep my picture and you worship it, and you are finished with it. Idolatry is worship without being in any way involved in the process of transformation. If an image can help to remind you about yourself, it is not idolatry.

Have you gone into a Buddha-temple? Have you seen the Buddhist statue, the statue of Buddha? - that white marble, that coolness, that posture, even the marble seems alive, that calm, that quiet that surrounds that statue. The form of the statue is such that it creates its own vibe.

Now much scientific work is being done on form. Now they say the pyramids have a certain form which helps. You can sit inside a pyramid and you will have new experiences that you may not have outside, because the form of the pyramid gives a certain shape to space, gives a certain vibration.

They have made small pyramids to keep your razor blades in. And you will be surprised: a razor blade kept in a small pyramid can be used for years; it does not lose its sharpness. The same razor blade is gone within days without the pyramid. What happens under that space? That pyramidical space somehow goes on sharpening the razor blade. This is a miracle! Now this is a scientific fact. If it can sharpen the razor blade, is it possible that it can sharpen your consciousness, that it can sharpen your mind? It is possible. They were invented by great Masters.

Another fact has been known: just a few scientists were working in a pyramid. By accident a cat entered and died inside. They found the dead body after two months. It had not deteriorated at all, it was not stinking. They were surprised: "This is a miracle!" Then they stumbled upon a fact: that's why mummies were kept inside the pyramid. Just the shape prevents the body from deteriorating. Now this can be a great secret.

If you want to go deep in meditation, it will be easier under a pyramid, because you will need less food, less water. You can go on a long fast inside a pyramid more easily than outside. You can live with minimum expenditure of energy. Even when the body is gone and dead it can be preserved by the pyramid. And sometimes it happens, in deep SAMADHI, that you disappear into the inner so deeply that the body is felt to be almost dead.

It used to happen to Ramakrishna: for six days he would be in SAMADHI and the body would almost be falling dead. The disciples had to continuously massage it, otherwise he would not be back again. They had to heat the body, massage the body just to keep the blood flowing. Now there would have been no need if Ramakrishna had been put inside a pyramid.

Those pyramids were created by great Masters, great explorers of the inner. The shape of the Buddha-statue is the shape of meditation. It does not represent Buddha, it has nothing to do with Buddha. Never think for a single moment that it is a realistic image, no. Buddha never looked like that! It does not represent his physical body, it simply represents the INNER FORM OF ENERGY. When you go into absolute silence this is the shape of your inner energy, of your inner aura. This is how your inner electricity starts flowing. This represents Kirlian photography more than ordinary photography.

Remember, in ordinary photography your figure is caught by the camera plate. In Kirlian photography your figure is not caught, but the electricity that is flowing around your figure, the electric field is caught. Buddha's statue is a Kirlian statue, not an ordinary camera figure. It simply represents the innermost form of energy - when everything falls silent, when mind disappears. It is the symbol of no-mind.

If you think it is Buddha and you just go and put a few flowers there and bow down and forget all about it, then you are in idolatry. But if you go and sit there and you feel the energy, the form of the energy, and you create that form of energy in yourself, in your own being, this is not idolatry, this is pure science. Then that statue is functioning only as a map to remind you of how you should be.

Sometimes I will be saying many things against idolatry - I say them - but I am not saying that all those who have images are idolators, no. Ninety-nine percent of people are, but even that one percent is enough to prove the truth.

They say that even if you can find one white crow it will be enough to prove the falsity of the statement that all crows are black. Just a single white crow will be enough proof. There will be no need to bring two white crows to destroy the certainty that all crows are black. One crow will do.

That one percent is enough to prove that there is something more in the image than the image. It can be a map of consciousness, it can be a symbol. If you are just a worshipper you will miss it. If you are not just a worshipper but an explorer, a seeker, you will be surprised how many clues the Buddha-statue has in it - MILLIONS of clues. The exploration is great, it is a great adventure.

The form of the temple, the form of the church, the form of the mosque has something to do with inner work. But then you are being simply scientific.

You ask me, "IF YOU SAY THAT ONE CANNOT MAKE AN IMAGE OF THE DIVINE "

Yes, nobody can make an image of the divine because divine means the total. How can you make an image of the total? But I am not saying that you cannot make maps, I am not saying that you cannot make symbols. The only thing to be remembered constantly is that a symbol is a symbol and not the truth. Don't start clinging to the symbol as the truth; then there is no problem. The moment you forget the symbol as the symbol and the symbol becomes the truth itself, then... then you have lost the whole point.

”THEN WHY AM I WEARING AN IMAGE WHICH IS A SYMBOL OF YOU AS A MALA, WHICH INEVITABLY FORCES ME TO TALK ABOUT YOU?”

That’s the purpose of it - so that you have to talk about me. That is the purpose - to offend people, to provoke people. Just your very presence will create uneasiness in people. They will have to talk to you, they will have to criticize me, they will have to say something against me. They will provoke you into saying something for me, they will provoke you into defending me. That is going to help you, because talking with people about me, you will come to know me more. In fact, many times it happens: you learn only when you teach. To be a teacher is to be a great learner.

When somebody says, ”Why this mala? Are you crazy? Mad?” now you have to say something. You have to speak out something for me, in defense of me: you have to search within yourself, you have to reconsider, you have to rethink, contemplate. This helps you. You have to remember me.

And sometimes you will be surprised by things that you say. You would never have thought of them on your own, but this man provoked and you responded - and that response may change you! It may change the other person too. The joy in your eyes, the song in your sound, your trust in me, your love for me, may give the man an experience. He may start thinking of coming sometime and seeing on his own what is happening here.

People can tolerate one person in orange. They can tolerate two, three, four, five; how much can they tolerate? I am going to create thousands! And each orange person will be an offense. His very presence will be a disturbance, a shock. How can they tolerate? And for how long?

There is a function; all that is being done here is a device.

And you say, ”I FEAR THAT I AM PARTICIPATING IN THE CREATION OF A TRADITION.”

There is no need to fear - it is exactly what is happening. All traditions are not bad. It depends.

For example, Christianity is a tradition, Islam is a tradition, Buddhism is a tradition. Zen is also a tradition! And Sufism is also a tradition! Don’t throw them together; they are totally different.

Christianity is the tradition of the worshippers, so is Islam, so is Buddhism. But Zen, Sufism, Hassidism - these are not the traditions of worshippers, these are the traditions of explorers. These are the traditions of those who are really hungry for truth, who are thirsty. Many have walked on the path before you - wouldn’t you like to be benefitted by their experiences? That’s what real tradition is.

Many have searched before you. You are not searching for truth for the first time. Why should you start from ABE? You can be benefitted by all that experience. That’s why I’m continuously speaking on these traditions - Sufism, Hassidism, Tantra, Yoga, Zen, Tao. Why? These are all traditions, but there are traditions and traditions!

The tradition that becomes only a worship, the tradition that becomes only a belief, the tradition that simply consoles you and does not transform you, is wrong. But there are traditions which can transform you, which are great streams of energy: if you can join hands with those streams your journey will become very easy, simple. You will be moving on more certain ground.

Yes, this is the creation of a tradition. And you are fortunate because very rarely does it happen, to very few people, that they are there in the beginning of a tradition, at the very source. People who will be coming when I am gone will not be so fortunate. They will have to depend on second-hand things.

And this is the creation of a tradition in a VERY CONSCIOUS way. I am creating it!

There have been two types of people in the world. One, those who do not want to create a tradition. For example, Krishnamurti does not want to create a tradition. The tradition is still being created, but he does not want it so he will not cooperate in creating it. He will, on the contrary, create all kinds of hindrances on its way. The tradition will be created all the same. Tradition cannot be avoided. The moment you speak, tradition is on the way. The moment you say, the moment you look into somebody's eyes, the tradition is created. What is a tradition? - just this declaration, "I have arrived!" It may not be in words. I may keep quiet, I may remain silent, but my silence will be felt; then the tradition will be created. Tradition is created when I start communing with anybody in the world. Where there are two there is creation, creation of the tradition. Alone there is no tradition. If I am alone and I don't commune and I don't relate then there will be no tradition. But this is impossible.

Whenever truth happens it has to be communicated. It is its intrinsic necessity. Just as when a flower blooms the fragrance is spread; in the spreading of the fragrance is the beginning of a tradition.

Krishnamurti says he does not want to create a tradition. His saying this is not of any use; the tradition will be created. Buddha never wanted to create the tradition but the tradition was created.

When the Master does not want to create the tradition because he is afraid of ninety-nine wrong things - and there are ninety-nine percent wrong things possible - and he is afraid of that ninetynine percent of things, and he does not want to create a tradition, the tradition is created. And the tradition will have only that ninety-nine percent of things the Master was afraid of, because the one percent could have only been provided by him, and he never provided it.

If Krishnamurti creates a tradition he will be able to provide that one percent. Only he can provide it. The tradition will be created by the disciples, they can provide the ninety-nine percent. That has been happening. This is one way.

Another way is: the Master decides to create the tradition on his own. More possibilities are there that the tradition will remain close to the essential, because the Master will supply the one percent.

Now, look at it.

If I don't give you the mala, then too, a few people will have my picture, but they will have them according to themselves. I give myself, the mala is a gift from me. I have sanctioned it. It has been touched by me, it is my gift to you. I have not left it to you to create it, I have created it. My whole effort here will be this: to create the tradition as clearly as possible so nobody can confuse you easily, so you don't get confused easily.

It is a CONSCIOUS work. It is a conscious creation of a tradition. There is more possibility that more people will be benefitted by it. But I am not saying that nothing will go wrong; that risk has to be taken.

Life is always a risk. You say something and the risk is there: somebody may understand wrongly, somebody may interpret in some other sense. The moment you speak, that risk is there. That risk has to be accepted, that is part of the whole game of life, that is the challenge.

So Prem Dassana, you say, ”I fear that I am participating in the creation of a tradition.” There is no need to be afraid. It is exactly what is happening. Either PARTICIPATE IN IT CONSCIOUSLY, or get out of it. It is going to be a tradition. It is going to be one of the most consciously created traditions. But if you are afraid too much, afraid of those ninety-nine things and you are not interested in the one percent, then please get out of it. There is no need to be getting into unnecessary trouble. Be free of it.

And I want to sort my people out, because I would like to work only on those who are REALLY with me. I would not like to waste my time and energy for those who are only here so-so, lukewarm, by the way, accidental. Up to now I have been giving sannyas to anybody and everybody who comes, but soon it will not be so. I will start choosing, and I will help people who are sannyasins but are not really sannyasins to drop it. I don’t want any unnecessary luggage to be carried. I want only those who are REALLY here, totally here. And those people are here.