

PREFACE

The Concept of the Perfect Master according to Paltu (a Perfect Master in India) & Soami Ji (a Perfect Master and Founder of Radha Saami Religion) was written by DR. Narinder Ravi Goyal on the basis of his Ph.D. thesis in early 2000. He has had a passion for religion and spirituality for some time now and has made this a part of his life. He has taught these concepts in colleges as well as preached in his home satsang for a while. He decided to combine his passion for teaching about God-realization along with his interest in writing to create this above mentioned book. Now again, DR. Goyal is bestowing upon us this privilege to gain his insight and knowledge about the Perfect Living Master with his new book titled “*Importance of a Perfect Living Master*”. This book teaches us what our sole purpose in life is, the importance of finding a Perfect Living Master, how to be able to identify one as well as be able to distinguish the differences between the falsehoods in front of you and what role they can have in benefiting and prospering our life. I am enthusiastic about this new composition and eagerly awaiting his next endeavor. I wish him all the best and success on his many accomplishments on this path.

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MY SUBMISSION

I clearly remember the times of my childhood in India when as a family we would go to see the live performances of the life story of Lord Rama (Ram Lila). This Ram Lila would start about two weeks prior to Dushehra (a Hindu festival) and last right up until this holy Hindu festival. These two weeks were very precious to me, as I would enjoy sitting on the ground with my family, covered in blankets to protect ourselves from the gentle October chill. Similarly, in the summertime, a group of actors from Mathura Brindaban (birthplace of Lord Krishna) would come to our city and act out the life story of Lord Krishna (Ras Lila).

After viewing these brilliant performances many times throughout my life, I became confident that God came to this world as both Lord Rama in Ayodhya (birthplace of Lord Rama) and Lord Krishna in Mathura Brindaban (birthplace of Lord Krishna). At the same time, I was confused as to how God, being one entity, could appear as two different bodies and in two different places. Furthermore, I was puzzled over what had become of both Lord Rama and Lord Krishna following their respective deaths. What had become of their physical bodies? A part of me believed that they hid at the tops of the highest mountains, or at the depths of the deepest waters.

For a long time, I strongly believed that God was a very powerful human, who, like Lords Rama and Krishna, wore a beautiful gold or silver crown on His head and held a bow-and-arrow or Sudarshan Chakra (holy weapon in Lord Krishna's hand) in His hands. This God of mine would be

found watching over the people of the world from atop the highest mountain, or from the depth of the deepest water. As a part of this firm belief of mine, I would go every year to the Temple of Nainadevi, which was situated at the top of a mountain in Punjab. Moreover, I would not simply walk to this Temple, but would lie down at every step before advancing, in a process called Dandoth. Other times, I would go to Haridwar (a holy city of Hindu pilgrimage) to take baths in the holy river of Gangaji (Ganges). Through these methods, I was dedicated in finding God.

Later on in my life, I was fortunate to visit some Sikh Temples (Gurudwaras) with a friend. Over there, I had a chance to listen to the holy Gurbani (holy teachings from Sikh Masters) from the Guru Granth Sahib (holy book of Sikh religion). Following this, my spiritual knowledge increased, and I began to believe that in 1469, God came to this world in the form of Guru Nanak Dev Ji (Founder of Sikh Religion). He continued to do this over the span of hundreds of years as ten different Gurus, up until the final Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

In the late seventies, I took admission at the Punjabi University in Patiala for my Masters of Literature (Religious Studies) degree. Here I came to know that God also came to this world in the form of other Masters such as Jesus Christ, Muhammad Sahib, Buddha, and Tao in various geographical areas.

With the expansion of my knowledge came further confusion as I could not understand the real form of God. However, one thing was clear for me, and that was that aside from the birth of these Perfect Masters, God

must have existed in other forms in the world. I was a firm believer of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's (Founder of Sikh Religion) quote: "In the beginning was the Lord; during four ages was the Lord; now is the Lord; and forever will abide the same Lord."

When I had the opportunity to read the teachings of Saint Tulsī Sahib (a Perfect Master) of Hathras, my beliefs became stronger. I can recall one of his sayings: "Why do you wander in search of God. The way to Him lies through the royal vein." Similarly, the third Sikh Master, Guru Amar Das Ji said, "In this cave of the body is an inexhaustible treasury where also resides the invisible and infinite Lord." He also said, "Your own body is the temple of God where He is manifested with Divine knowledge."

By gaining spiritual knowledge and reading the teachings of various Perfect Masters, I came to know that God is omnipresent and exists within the human body and can only be found inside. I then realized that I had wasted many years searching for God in the mountains and holy rivers when he was within me all along. Kabir Sahib (a Perfect Master) expressed my feelings when he said, "The thing you want is at one place, but we search for it at another, how can you ever find it?"

By now I began to ask why we do not hear or see the Lord even though he exists within the body. Also, I wondered at which part of the body He resides. Furthermore, I was led to question the appearance of God and how one can contact Him. To answer this, Guru Arjun Dev Ji (fifth Sikh Master) explained, "It is not possible to find God by our own independent efforts." However, my intellect was not yet satisfied as I felt that we should

not need anyone's help to find the God that is present in our own bodies. It was not until I read Bulleh Shah's (a Perfect Sufi Mystic) teaching that I was finally content: "The Lord, o Bulleh, is not separate from us; Apart from him, there is none else. But we have not the eyes that see, so we suffer the pangs of separation." Similarly, Maulana Rum (a Perfect Master) clearly said, "If you intend to go for Pilgrimage, take a Pilgrim with you, be he Hindu, Turk, or Arab, look not to his color or country. Seek a guide please."

As a result, I began to believe that God resides only within our body, and in order for us to find Him, we must come in contact with somebody who has real knowledge of the path and someone who has already met Him. As an example of the necessity of a teacher, I can look at my own life. I have lived in Canada for more than twenty years, and now consider myself to be a very good driver. However, this was not always the case. When I first started to learn driving, I read many instruction manuals and talked to many people, but still had many troubles driving. Only after I obtained the help of a driving instructor was I able to master it. He sat alongside me and helpfully explained to me how to control the steering, how to brake, and other such techniques. From this, I began to think that if such a simple task as driving requires an instructor, then the much more difficult task of finding the Lord would also need an experienced teacher. Thus, I understood the importance of a Perfect Living Master who, like a driving instructor, has practical experience and is qualified to teach disciples the path to God.

I wrote my Ph.D. thesis about this very being, or Perfect Master, that would provide us with the spiritual guidance necessary to find the Lord. My research was based on the following questions: who is the Perfect Master

and how can we recognize him; why did the Perfect Masters come into the world and what is their mission; and how we are behaving towards them.

Although for my research I read the teachings of many Masters, I primarily based my research on the teachings of Saint Paltu and Soami Ji (Founder of Radha Swami Religion). Paltu sahib, one of the greatest saints of the 18th century, was born in the village of Nanga-Jalalpur near Ayodhya (bithplace of Lord Rama), in Uttar Pradesh. He is deemed to have lived for more than sixty years and we may place his life between 1710 and 1780. Paltu was not his birth name, actually it was his Master Govind Das who, amazed to see how rapidly and easily his disciple had turned his attention inward to the Lord through Nam (Divine Melody)-Bhakti (devotion to the Word), started calling him 'Paltu'

Soami Ji (Founder of Radha Swami Religion) was born in Agra on August 25th, 1818. He was originally named Shiv Dayal Singh. From his childhood, he started practicing 'Surat Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody), Yoga' (the practice of merging the soul in the divine current of the Supreme Being's melody and power) and continued this practice for fifteen years. On June 15th, 1878 he passed away, however he left behind his teachings, which were embodied in two volumes, the Sar Bachan in prose and the Sar Bachan in poetry. Soami Ji was the founder of Radha Soami Sant Mat and initiated more than four thousand individuals during his lifetime. This is why people began referring to him as Soami Ji.

I first chose these two Perfect Masters to follow since I was able to understand their writings in Hindi. The second, more important reason is that

Paltu and Soami Ji (Founder of Radha Swami Religion) belonged to the Hindu and Sikh religions, respectively and shared birthplaces with Lord Rama and Lord Krishna, respectively. This allowed me to make connections between the teachings of Masters from two different religions, born in two different areas. Finally, these Masters were active in this world only two to three-hundred years ago, which gave me information on the latest spiritual teachings amidst the old teachings of other Masters which I already had.

I would like to make it clear that I am not claiming that my research about the Perfect Master is absolute. However, if my work has an impact on anyone's spiritual life, then I consider myself fortunate.

First and foremost, I would like to pay my respect and upmost gratitude to my Master Maharaj Charan Singh Ji who has always guided me and cleared any doubts I had inside.

I would like to pay respect to my teacher and research guide, Dr. Baswati Sinha (Dept. of Religious Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala) and Mr. Michael (Chairman, Science of the Soul Society, Canada). They both were very helpful in helping me complete my Ph.D. degree. I am thankful to Dr. D.S. Dhillon (Chairman, Punjab School Education Board) and Mrs. Bindu Gupta for taking out the time to assist me. Last but not least, I would like to say thanks to my wife, Kamlesh; my daughters Dr. Kimmy and Dr. Fenny and my son Ankush for their love and support throughout.

-Dr. Narinder Ravi Goyal

Chapter 1

LIFE'S ULTIMATE GOAL

It is in our nature to run after happiness and try to avoid pain in any way possible. Happiness is the goal and desire behind all actions and paves the path of our human lives. We try to find this bliss in relationships, careers, money, books, movies, alcohol, drugs, food, shopping and attempting to seek power, popularity or fame. However none of us have actually found true peace out of these worldly things. In fact, it is rare for someone to actually achieve this desired happiness. How can we attain everlasting happiness from these temporary entities? Permanent pleasure is possible only from permanent sources. All Masters and religions of all ages agree on one thing: until our soul connects with the Lord, there is no way we can achieve our goal of eternal happiness. The answer to our quest is simply God- realization.

There is no doubt that all the religions of this world that we see have different types of rituals and ceremonies, but all of their platforms are identical to each other in terms of the essence of spirituality. Every religion teaches us that there is one God, who has created the entire universe. That is why God is called omnipresent. Undoubtedly, countless names for God exist in this world. In Hindu scriptures, it is said 'Hari kai hazar naam, lakh naam Krishan kai, Keisho kai krur naam, Padam naam Bishan kai'-indicating that God has an endless number of names. In the Bible, God is known by the

words: Father, Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, Word or Logos. In Islam, God is referred to by the names of Allah, Aula, and Khuda; Hinduism remembers God as Rama, Hari, Gobind, and Madhav; Sikhism praises him as Wah-i-Master. The Arya Samajists believe in Om as the true name of God. Similarly, Soami Ji (Founder of Radha Swami Religion) addressed God as Radha Soami .

For example, when a child is born the nurse who first looks at his fair skin calls him “Gora-lal”. However, when the mother sees her child for the first time, she begins to call her child “Kala-Ram” to avoid getting the child jinxed. When the child’s head is shaved for the first time, his relatives jokingly call him “Ganja” (baldy) and when he grows up and becomes married, his wife begins to call him “Honey”. We can see the various Names that were given to that one being by different people up until his married life alone. Imagine how many names billions of people around the world have given God until today. God is not a name but it is actually a power, a presence that is present in each and every particle of this universe and the names different religions have may vary but their love and affection for that ultimate power is still the same.

There is no doubt that God is omnipresent. St. John says:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him as not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.¹

Guru Ravidas (a Perfect Master) reminds us that our human birth is a rare opportunity obtained as the outcome of commendable deeds through

countless lives. . It is bestowed upon us primarily for the purpose of God-realization. Human beings are the only species that have the opportunity to attempt to find the Lord. It provides the only opportunity to escape from the long, never ending cycle of birth and death. The basic purpose of human life, therefore, is defeated if one remains lost in the swamp of worldly delusion and fails to complete the path to God-realization.

Man has always searched for wonders of the world outside of his own home. For example-Niagara Falls in Toronto , Great Wall of China and the Taj Mahal in India. The greatest wonder of all, seeking mortality, Man also will attempt to seek outside. Living masters do not ask us to go to forests, mountains or any religious places to meet the Lord, because he is not to found there. Paltu Sahib brings out the futility of external forms of worship in the Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam or Divine Melody) below:

*Long did I seek Him in pilgrimages,
but found Him not.
The worship of idols filled me with remorse,
for I saw nothing but stones.
Fasts endless I undertook till I was
on the verge of death. ²*

Since he is not to be found outside, we ask ourselves where we can find Him. The water of immortality that he seeks, that elixir of life, that manifest knowledge of God can be attained by the seeker only within himself.

All Perfect Masters teach us that the Almighty, who has created life, who takes care of everyone, everything in all parts of the world, in fact, lives

within our very own body. In order to meet God, you have to go within yourself. Kabir (a Perfect Master) (a Perfect Master) Sahib says:

*As oil is in sesame seeds and fire in flinstone,
so is your Beloved within you: wake up, if you can.*³

Guru Amar Das Ji (third Master of Sikh Religion) further emphasizes this point:

*The Lord who has given life
To the entire creation,
Who is the supreme giver,
Who nurtures and sustains everyone,
Resides within the human body.*⁴

As Jesus says in the Bible, “*the kingdom of God is within you.*”⁵

Now the question arises as to how we are to turn within and find the Lord inside ourselves? Paltu Sahib talks about the inverted well in the sky when he says:

*In the inverted well in the sky, a lamp is shining.
A lamp is shining there without wick or oil;
through six seasons and twelve months, it burns day and night.
Only they who have found a true Master are able to see the light;
without a perfect Master, no one can behold it.
From within the lamp’s light emanates a sound;
it is heard by one in deep meditation- no one else can hear it.
O Paltu, those who hear it, their destiny is fulfilled;
in the inverted well in the sky, a lamp is shining.*⁶

The dome of the well refers to the top of your head being inverted.

He explains: “In the inverted well in the sky, a lamp is shining.” Once our simran and dhyān are focused on our eye center and away from the other outlets of our body, we will begin to see an inner light. All mystics mention this light which burns on without any wick or oil at all times in each and every single one of us.

When we close our eyes, we are automatically within ourselves. Although a person will only see darkness when their eyes are shut, this darkness is actually the starting point of the spiritual journey back to God. It is all a question of the mind's attention. A mind can not begin to start on this journey if it is thinking about worldly matters. Only once their mind is clear and their attention is focused will they begin to attempt to see what lies within that darkness, thus allowing the inner journey to begin.

Soami Ji (Founder of Radha Swami Religion) says,

*remain steadfast and apply yourself to this task.
Still the soul and mind within the body,
catch hold of the Melody
and focus your attention on the inner sky.
You are totally enmeshed in a net;
without this method, you will never get free.....
There you will meet Radha Soami (Lord).
Your heart is now drenched in bliss.⁷*

Once you are able to find Him inside you will only then begin to see God in everything around you. After realizing God within Himself, Namdev Ji (a Perfect Master) began to see Him everywhere outside and within every creature. Once, while traveling, Namdev Ji sat under the shade of a tree and took out chapatis (indian bread) for his meal. He was about to open a jar of

clarified butter to spread on his bread when a dog, which was passing by, picked up some of the chapatis in its mouth and started running away. Namdev Ji ran after the dog with the butter bowl in his hand, and entreatingly called out to the dog:

*“Lord do not eat dry bread. Let me apply butter on the chapattis.”*⁸

Because of his God-realization, he has not only been able to tame his mind, but has also been filled with love for the whole world.

It must not be forgotten that the human body is transient and fleeting. It is ours only for a very limited period of time. This body is similar to a hollow bubble that will burst after a short length of time. This body, for which we do so much, is as brittle as glass and may at any moment be shattered to pieces. Once you have seen this light in everything around you, our soul only finds contentment and inner peace seeking the Lord’s spiritual union. Throughout our life here on earth, we often experience feelings of loneliness and pain. According to the mystics, God has placed these feelings in our hearts in order to pull us back to Him. If we had not felt this longing, we would not have turned from outside involvement in worldly activities to inside involvement in religious pursuits. The feeling of separation will persist as long as the soul does not return to its original home and meet the Lord.

It is now evident the necessity to seek God realization but realize it is within our own human body. First, unless we have firm faith that God resides within, we cannot begin the search to find Him. A man must have some kind of faith before he undertakes any journey. For example, if a jar of

gold coins is said to be hidden underground, then one must first have faith that the jar is actually there. Only then can one begin the labor required to reach this glorious prize. Likewise, a disciple starts his journey on the basis of faith alone, and this faith is proven through the progress the devotee makes. One questions if this is possible to do so and how. We need to seek out a Perfect Master that has actually been through the process and has achieved God realization. It is evident that a Perfect Master comes into this world to show us the path which leads us back to our true Home. Masters do not come into this world by means of their own will; they are always appointed by the Lord. Whenever the Lord wishes, He Himself sends a Perfect Master to come into this world and collect his Marked Souls.

Christ says,

“For I come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me.”⁹

Perfect Masters may be born in any country, caste or creed; however they all have a mission of mercy, which is to save us from the misery surrounding this world. The purpose of every Master is to find His chosen souls and put them on the path to God-realization. Their goal is to take the disciples back to their eternal Home with God. Unless we reach the level of the Father, we cannot attain everlasting peace. The Master puts his disciple on the spiritual path and gives him certain teachings and guidelines, which he must follow in order to be successful.

Both Paltu and Soami Ji emphasize that we cannot find God outside. God is not a material object that may be contacted in the physical world. He is too subtle and spiritual. Therefore, we have to follow suit and become equally

subtle and spiritual in order to discover Him. This becomes possible only by withdrawing into ourselves, and concentrating our attention within the body. God exists within man; and the role of the Perfect Master is to show us the way inside. We know nothing of the world beyond death, but Perfect Living Masters have access to all planes beyond death as their souls go there every day. They can help us at our death and even after it. Soami Ji (Founder of Radha Swami Religion) says,

"Outside in Delusion do all seek; The inner Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody)) (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody)) no one doth adopt."¹⁰

Chapter 2

IMPORTANCE OF A PERFECT LIVING MASTER

Whenever we learn something, we need some sort of a teacher or guide who has knowledge of the material at hand. We need someone to reveal the truth to us. When we need to learn mathematics we enlist in a math teacher, for learning to play an instrument like the piano we need a piano teacher. Similarly if we desire to learn perfect we need a Perfect Master. When we were born, our teacher was our mother who taught us how to sit, stand, walk, talk, and eat. Later on our brothers, sisters, and friends became our teachers as they showed us how to socialize. When we entered school, it was our teacher who taught us how to read and write. In our lives, we have met so many doctors, advocates, and engineers and yet none of them have gotten to their current position simply by reading books or going to the library. Only after spending years in college and taking the guidance of their teachers can these people be considered professionals. Now we can see that if the aid of teachers is required for gain in worldly agendas, an even greater source of knowledge is necessary in order to advance in the path of spirituality. This help is provided by the Perfect Master, who has traversed the very path we wish to embark upon, and can alone provide the instructions we require.

Upon visiting St. Kitts, West Indies earlier this year, I decided to take advantage of the coconuts strewn on the sandy beaches and drink fresh coconut water. I figured I can purchase this in many markets but here is an opportunity to not only obtain the coconuts on my own, but drink it fresh as well. I collected coconuts on my morning walks along the beach. Excited, I slowly with pauses cut the coconut near the top horizontally. This caused it to splash out coconut water with great pressure causing my clothes to get dirty and thus wasting some of the coconut water. Even after washing my clothes the stains were still there. Frustrated, I tried to seek out another way to salvage the coconut water and my clothes. I asked a gardener for assistance as he was doing this with great ease in front of me. He explained and showed me that the coconut was to be cut vertically in one quick sharp cut. I tried this in front of this gardener teacher and his method proved to be successful. Due to his teaching I was able to enjoy fresh coconuts with my wife without ruining my clothes or having to do another load of laundry.

In this situation, I was very similar to a student seeking education. We both had the right tools in front of us. The student has \countless books and formulas; I had the beach close to me in order to get fresh coconuts as well as the tool to cut one. However, on our own with simply tools we are both at a loss. A student can not effectively learn and apply the material with just books, just as I could not cut the coconut properly. There are many problems that can follow if one were to take life's tasks on their own without any instructions. There are many people in this world who don't realize the necessity of a spiritual teacher or Perfect Master. They think they can gain spiritual knowledge by themselves. However, as Guru Arjun DevJi (fifth Master of Sikh Religion) says,

it is not possible to find God by our independent efforts:

*Could man find Him by himself, why would
he suffer the pangs of separation? In the
company of Sadhus is He found, O Nanak,
and the bliss of union doth the man enjoy.1*

We all have to enlist in a teacher, whether it be a professor, or in my case the gardener, or in God's realizations case- a Perfect Living Master. We can take our tools and effectively apply them to the task at hand, go through trials and errors, but have someone's guidance steering us to the goal.

Soami Ji (Founder of Radha Swami Religion) says that these people are like a person who refuses to drink water out of the well of someone who is willing to serve him, but insists upon digging a well of his own. Complete and eternal spiritual success can be had only from a Perfect Master. There is a dynamic power of higher consciousness in Him. His touch charges us and connects us with the current of the Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam, Divine Melody) and he helps us in the higher spiritual regions by accompanying us. That soul which takes shelter with such a Perfect Master is indeed blessed.

The formless Lord is present everywhere, but we do not receive enlightenment from Him unless we make direct contact. For example, we may have a big-screen TV, but until a connection is made with the outlet, no pictures or sounds are produced. Only when the connection is properly established can we appreciate the full effects of this high-quality television.

My daughter, at the age of 10, used to feel cold even in summer months. She needed a winter jacket even in months of June and July. We consulted many doctors (general practitioners). They investigated this with history taking as well as lab work like blood tests and x-rays, but could not find a reason for this behavior. Finally, she was sent to a children's specialist-pediatrician. The pediatrician, after observing and asking her some questions, concluded that this problem is due to her intolerance to dairy products. As soon as she gave up dairy products she was completely fine. This is not to say that general practitioners did not have the knowledge to assess her, but the specialist not only had their knowledge of the disease that all doctors study in medical school but he had the experience of dealing with these types of cases to be able to effectively diagnose and treat her. First, Contact with this doctor was important, because without this we would have still been doing more lab work and growing frustrated. We needed someone that was specialized in this field, someone that had experienced these situations before in past patients to easily diagnose my daughter.

Our family doctors, just like preachers and scholars, have the right tools, knowledge as well as have also found teachers of their own. However they do not have direct contact or experience with this particular situation and we will not be able to accomplish our goal. There could be many preachers and scholars with the knowledge of one's soul and God, who are able to teach us about the ultimate goal of our lives and how it can be achieved. In holy places such as temples, gurdwaras and churches we are taught the principles of life. We feel at peace when we hear satsung and spiritual songs. These preachers, however, do not have the practical knowledge which is required to go inside to God. To achieve the ultimate

goal of our life, which is to be one with God, we need a specialist, a perfect living master who himself knows the path inside to God. Not only tell us the necessity to get there, but teach us how to get there. Only a perfect living master can take us on that journey and teach us how to stay there.

Similarly, we need a means of connection with the Lord in order to realize His greatness. The Perfect Master is this very link. He is the Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody) incarnate, “The Word made flesh.” How can we possibly realize the Master’s subtle form if we are not even familiar with his obvious physical form? No one except for the Perfect Master can reveal the secrets of Reality and without Him no one can be set free from the imprisonment of the mind. To meet the Lord, we must connect with the Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody) and this is possible only through the help of a Perfect Living Master.

The Perfect Master guides us as to why we must meet the Lord, where He resides, how to find Him, and how to remove these barriers keeping us away from Him. If we need a teacher in this world to learn about and carry out so many things, then why shouldn’t we seek the help of a Perfect Master to go within and follow the real path to our home? If there had been no need of having a Master, then there would have been no need for any Master to come to this world before. If there was ever a necessity for a Perfect Master at any time in the past, then it follows that there is a necessity for one even now. In order to show others the path to eternal happiness, God had to take the form of a Perfect Master. The company of a Perfect Master is necessary for advancement on the path. Without their help, it is impossible to escape

the cycle of death and rebirth. As Guru Arjun DevJi (fifth Master of Sikh Religion) writes:

*The Vedas, the Smritis
And the holy scriptures,
All these have I studied;
They all proclaim the same truth:
Reflect well within your mind-
Without a Master,
No one attains salvation.²*

Further, Guru Amar Das (third Master of Sikh Religion) writes:

*No one can gain Nam (Divine Melody)
Without help from the Master:
Such is the law the Creator has made.³*

In the Bible, Jesus Christ says:

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father Iso: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.⁴

We may consider the Perfect Master as a preacher, teacher, or a guide. Once we go within with His help, we well begin to realize what He does for us. We will automatically see what He is.

Queen Indumati was a devoted disciple of her Master, Kabir (a Perfect Master) the weaver Saint of Kashi. When her soul left her body for the last time, Kabir (a Perfect Master) took her on the final voyage to Sach Khand (True Home). To her amazement, she saw that the ruler of that supreme region was none other than Kabir (a Perfect Master) Sahib himself.

“If you had told me in the mortal world,” she protested, “that you were the Lord Almighty, I would not have had to work so hard at my meditation.”

*“But you would not have believed me,” said Kabir. “You would have just said that this is a man who claims to be the supreme Lord.”*⁵

Even if Perfect Masters revealed their true origin to us, we would be likely to doubt them. We have no idea who they are and where they come from. If we did know, we would never have given such crucial punishment to many of these Perfect Masters as is seen throughout history.

It is virtually impossible to enter and pass through the inner regions through one’s own efforts. We need the guidance of those who have already traveled there and experienced it for themselves. Maulana Rum (a Perfect Master) says that if you wish to go on a pilgrimage, you should go with one who has already made the journey. The worries and difficulties of the journey will be reduced. It does not matter whether such a guide is a Hindu or a Turk or an Arab.

He says:

*If you wish to go on a pilgrimage,
Go with one who has already made it.
Whether he be a Hindu, a Turk or an Arab.*⁶

Paltu Sahib says that the Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam or Divine Melody) has been realized only by a rare and lucky few. They must first control their earthly desires, and then, through their Master’s grace, experience the Nam (Divine Melody).

*Hunger and thirst he forgets, for his mind has
drunk deep of the Word;
The “five enemies” – lust, attachment,
egotism, anger and avarice-
And the twenty-five prakritis that govern the
mind have fled from him.*

*Detached from the lure of the world, he speaks
a language soft and sweet.
To know that Melody one has to experience,
for how can I put it into words?
through the grace of the Master, O Paltu,
carefree I abide in the world.
Of Nam (Divine Melody) do many speak, but few have
experienced it.⁷*

Paltu goes on to say that Masters are imbued with the name of the Lord. They alone can give salvation to man by teaching him the practice of Nam (Divine Melody). All other methods, such as austerity, penances, fasts and pilgrimages are worthless. He says in his Poem:

*The Nam (Divine Melody) of the Lord is embedded in the
Saints, and the Saints are imbued with His
Nam (Divine Melody) e...
The chamber of Nam (Divine Melody) will not be accessible till
one comes to the door of the Saint.
Nam (Divine Melody) lies, O Paltu, beyond the reach of the
Pranas. It is at the beginning. It is
at the end.
The Nam (Divine Melody) of the Lord is embedded in the
Saints, and the Saints are imbued with
His Nam (Divine Melody) e .⁸*

Paltu explains this by speaking of a boat without its Captain. The traveler has the boat, but there is no one to steer it. Being the travelers ourselves, we can not go across the ocean of phenomena and achieve access to the shore of everlasting bliss without the expert steering of the Master, our Captain:

*The boat is there, but the boatman is missing;
how will the traveler ever go across?
How will the traveler get across, when faith*

*in the boatman is lacking? ...
 He attends not, O Paltu, to the Master's path
 of the Melody within.
 The boat is there, but the boatman is missing;
 how will the traveler ever go across?⁹*

Soami Ji (Founder of Radha Soami Religion) says that without the help of the Perfect Master, nobody can cross the ocean of Maya (illusion). If we take shelter with a Perfect Master, He will safely carry us across.

*Without Master is no salvation;
 So with Master do thou find refuge.¹⁰*

*Without Master hath no one been saved.
 Without Master, never doth one go across.¹¹*

As Soami Ji (Founder of Radha Soami Religion) says, Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam or Divine Melody) is a supreme entity and we cannot grasp it from holy books alone. For this task, a Perfect Master is essential. A Perfect Master can take millions of people to their True Home. Those who desire salvation should take shelter with a Perfect Master.

*Higher is the position of a Gurumukh (Master)
 Than that of any other man.
 To millions doth a Gurumukh give salvation...
 Who desireth going out of the cycle
 of eighty-four lac kinds of life,
 To the service of a Gurumukh
 should he devote himself¹²*

In the Bhagvad Gita (a holy book of Hindu Religion), Lord Krishna says that we cannot gain knowledge of the spiritual path without a Master:

*You should prostrate yourself before a perfect Master
And carry out spiritual practices and serve him.
Only a Master who knows the reality
Can impart this knowledge to you.¹³*

In the Katha Upanishad (a holy Hindu scripture), the necessity of having a Perfect Master is further emphasized:

*People cannot know Him simply by hearing about Him.
The Saint who says anything about Him is a wonderful
person. He is worthy and wise who gains access to Him.
No one can realize God without a Master.
God cannot be realized without initiation, however much
one may meditate on Him. Unless you are initiated by a true
Master, you cannot realize Him because He is so subtle that
He is beyond the reach of imagination.¹⁴*

Taking shelter with the Master is the best method of realizing the Lord. Hazrat Mohammed (a Perfect Master) said to Hazrat Ali (a disciple),

“O Ali! you are the lion of truth, a hero and a brave man; but do not rely on your own strength alone. Come under the shade of the fruit bearing tree. From among the various methods of meeting the Lord choose the best; find out the loved one of the Lord. He will hold your hand, for he is beloved of the Lord. He takes the seekers to the Court of the Lord.”¹⁵

Maulana Rum (a Perfect Master) says that the mind cannot be controlled except by taking shelter with a Master. You should, therefore, firmly clutch the garment of a master who has controlled the mind. Go and sleep under His protection, so that He will release you from this bondage. Sing His praises day and night. Search for this hidden treasure with the Masters. You should wander from door to door; roam in the streets and

search for Him over and over again. As far as possible, do not turn your back on the Masters. Make an effort to know them as they are.

*Nothing except the grace of the Master can kill the ego;
 Hold fast to the garment of the Redeemer.
 Go and sleep under His protection;
 It may be that He will then grant you release;
 Go on cooing like the cuckoo day and night;
 Seek the secret of the hidden treasure from the Master.
 Go from door to door and street to street;
 Search for Him time and again;
 Do not turn your face away from the Saints;
 Then leave the rest to God.¹⁶*

In the following poem, Tulsi Sahib (a Perfect Master) specifies the many gifts that the Perfect Master offers his disciple. Not only does the Master guide his disciple in his everyday conduct, he also guides him on the spiritual journey within.

*Oh think thou deeply and deliberate;
 Without the guidance of a Master
 The way cannot ever be found.
 He will dye thee in satsang's color,
 Take thy soul to regions celestial,
 And reveal the firmament within.¹⁷*

Dadu Dayal, a saint of Rajasthan, explains the need of a Master by giving the following example: Just as butter is in milk, oil is in oilseed, fragrance is in flower, fire is in wood, and an image is in a mirror, so the Lord is within man. However, it is only with the grace and guidance of a Perfect Master that man can see the Lord within himself and realize the secret of how the macrocosm is contained within the microcosm.

*Where there is God, there is the Saint;
 Where there is the Saint, there is God.
 The two are together, O Dadu.
 Interpenetrating
 Each other, they rest in perfect
 communion.
 Thus shouldst thou find God and
 the Saint, O Dadu,
 The inaccessible goals of contemplation.
 God is found through the company
 of the Saint,
 And the Saint through the grace
 of God.¹⁸*

Guru Ravidas (a Perfect Master) says that one can never realize God without the grace and guidance of a Master, who is in reality God made flesh. This Master is the only means by which man can establish a connection with God. He alone shows us the way to God, by first washing away our sins and then connecting us with the Nam (Divine Melody). He teaches us the true technique of love, and unlocks the door to Divinity, thereby saving us from the delusions and dangers which occupy this world.

*Master hath give the lamp of wisdom
 And hath kindled the wick,
 Enabling me to practice devotion to God.
 He hath terminated the cycle
 of birth and death for me, sayeth Ravidas...
 In the Ocean within lie all diamonds and rubies,
 But one can have access to them
 only through a Master.
 If thou wishes to have them,
 then follow his instructions with reflection,
 Only then canst thou lay hands on them.
 Reflect on it, O holy men, sayeth Ravidas,
 This is an esoteric message.
 One who seeketh and realizeth this secret,*

He alone attaineth the illumination of a Saint.¹⁹

Sultan Bahu (a Perfect Master) a well-known saint of West Punjab, wrote a large number of books in Arabic and Persian. He urged the seeker to find union with God by finding a Murshid (Perfect Master) and serving him with all his heart. Through the grace of his Murshid, he would experience God within. All his philosophical doubts would be resolved and he would be freed from all of his worldly desires.

Since God has no form or shape whereby he can be perceived, he is virtually non-existent for us. He is no more than a word or an abstraction, and therefore can not become the object of our love. The Perfect Master, however, is not an abstraction; he is a living person who can be the object of our love. Moreover, he is not an ordinary person but a realized soul. Through love and spiritual practice, he has attained union with the Lord. He has become one with Him. Through love for the Master, we too can rise to the level of God. Since God is love, the Master is the physical form of this very love.

Sultan Bahu (a Perfect Master) considers worldly attachment to be the main stumbling block in our path to God. Only a rare faqir (saint) breaks the shackles of the world. A person is able to tread the mystic path only when a Perfect Master showers grace on him and initiates him into it. Only then is he able to detach himself from the world and turn his attention to the realization of God.

The following poems, written by Sultan Bahu, demonstrate the necessity of a Perfect Master in our lives.

*O Shah Jilani, Master of Masters,
listen intently to my supplication:
my ship is caught in perilous seas
where even mighty whales dare not venture.
O Shah Jilani, beloved of God,
make haste and come to my rescue!
Those who rely on you, O Meera Bai (a Perfect Master)n,
as their Master and Saviour,
will safely swim across the ocean of life.²⁰*

We go to holy places on pilgrimage, we read the holy books and scriptures, we hold spiritual meetings and discourses, we bathe in tanks and rivers, and we search in caves and deserts, but Guru Arjun Dev Ji (fifth Master of Sikh Religion) says that without a Master none can get liberation.

*Say thou O Nanak, this hath God revealed to thee:
without Master is no salvation, O Brother²¹.*

God is realized by the spiritual repetition of His transcendent Nam (Divine Melody), which can only be learned from a Perfect Master. Therefore we are repeatedly told that a true Master is essential for spiritual enlightenment.

*Let no man remain in delusion in the world;
without Master non shall go across.²²*

Without the key, we cannot open the lock of the Anhad Bani (Divine Melody). This transcendent Sound removes our spiritual darkness and brings

us salvation. We should, therefore, make our best effort to search for a perfect Master, who will provide us this very important key.

*Without Shabd, there is darkness within;
One neither finds the precious thing,
Nor escapes from birth & death;
Only Saint has the key to open the door.*²³

It is quite bizarre that we can have deep faith in ancient saints and previous Masters, but find it difficult to bring forth such faith for a living Master. During the lifetime of those ancient saints, they were generally persecuted by their peers because their teachings were considered skeptical. Recognition for them came only after they had passed on from this world. This pattern follows even to this day. It seems that the common practice of this world is to persecute living saints while worshipping dead ones. This is not to belittle the greatness of past Masters. They contributed tremendous benefit to those who came in contact with them, and others living in their times.

Sometimes we become doubtful as to how the present living Masters can compare to the Perfect Masters of the past. This is because we see that they are very similar to us in certain physical aspects: they have the same physical bodies, they eat and drink like us, they dress like us, they live like us, and ultimately, they die like us. However, we can clear this doubt by looking at the history of any Perfect Master. For example, Jesus Christ, Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Muhammad Sahib, and Guru Nanak Dev Ji all portrayed these very physical characteristics and are considered today as Perfect Masters.

A living Master is essential for a seeker to attain God-realization just as a living husband is necessary for a woman to produce children. Though the past may be filled with excellent doctors, a sick man needs the help of a living physician to get cured for his illness. A student, despite such great historical teachers as Plato and Aristotle, needs the practical guidance of a living teacher to acquire knowledge and wisdom.

When great doctors, musicians, generals, painters, philosophers, scientists, and the like can be born at any place and at any time, why should the birth of Masters be restricted to particular places and times? Just as God has given great reformers to people for solutions to their worldly problems, He has also sent Masters in all ages for satisfying people's spiritual needs.

In several of the poems by Bulleh Shah (a Perfect Sufi Mystic), the necessity of the guidance of a living Master is made obvious. In fact, the main feature in most of his compositions is love for his Master, Inayat Shah. Love for the Murshid (Perfect Master) is the cornerstone of his teachings. In one of his poems, Bulleh Shah (a Perfect Sufi Mystic) refers to his Master, who is a merchant who deals in precious stones, as the seller of rubies. He warns people that the jeweler is there only for a short time, and the opportunity in striking a rare bargain should not be lost. In another sense, he's saying that the Master in the human form is in our midst for a short period of time and we should therefore take full advantage of the opportunities he can and will provide for us through Nam (Divine Melody). After the departure of the Master, the secret of the Word will remain unraveled.

*Strike a bargain, the merchant is here.
Such a chance will not come again.
Make haste to buy the precious stone,
For the tradesman will soon depart,
Nothing will be possible to do that day,
When the bugle will summon you with the last call.
You are loath to live the life of piety;
How long will you issue imperious commands?*

*O Bulleh Shah (a Perfect Sufi Mystic), sit at the door of Inayat,
Who has made you wear garments red and green.
Look what tricks he plays with me.
My Master and Lord, Shah Inayat!
Sometimes he comes, and sometimes not.
Thus he enkindles a fire in my heart.
O' bring me the message of Nam (Divine Melody) from God;
And deprive me not of a glimpse from you.²⁴*

The spiritual path is infested with wild animals and poisonous snakes in the form of greed, lust, anger, hatred, jealousy, and ego, all of which become more and more ferocious the more they are suppressed. Only a Perfect Master can show us the way to tame them. A disciple can do nothing without the grace of his Master. Even genuine devotion comes only through the Master's grace. The Master teaches us that within our body the entire creation can be found.

The key to the inner door is only with the spiritual adept, the Perfect Master or Master, who has himself traveled through the inner regions and become one with the Absolute. When Christ revealed his decision to appoint St. Peter as his successor, he declared:

“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.”²⁵

This ‘key’ is the method of meditation and spiritual practice, which enables the seeker to go within and fundamentally die while living. The disciple vacates the physical body and withdraws his consciousness to the eye center, thereby entering the inner regions of divine bliss.

It is for certain that the Perfect Masters of the past are not dead. In truth, they are immortal and have united with the Lord and are identical to Him. We can take the help of past Masters only after ascending to the regions where they reside. Unless our inner eye is opened, we cannot be certain where our inner thoughts emanate from. When we have not seen a past Master, any negative power or soul can claim to be that Master and deceive us.

If something that we want is at one place and we search for it at another, how can we ever find it? If, however, we take with us someone who has this key knowledge which we lack, we can certainly find it. The path which would otherwise take innumerable lives to cover is then traveled in a moment. Kabir (a Perfect Master) says:

*The thing you want is at one place,
But you search for it at another,
How can you ever find it,
O Kabir, if you want to find it,
Take one with you who knows where it is.
He will then show you the thing you want.
It is a long, long way to go,
But he will take you there in a moment.²⁶*

Two of the most dominant obstacles on the path to God-realization are mind and Maya. Mind is intensely attached to the objects and pleasures of

this world and remains in pursuit of them. The mind is always thinking of something and never remains still. The only way to rid the mind of this dirty habit is to satisfy it with a joy which is greater and more lasting than the temporary pleasures of the world. This joy is obtained from contact with the Nam or Shabd (Word or Logos or Divine Melody). Mira says that her mind, which for ages was completely oblivious of the spiritual bliss within, became aware of it upon listening to the Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam or Divine Melody) of the Master:

*My mind, birth after birth,
lost in slumber,
Awoke on hearing the Shabd
my Master gave.²⁷*

Mira (a Divine Lover) compares the stubborn and disobedient habits of the mind with those of a rogue elephant, which can only be tamed by the goad wielded by an expert trainer:

*My mind is like a rogue elephant,
Willful, wicked and wild;
Place thy hand on my head like a goad,
O Master, and tame this wayward mind.²⁸*

Because of its long and continuous indulgence in sense pleasures and its deep attachment to the world and its objects, the mind has accumulated thick layers of dirt. Mira says that the Master is an adept washer who can cleanse our mind of all its impurities. With simran, or the constant remembrance of the Lord, as the ‘soap’ and love as the ‘water’, the Master washes the disciple’s mind, which will never again be covered by debris:

*If Master, the washerman, washes your mind,
 It will never be soiled again....
 With remembrance as the soap,
 With love as the water,
 Your mind, cleansed of all blemish,
 With virtue will shine.
 So deftly will the washerman scrub it clean,
 Even a speck of dirt it'll not gather again.²⁹*

In the following poem, Mira expresses her love and longing for her Master. Having come to the feet of the Master, she has become impervious to the world and its attractions. Liberation is no problem for her now, since the Master's feet are the threshold of salvation.

*I am smitten with a longing
 For the lotus feet of my Master.
 For the Master's lotus feet, aye,
 And for crossing this ocean deep.
 Mohe lagi lagan Master charanan kee.³⁰*

Mira points out that devotion to a Perfect Living Master is more fruitful than external observances, austerities and pilgrimages. She says that this profound truth, the secret of God-realization, was imparted to her by her Master.

The mystery behind all perfect Masters is that they are the "Word made flesh". They are realized incarnations of the creative power of God. The Master can also be referred to as the "Son of God". It is from this reality that the Christian concept of the Trinity has come into being. There

is God as the Father, the Word as the Holy Ghost, and the Master as the human Son of God, a manifestation of the Word at the human level.

John's gospel is a rich source of Jesus' teachings concerning his life, his mission, and his relationship to God. Though these have to be understood within the context of what is known about John's gospel, they remain as one of the greatest sources outlining Jesus' teachings.

According to John, Jesus makes the incredibly definitive statement:
*"I and my Father are one."*³¹

Jesus says there is no difference between himself and God. Furthermore, he emphasizes the point that he is God in human form and possesses all the power of God. He says:

*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;...
 Believest thou not that I am in the Father,
 and the Father in me?
 The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself:
 but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.
 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me:
 or else believe me for the very works' sake.*³²

Normally, the reason souls take birth into this world is because of their sins. They come here to fulfil their debt of sin. Masters, on the other hand, are free from such constraints and come with a different purpose altogether. Jesus, too, is very clear about his intention in coming to the world and his role and relationship to the real seekers of the mystic truth. In St. John's gospel, he says:

To this end was I born,

*and for this cause came I into the world,
that I should bear witness unto the Truth.
Every one that is of the Truth heareth my voice.*³³

The only way back to the Father is through the Son of God. The real Son of God is the Perfect Living Master, who holds the path that leads back to the Lord. Jesus says that the disciple who believes in him actually believes in God:

*He that believeth on me, believeth not on me,
but on Him that sent me.
And he that seeth me seeth Him that sent me.*³⁴

A Master only comes into this world for a short period of time. Although Jesus said that he came into this world to be the light, he pointed out that this was true only as long as he remained here with us:

*As long as I am in the world,
I am the light of the world.*³⁵

After a Perfect Master leaves this world, one must search for another Perfect Master. While a disciple is with his Master, he should take advantage of his Master's presence and guidance and work on the spiritual path. However, the time will come when even the Master will have to leave this world. No physical body can live here forever, nor would a Master ever wish to do so, as he can soar through the inner realms and return to God after death. After helping his allotted prisoners to escape this unbearable world, a Master willingly wishes to return to God. This is what Jesus meant when he said to a group of Jews who were not his disciples:

*Yet a little while am I with you,
and then I go unto Him that sent me.
Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me:
and where I am, thither ye cannot come.³⁶*

Earlier in his life, Namdev ji (a Perfect Master) had worshipped idols. He also had strong belief in fasting, going on pilgrimages, bathing in holy waters, and carrying out other rituals. He later realized that they were all meaningless. In one of his poems, he says:

“God, made of stone, never speaks. How can it heal thy worldly sorrow? If God of stone can fulfill man’s desires, then why should it break, when given a blow...In all the places of pilgrimage, small or great, there is nothing but stone and water. When I received initiation, I came to realize that there is no place without the Lord. That Lord has been revealed unto Nam (Divine Melody) a within by the grace of Khechar, his Master.”³⁷

When Namdev later realized the Truth, he declared that he had reached his goal by meditation on the Nam (Divine Melody) of the Lord alone, which was taught to him by his Perfect Master.

*Who hath retained the stain of sin after uttering
the Nam (Divine Melody) of the Lord?
The sinner is turned into the holy as soon as
His Nam (Divine Melody) is uttered.
Nam (Divine Melody)dev, the slave, hath realized through
union with the Lord:
Fasting on the eleventh day and going on
pilgrimages are futile.
Says Nam (Divine Melody)dev: “My thoughts and actions have
been cleansed.
Who hath not attained deliverance by uttering
the Nam (Divine Melody) of the Lord under the Master’s*

*instructions?*³⁸

Tukaram is a renowned saint of Maharashtra. His poems are simple, yet full of deep meaning and profound truth. Even after more than three hundred years, their appeal both to the common man and the intellectual remains strong. In one of his poems, Tukaram says that it is through love that the Lord can be realized, and the secret of this Divine Love can be obtained only from Perfect Saints. He says that unless you seek the guidance of a Perfect Master, all talk of liberation is meaningless.

*Without the Master, all talk of liberation
is the whispering of ghosts.
Vyas, other sages, and scriptures, too,
sing the glory of the Master.
Consider the one without a Master as
ever in mourning;
Do not even glance at his face.
No efforts will ever liberate him from
birth and death;
Know that his human life will go to
waste.
Holy books have stated thus, O Tuka,
And thus have declared all Saints
in the past.*³⁹

Dr. Julian Johnson, the theologian and physician, explains the need of a Perfect Master by giving an example of a patient who needs the skilled hands of the surgeon to heal him. If he does not submit to the operation and trust the competency of the surgeon, he will die.

*“A person trusts his higher interests in the hands of an expert... Complete surrender to the Master is the only avenue or path to complete liberation.”*⁴⁰

We cannot perceive the Lord or embark upon our spiritual journey without a Master. We, who are trapped within the mind and senses, do not have the power to go above and beyond the mind to the higher spiritual regions. We function in this world through the senses and the intellect, but we are limited by them. We need the help of someone who stems from the regions of pure spirit, whose home is in the highest region, and who can direct us back there.

We can be compared to flowers in a garden, which are surrounded by weeds. We cannot, through our own power, water the flowerbed or pull up the weeds that are choking us; nor can we cut down the tall grasses blocking the sunlight. The Master, acting as our gardener, waters the earth, pulls up the weeds, and cuts the grass so that we can grow toward the sun without hindrance.

Holy books detail the stories of the Masters and their quest for union with the Divine Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam or Divine Melody), but these books do not contain the Word itself. This can only be obtained from a Perfect Living Master. Just as we need a living lawyer to defend our case, we need a living Master to instruct us in the method of meditation and to guide us on our spiritual path.

For a long time, Jewish people have yearned for the coming of the Messiah who will lift them out of oppression and exile and establish a time of peace and harmony on earth. On a mystic level, we can understand the concept of the Messiah as the true spiritual Master, who comes in every generation to rescue suffering humanity from its pain in the world.

Although we are attached to the past Masters, we are not really following their teachings. By the time our religions become institutionalized, we have lost touch with the true inner teachings and have become involved with rituals and ceremonies. Our religions have even become commercialized, corrupted, and politically oriented. That is why a new mystic has to come to teach us about the path in our own time. There was nothing wrong with the teachings of the past mystics; it is just that we have forgotten their spiritual essence and have lost touch with their inner truth.

Without a Master, it is virtually impossible to have access to the spiritual regions. In Hindu scriptures, it is said that when Narad Rishi (a saint) went to Vishnupuri (the home of Lord Vishnu), he was denied access because he had no Master. Therefore, he had to adopt a Master. Similarly, Sukhdev, (a saint), maintained spiritual knowledge even while in his mother's womb, but when he visited Vishnupuri, he was turned away because he had no Master. He also could not visit the spiritual regions, and had to first adopt King Janak as his Master.

There is no case in history which tells of any man climbing the spiritual ladder without a Master. It is a well-known fact that even though these Saints had knowledge from the time of their birth, they still received much benefit from being in the company of other Saints. Guru Amar Das (third Master of Sikh Religion) said that it is intended by the Lord right from the beginning that no one can obtain God-realization without the help of a Master.

*It has been ordained by the Lord since the beginning;
No one can know Him without a Master.⁴¹*

According to tradition, even the incarnations of Lord Vishnu, Lord Rama and Lord Krishna- adopted the Rishis Vashist and Garg respectively as their Masters. Since even Rama and Krishna, who were Lords of the three worlds, had to obey this law, common men can claim no exception. In support of this, Guru Nanak Dev Ji (Founder of Sikh Religion) says that no one has ever had knowledge without a Perfect Master. You can verify this truth, he says, from Brahma, or the great sages Narad and Ved Vyas.

*O brother, none but a Master can tell the secret
of God-realization.
You may ask this of Brahma, Narad or Ved Vyas.⁴²*

It is quite obvious that no one can be successful on the Spiritual Path without obtaining guidance from a Perfect Living Master. Ashtavakar imparted knowledge to Raja Janak. Gorakh Nath obtained it from Bhartri Hari, Arjun from Lord Krishna, Soami Ji from Tulsi Sahib , Paltu Sahib from Gobind Sahib and Vivekananda from Ramakrishna. There is no doubt that many Masters have mentioned their Masters in their hymns, even though some have not. However, this does not mean that those who gave no mention of a Master had no Master. This idea can be further clarified by the following example: It is a universal law that nature provided milk for children born in the past, is providing milk for children being born in the present, and will continue to provide milk for children born in the future. This law of nature is immutable. Similarly, it would be incorrect to say that no help was available for someone seeking the spiritual path before Jesus, or

that no help was available for a seeker born after the time of Jesus. It is not logical to say that Perfect Masters visited this earth for a few centuries, but before and after their time, the world was and will be without Perfect Masters.

The teachings of all mystics are the same: Find the Perfect Living Master of your own time and learn the mystic practice from him. Do not get confused by rituals and outward ceremonies. Do not give blind allegiance and belief to unsubstantiated dogmas. Sit in meditation, follow the inner path for yourself, and merge your soul in God. Soami Ji says we cannot achieve God-realization by reading and reciting books or through our faith in Masters of the past. Only a living person can connect us with the Nam (Divine Melody). Just as a lit candle can light other candles, a realized soul can awaken other souls as well; but these souls must be working on the same plane of consciousness; otherwise there will be no contact between them.

*O, do not take thou Master as a man;
The very life and being of Sat Purush is He...
Master hath assumed the form of man.
So that somehow or other, salvation he may get thee.
Serve thou him, and him do thou worship;
Him do thou know as Master Nanak.
Kabir is he, and Sat Nam (Divine Melody) is he;
In Him all Saints do thou consider.
Thy salvation lieth in his hands;
O do not thou wander about but give up
thou thy vanity.⁴³*

It is said through devotion to the Master can we get rid of the ego which fogs our soul. Our so-called love for the Masters of the past is more like admiration rather than intense love. For this, we need a living Master.

We can relate the importance of the Master on our spiritual journey to the importance of a pilot on an airplane. With the door and engine locked by the pilot, one first faces the task of gaining access to the plane. If this is achieved, this person must still figure out how to unlock and start the engine. After many troubles, the person may accomplish this, but then faces the hardy task of actually getting the plane into the air. If, through some miracle, the person is able to get the plane into the air, he would not be able to successfully fly the plane. As a result, the individual would likely crash the plane and end his life. Without an experienced, professional pilot, one can not fly a plane. Similarly, without a knowledgeable, experienced Master, one can not gain entry into **Sat Lok**. Paltu Sahib gives a similar example of a boat without a boatman. The traveler cannot go across the ocean of phenomena and achieve access to the shore of everlasting bliss without the expert steering of the Master, the boatman.

*The boat is there, but the boatman is missing;
 how will the traveler ever go across?
 How will the traveler get across, when faith
 in the boatman is lacking?.....
 How will he reach the Beloved across the ocean,
 when he is reluctant to renounce worldly
 pleasures?
 He possesses neither knowledge in the mind,
 nor has he adopted the virtuous way.
 He does not listen to the Master's sagacious
 words,
 And without love in the heart, his speech gets
 divorced from action.
 His boat does not cease wobbling, for he heeds
 not the boatmans's words.
 The fool, bereft of all wisdom, brings in his*

own cleverness.
He attends not, O Paltu, to the Masters path
of the Melody within.
The boat is there, but the boatman is missing;
*how will thy traveler ever go across?.*⁴⁴

Out of respect for their Master, the disciples of every saint refuse to believe that their own Master ever had a Master. In our appreciation, we think that our Master may not be considered great if we admit that he had a teacher of his own. This thinking is cutting at the very root of the teachings of those Masters. Every Master needs a teacher. Before he becomes a Master, he is a disciple, and is guided by his own Perfect Master.

It is said that each and every man seems to think that he is on the right path and becomes anxious to preach his view to others. However, his faith is most likely based on intellectual reasoning rather than spiritual insight. Only the faith which is based on one's own inner realization of transcendent truths by transport of the soul into higher spiritual planes is dependable and true.

For the realization of God, no previous Master or holy book is required. One needs only a Perfect Living Master who may unite us with "Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam or Divine Melody)" and through its five Melodies, take us to Sat Lok (True Home). The only useful purpose of books is to serve as reminders and to convince us to give our devotion to our Master and practice Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam or Divine Melody). Meeting with a true Master and being initiated by him into his fold depends solely on the grace of the Master.

After discussing the various saints of different cultures, times and places, we reach the following conclusion regarding the Importance of a Perfect Living Master.

Everybody wants happiness and hardly anyone wishes against peace. However, our approach in seeking this is usually wrong. People search for happiness in worldly things such as politics, economics, and society. Though these things may help us achieve happiness, it is only temporary. In the long run, we are still not at peace. On the other hand, if we try to find peace in a spiritual manner, we will not only get peace within ourselves, but we will also radiate peace to our surroundings. True peace can only be found within our body and unless we seek it inside, we will always be unsuccessful in attaining permanent happiness. In order to find this peace, we must learn the secrets of spirituality.

The secrets of spirituality, or of the practical means by which the soul can become united with the Lord, can only be dispensed by a Perfect Master. The Master gives us spiritual knowledge not by mere words, but in an unspoken language. Although religious books can inform and encourage us about the spiritual journey, they are not enough. They only touch the tip of the iceberg and do not go into depth as to what awaits us on the Path back to our Real Home. Since a Perfect Master is one who has been to the Real Home and has the ability to merge with the Nam (Divine Melody) at any time, he is the only one who can help us reunite with the Lord.

Now that it is clear that a Perfect Living Master is vital, the question arises as to how we can recognize such a being.

Chapter 3

RECOGNITION OF A PERFECT LIVING MASTER

As discussed in the previous chapter, we have come into this world for the sole purpose of God-realization. This path to God is kept securely locked within us, yet the key to access it is not within our hands. Only the Perfect Masters hold the key required to open the lock. The Perfect Master can show us the direct path to God, and allow us to merge with Him.

The term Master is equivalent to the term Saint (Sant in Sanskrit). It is also holds the same meaning as Master. However, while all Masters are saints, not all saints are Masters. This is similar to the higher responsibility given to the Prime Minister in the Parliament of any Country. While the Prime Minister is also a Member of Parliament, all of the other Members of Parliament are not Prime Ministers.

The terms Master, Master and Saint are interchangeable, and refer to one who has made it to the fifth region by his own efforts as well as with the aid of his Master. The term 'Saint' is not used in the sense in which it is generally applied in the Christian world; that is, one canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. The terms 'Sant' and 'Sadhu' are like degrees in the school of Spiritual Science. However, the actual meaning of Sadhu is

someone who is highly developed spiritually and has crossed the regions of matter and mind. This is because while both Saints and Masters have reached the highest stage in spirituality and merged with the Lord.

The term 'Master' refers to one who has himself crossed all the stages on the spiritual path and has ultimately merged into the Lord. To highlight this, saints sometimes add the word 'perfect' to the word 'master'. The Perfect Master is thus vital on the path to God-realization. A Perfect Master is both God and man. He is a man because he takes on the human form and is God because he has merged with Him. The reason a Perfect Master has to take on a human form is so that he can show other humans the method to realize the Truth. Only a Perfect Living Master has the responsibility of giving Nam (Divine Melody), or initiation and of leading his disciples back to their home.

Saints do not preach outward formalities such as rites, rituals, modes of livings, or any special type of clothing. They are above all of these things.

Perfect Masters are identical to the Lord. They are born into the human form for the sole purpose of helping souls from the lower worldly regions to become one with Him. They help only those who follow their instructions. Perfect Masters not only look after human beings, they look after the entire universe. A man who stands on top of a very high hill can see a fire whether it is near or far away. Likewise, the Perfect Masters, who are spiritually higher than us, seek out those who are in search of the Lord, and help them unite with Him.

We are aware that the Lord is full of wisdom and power and that he is omnipresent. The Master is exactly the same, except for the fact that he has physical limitations. Spiritually, he has no limitations and may leave the body and advance to any of the higher planes at will. Furthermore, the Perfect Master is as omnipresent as the Lord. For example, if a Master has a thousand disciples, each disciple will see the living Master in the inner chambers of his being, no matter where he may go. Of course to do this, the disciple must have attained some spiritual development. The disciple views his Master as the giver of all life and the lord of the universe. This is strictly because the Master is identical with God.

The Christian belief that Jesus was the true God in his very essence is not wrong. Jesus himself said: 'I and the Father are one.' This is what all Masters teach. When any being attains sainthood, he gains conscious oneness with the Lord. It is true that all men have that oneness to a degree, but few of them are conscious of their noble inheritance. The Perfect Master, however, is conscious of this. That is one of the distinguishing qualities of a Master. He knows his relationship with the Lord and is consciously able to exercise his powers and duties as His son. He is no longer a mere man with a limited understanding, but has become like God.

According to Maulana Rum (a Perfect Master), we should not try to judge the Saints by means of our intellect. In Persian, the words 'shir' (milk) and 'sher' (tiger) are written almost alike. However, the sher is the tiger which kills and devours, while the shir is the milk that sustains us.

Similarly, humans and Perfect Masters have similar outwardly appearances, but differ significantly in inwardly attributes.

In a way, the Perfect Master can be considered a Superman. However, he is still more than a superman because he surpasses all of the limitations of a mere man. He can see beyond what the eye can see and can hear more than what the ear can hear. He can go where the microscope cannot follow and where the scalpel cannot dissect.

Often, we find it difficult to believe in Perfect Masters and their powers. It is a tragic human tendency to discredit modern ideas, especially those relating to religion, but to honor those which are ancient. We cannot acknowledge that which is right before our own eyes, but will automatically accept what was written in a book thousands of years ago. As such, we can not believe in a Perfect Living Master, but find no problem in accepting the stories of Masters of the past.

A Perfect Master appears to be an ordinary human being. He leads a stable family life, earns an honest living, shows no outward display of spiritual height, and bears no particular clothing or marks. The Perfect Master may be rich like Raja Janak, a soldier like Baba Jaimal Singh, a farmer like Guru Nanak, a grocer like Paltu, a cobbler like Ravidas, or a woman like Mira Bai or Sahajobai. The criteria do not involve caste, creed, color, race, religion, wealth or poverty. The only characteristic of importance is spiritual progress.

A couple of years ago, one gentleman from India was traveling by airplane. He was in his early 50's, in a turban and tight beard. He was wearing blue jeans, short sleeve t shirt and running shoes. A flight attendant thought she recognized him and asked in secret one of her fellow Indian colleagues. Her friend dismissed this because even if he looks like that Perfect Living Master by his face and turban but his tight beard and westernized clothing was completely out of the typical appearance of a Perfect Living Master. When the plane landed both the flight attendants were standing there to greet goodbye to the travelers. When this man approached he smiled, called them sisters and told them that spirituality doesn't lie within clothing but comes from within. When he spoke this, the flight attendant had tears well up in her eyes and realized this was indeed the Perfect Living Master she had thought she recognized. These days society will base choosing a Perfect living Master on the basis of their physical appearance. Such as wearing traditional white clothing, kurtha pyjama, a long white beard, and a crème turban.

It is clear that the Perfect Masters are God made flesh. They have to take birth, eat, drink, and dress like us so that we may understand and relate to them. If they were to look like extraordinary human beings and have a different way of thinking and speaking, we would not be able to understand or follow them. When a mother tries to talk to her child, she uses baby talk so that the child can follow her better. Similarly, the Master takes on human form and talks to us in our language and at our level of understanding so that we may grasp his teachings.

The Perfect Master is the most highly-developed man and even though not much emphasis is laid upon physical perfection, his body must be fit. This is similar to a skilled workman who must have good tools if he is to do his finest work. Throughout history, it is evident that no man with any bodily defects or deformities can become a real Perfect Master. Other than his body, his mind must also be of very high standard: keen, penetrating, quick of wit, and sound of judgment. Whether or not the Perfect Master has participated in any worldly education, his mind must have undergone the severest training and discipline. In each and every respect, the Perfect Master is the highest standard of man possible.

Being a student of religion, I could never grasp how these days there were numerous, almost thousands in a country at a time, considered Perfect Living Masters. It is true that in history, there have been a few together at one time but in different places. But these days I was surprised to see that only in a few years of time, there have been so many new Perfect Living Masters found. I was always curious to see how this was possible, have there been more Perfect Living masters truly created and found or is this a false finding. Luckily, a couple of years after I was reading in the Canadian newspaper that a spiritual living master from India was coming to give spiritual discourse in Toronto. I was eager to attend as well as hopefully solve any doubts.

I saw the Master sitting on his platform, clothed in pure white and sporting a long white beard and white turban. There were spotlights down on him and he looked like the spitting image that we all have in mind of a Perfect Living Master. When I was listening to his discourses it became

apparent and unfortunate that he was criticizing most of the other religions and indicating his belief's superiority.

I was surprised at this because I do not understand how a Living Master would be able to find fault in any other faith's beliefs, especially voice them. I feel that a Perfect Living Master will simply outline the basic principles of spirituality and how to achieve God-realization. There will be no bashing or ridiculing any other faith or belief. They will take another religion for example and show that its idolistic devotion, or certain fasts or ceremonies are symbolic in nature. However a Perfect Living Master will immediately stress that although this practice is sometimes important and ritualistic to one, the bigger picture is the deeper meaning and feelings it provides the disciple in simply trying to invoke the love and spirit of their God and keep them at the center of their mind.

I am very distraught when I hear on the radio, see on the television and read in the newspaper about certain accusations of some Perfect Living Masters in India. Some have murder accusations, some are currently fighting rape accusations and they need to be constantly with police protection for their safety. In Punjab there have been some cases where the Perfect Living Master's are involved in property disputes.

These days, the Perfect Living Masters have created large, wholesome city-like deras. They drive fancy imported cars, gorgeous bungalows and money is clearly not an issue for them. Furthermore, Perfect Living Masters reside in India during the winter and travel abroad in summer for satsang, allowing them to stay warm and comfortable.

They have hundreds of thousands of disciples who offer their Seva (personal volunteer time) to be able to stay in the Master's presence. With so many disciples it is very hard to find the time and opportunity for one to ask a Perfect Living Master one of their many questions and doubts.

It is preached to practice truth and humility, however; unfortunately, sometimes even the closest follower has been involved in malpractice or belittle and insults other disciples whom, in his eyes, are not as significant. An honest living is advised but sometimes the disciples are misusing the Sangat's (Disciples') donations. A Perfect Living Master stresses to maintain a high moral character, however these days there are many stories brought to light about their bad character.

The Perfect living Master is the teacher, light, and inspiration of all. Those who meet him are fortunate whether they realize it or not. He breaks no law of the country and supports all good governments. His life and teachings are universal. He belongs to no particular race or time, but to all nations and times. He is simply a friendly visitor to this world. The Master is the best example for all men, whether they are kings or peasants.

The Perfect living Master is the ideal in religion. He is the strongest among men and possesses absolutely no weaknesses or faults. He has no religion, but remains the most religious person on earth. He has no creed, but does not discredit any other creeds. He never condemns any man or religious system. Though he finds no faults with anybody, he draws the sharpest distinctions between the good and the bad. He has only pity, never

blame. Even for the worst of sinners, he never criticizes scolds, abuses, or lectures.

The Perfect Master lives and teaches positive truth and overcomes all evil with good. To correct the faults in his disciples, he points out the opposite virtues. He believes strongly that to point out a fault never removes the fault, but actually strengthens it. He never holds ill will, not even against his enemies. He gives love to all and seeks to serve all. In the book “Legacy of Love”, a poem is written by Paltu:

*Soft and tender are saints,
no one else in the world is like them.
There is no one else like them;
they are kind and merciful to all.
Foe and friend are alike to them,
and alike are bad luck and good fortune.
They are as tender as flowers;
not even in a dream do they see others' faults.
They ever wish well to others,
for they savour the wine of divine love.
Affable to all, with a gentle smile,
soft and sweet of speech are they.
Cheerful whatever happens, they emanate coolness;
in every glance they radiate compassion.
Whatever one might say to them,
O Paltu, they are not in the least perturbed.
Soft and tender are saints,
no one else in the world is like them.¹*

Dr. Julian Johnson describes his own experiences about the recognition of the perfect Master:

“When you see him, give him the most critical study. For one whole year, I lived and worked and traveled right by the side of my Master and took note

of everything he said and did, even watching the expression on his face during crises, such as when we were attacked by opponents with fierce arguments and abuse. I watched his reactions when people came before him confessing their sins. I watched him when he went into the hovels of the poor to see the sick, and I studied him carefully when he entered the homes of the rich. I observed him carefully when dealing with two rajas who tried to bow at his feet. I took a careful note when streams of people came along offering money for some public building, like the satsang hall; also when people tried to give him money or other things for himself. Under all conditions, I found him a perfect man, as a Master is supposed to be. A perfect character- as a man- is the foundation of the spiritual mastership. If a man has not that to begin with, one had better let him alone.”²

History shows that Perfect Masters do not accept any gifts from their disciples for their own use. Similarly, disciples should not accept any gifts from others. The law of karma recognizes no gifts. Whatever we receive, we must eventually return; if not in material possessions then in some other way. As Kabir says:

The first rule of ‘paramarth’ (the spiritual path) is: never eat anything which does not belong to you (earn your own living). Even if one is a ruler of the whole world- even then he should honestly work for his living.³

Many people claim to be Perfect Masters, but very few are truly able to put individuals on the Spiritual Path to God. There are frauds along the way. This is likely the work of Satan (Kal), who tries to cover up the Perfect Masters by creating more frauds, in an attempt to distract people from finding the way to the Lord. Kabir says:

Of what avail thy dyeing thy garments in ochre,

*If thou hath not dyed thy mind in the dye of Nam (Divine Melody)?
 Of what avail is thy sitting before an idol,
 Abandoning the Nam (Divine Melody) of the Lord,
 The only worship that takes you across?
 Oh sadhu, thou hast pierced thy ears,
 And hast grown long tresses and a beard
 In the fashion of the yogis.
 But if growing a beard could make thee a yogi
 Look at the bearded goat.
 Retiring into the forest, thou hast
 Lighted fire all around thee,
 But if that could make thee free from passions,
 Look at the eunuch, he indulges not in sex,
 But is filled to the brim with sexy thoughts.
 The external fire is useless
 For reducing to ashes the passions within.
 by shaving thy head, dyeing thy garments,
 And reciting the Gita parrot-wise,
 Thou pretendest to be a learned yogi.
 But Kabir warns thee, listen, my brother seeker,
 Such fakes are taken captives
 To the door of Yama, tied hand and foot.
 Of what use is such pretence?⁴*

In truth, the fake Masters are dangerous to society. Some are drug addicts; some find non-honest ways to make a living; some find it assuring to give discourses to others; some are astrologers or palmists who read the past and future; some run employment exchanges of sorts; some work as stock exchange experts and some offer marriage advice.

Outwardly, they appear to be great beings, friendly in all aspects, and highly eloquent. In reality, they do not act on what they preach. Furthermore, they ask others to pay in cash for their services. Their prime goal is to give certain services for the purpose of getting money or other material wealth.

On the other hand, Perfect Masters such as Kabir , Paltu, and Soami Ji belong to a different category. They are not concerned with outward shows and are in tune with the Lord twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, even while occupied in worldly work.

The following poem by Paltu Sahib outlines the qualities of a Perfect Master:

*Very near (and dear) to God are Saints.
 Whatever they ordain, happens.
 Yes, what they order, occurs;
 For the Lord is within their command.
 Whatever Saints ask, He does.
 He never goes against Their wishes.
 In the Mansion of the Lord,
 All work is done by Saints.
 Three hundred and thirty million gods,
 Pay homage to Them.
 They may turn a mole into a mountain,
 Or reduce a mountain to a mole.
 In the Lord's Mansion,
 Their glory is ever proclaimed.
 In fact, O Paltu! in the Lord's House,
 There is no other Doer⁵*

Perfect Masters have distinct characteristics which separate them from others. All those who go about in the world as saints are not necessarily Perfect Masters. Many of them are fakes. These false saints, who wear robes and go begging from door to door for donations, are far from perfect. The Perfect Masters do not involve themselves in magic or miracles, even though they have the power to do so. Often, scholars give spiritual discourses based on holy books, but should not be classified as saints or Perfect Masters as a result. Paltu says in one of his songs:

*Saints aspire not for Salvation, nor are they
 tempted by the four coveted things
 of the world.
 Not tempted by the four coveted things,
 Salvation rather is a slave in their court.
 On Riddhis and Siddhis they spit; and
 Paradise they despise.
 They are above all desire. They neither undertake
 pilgrimage nor do they keep fasts.
 Indifferent to honor and fame, they seek
 neither power nor glory.
 They do not want Vishnu's paradise, nor a mere
 release from the cycle of birth and death.
 The pleasures of all the seven heavens are, to
 them, contemptible.
 O Paltu, I seek nothing; I long only for the
 company of such devotees of the Lord,
 Who desire neither liberation nor the four
 coveted things of the world⁶*

According to Paltu, Perfect Masters hold the priceless treasure of eternal bliss within themselves. Those who follow the outward rituals such as fasting, praying, and practicing charity may be religious, but this does not mean they are Perfect Masters. The qualities and powers of Perfect Masters are made clear by Paltu. The Master is the 'word made flesh.' It is he alone who can put the disciple in touch with the Nam (Divine Melody) which is ringing within all people, yet cannot be heard with the physical ears.

The Perfect Master's love flows to each and every person, whether he is a king or a beggar. The Master is free from joy, sorrow, praise, and blame. He makes no distinction between gold and brass, friend and foe, or good and bad. Hunger and thirst do not affect him, nor can lust and anger ever attack

him. He has broken the binds of greed, ego, and attachment. Even though he lives in this material world, he is completely detached.

It is very difficult for an ordinary person to describe or even imagine the spiritual powers which all Perfect Masters possess. The Perfect Masters have all of the secrets of this world and beyond. They don't practice the common formalities of religion such as yoga, pilgrimage, fasting, and charity. They possess such immense powers that they can sidetrack fate, eliminate karmas, and redeem sinners. They can enable the mute to recite scriptures and can make stones float above water. However, they do not perform these miracles as they do not want to interfere with the ways of the universe.

The Perfect Master is generous. He provides free teachings to all those who are willing to listen. He showers worldly and spiritual grace upon seekers, and his weapons are strictly knowledge and meditation.

A Perfect Master descends from higher spiritual regions for the sole purpose of redeeming mankind. He appears in the human form and dedicates his life to the Lord's service. He expresses his love to the good and bad alike and saves humans from their earthly desires. Perfect Masters are extremely rare on this planet. Paltu compares them to lions, which are never seen in groups and are always wandering alone and independent of one another. Perfect Masters are also never found in large groups and are usually isolated. On the other hand, it is the false saints which are found in large groups in each and every corner of the world. He says:

*Sihon*lion ke lahand*group kin dekka.
Basudha barmain ek.
Asai sant koi ek hai,
aur rangai sab bhek.⁷*

Absolutely no importance is placed on the nationality, race, or religion of the Perfect Master. He may or may not be educated; he may travel by plane or by foot; he may live in a mansion or a hut; he may be well or poorly dressed. Such things have no affect on his sainthood. The Lord may appear in any shape or form and the disciple must accept him as he is. Paltu was a perfect example of simplicity. Though he was a Perfect Master with many disciples, he earned his living on his own through his grocery business and never accepted anything from anyone. Paltu says:

*A lion would rather die than take to eating
grass. So also a Saint would rather die than
live on charity. A swan would rather die than
eat shell-fish. So is a Master; he would
sooner die than beg for his living.⁸*

In the Adi Granth, Guru Nanak Dev Ji (Founder of Sikh Religion) illustrates this same idea beautifully:

*He is no Master, who begs from door to
door. Do not bow to such a one. He who
labors and gives in charity, O Nanak, he is
on the right path.⁹*

The Perfect Master appears to be an ordinary human being, having come into this world like one. In reality, there is a great difference in the way in which he enters this world and the way in which we enter. For

example, both prisoners and doctors go to jails. However, the prisoners go there in order to receive punishment for what they've done wrong, while the doctors go there in order to help look after the health of the prisoners. The prisoners are not allowed out of the jail until their punishment is complete; however, the doctors can come and go as they please. Similarly, we come into this world to pay the debts of our good and bad karmas and cannot leave at will, whereas the Perfect Masters come into this world to help guide us back to the Lord and can leave at any time.

Perfect Masters never open their hands to receive anything. The world is full of holy men living on the charity of others. These men impress people with their false spirituality. Paltu Sahib says that such men are not true saints. One of the most important qualities of a Perfect Master is that he supports himself and earns an honest living. Those who live off of others are classified as frauds of holiness.

*A swan stoops not to peck at shell fish, nor does
the lion eat grass.
The lion eats not grass, he would rather kill
and eat an elephant.
He shuns the carcass of an animal killed by
another and never goes near it.
It is tradition, a point of honor with is kind,
that he will rather die than eat such meat.
He would court starvation rather than stain
his honor.
Saints are the crown of all creation, taking
nothing from it except the human form.
They awaken men from ignorance, pointing to
new paths, and seldom have they
smooth sailing.
Says Paltu, saints never stretch their hands*

*before others, seeking alms.
The swan stoops not to pick up shell fish, and
the lion scorns to browse on grass.¹⁰*

A Perfect Master will not be a burden on anyone no matter what the circumstance. They live off of their own hard-earnings and teach their disciples to also support themselves through honest means. Saints and mystics have made their own lives into perfect examples of how we must live ours. For example, Guru Nanak Dev Ji ran his farm with his own hands in the village of Kartarpur. He took care of his own needs as well as those of his family, and he served the sangat for free throughout his life. At the end of his life, he left behind the following message:

*Never bow down before one
who calls himself a Master and spiritual preceptor
and goes begging.
He who eats what he earns by his honest labour
and from his hand gives something in charity,
Nanak says, he alone knows the true¹¹*

One should look for a Master who earns his own living, earns for his own needs, and serves his disciples while living amongst them. The saints certainly encourage their disciples to give in charity, but they never stretch out their hands before anyone for their own needs. Be aware of the frauds that go about begging from their disciples.

Throughout his entire life, Kabir earned his living by weaving. This was despite the fact that people like the King of Balkh-Bokhara were amongst his disciples and could have easily provided him with a palace to live in.

It is the disciple's duty to use everything as if it belongs to the Master, but it is a fundamental principle that no Master takes even a pin from his disciples.

If we read the life of Saint Ravidas, we see that he supported himself throughout his life by making shoes, although Raja Pipa, whose writings are included in the Adi Granth, and Mira Bai, the famous princess of Marwar, were among his disciples and could have given him anything he needed. In the life story of Mira Bai, we read that her relations taunted her for having a Master who lived below the fort stitching shoes, while she was a princess living in the palace.

One thing is certain: it is very difficult for a disciple to bear taunts and criticism concerning the Master. Mira took a valuable diamond and presented herself at Saint Ravidas's hut and entreated him: *'Master, my relatives are harassing me. Please sell this diamond and build yourself a nice comfortable home to live in.'* He replied, *'My child, whatever I have received has come from this tanning tank and from cobbling shoes. If this disturbs you, then you may please sit at home and do your meditation.'*

Even so, she concealed the diamond in the thatched roof of the hut, in the hope that her Master would sell it later and build a house. When she visited him again a month or two later, she found him in the same state, working at his shoes. She asked about the diamond and he said, *'You can take it, child, from wherever you left it.'* And there it was where she had put it.

Giving these examples is simply to show that saints always live by supporting themselves from their own honest earnings. Read the life of Namdev Ji and you will see that he earned his livelihood printing cloth by hand. Paltu Sahib, whose writings we are discussing, worked as a shopkeeper. Dadu Sahib carded cotton.

Saints are never a burden on society. They work hard to support themselves, and they teach their disciples to do likewise¹²

If our goal is God-realization, then we should create humility, meekness, and longing within our hearts. We can learn the meaning of humility by examining the lives and writings of the Perfect Masters. In MasterGuru Nanak Dev Ji (Founder of Sikh Religion)Sahib's writings, he refers to himself as a slave of slaves and as a servant. He writes:

*Says Nanak, my deeds are despicable.
I have taken your refuge:
oh, protect my honor!*

*Kah naanak ham neech haramaa.
Saran pare kee raakhah sarmaa.¹³*

Saint Ravidas, although he had merged himself with the Supreme Being, wrote:

Low is my caste, low my rank, low my birth.

Jaatee ochhaa paatee ochhaa ochhaa jaNam (Divine Melody) hamaaraa.¹⁴

When we say that the Perfect Master is equal to and above God, it appears to be a contradiction. However, one must look at the sense in which

this statement is made and the contradiction will be resolved. The Master is equal to God because his soul has merged in Him and they have become one. The Master is greater than God because he is a man and comes in contact with other humans and lovingly helps them on their path to God-realization. As God can not directly help us, the Master is indeed greater than Him as it is he who unites us with Him. At the same time we should not forget that it is God who has sent the Perfect Master. In fact, God manifests himself in this world as the Master by donning the human form in order to take us to our true home.

People believe that there can only be one Perfect Master in the world at a time. However, as we have already discussed, a Perfect Master is one whose soul has already reached Sat Lok (True Home). If many people merge into the Nam (Divine Melody), then all of these people will become Masters. There is no rule stating that only one being can reach Sat Lok at a time. Furthermore, this truth again becomes evident if one takes a look through history. Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Kabir Sahib were both Perfect Masters and lived in the world at the same time for about forty-nine years. Similarly, both Guru Angad Sahib and Dharam Das Ji were Perfect Masters and were contemporaries of each other.

A Perfect Master never claims to be a Perfect Master. His greatness is gradually revealed when his disciples remain in his company. When one first meets a Perfect Master, he does not display his spiritual powers. As a disciple becomes more deserving, the Master becomes more revealing. At the beginning, the Master appears as an ordinary man and it is not until later

that he reveals himself as the Master, though he does not say it. With time, the seeker sees no distinction between the Master and the Lord.

While it is not easy to recognize a Perfect Master, we receive a glimpse of his perfect qualities through his style of living and through the spiritual benefits we obtain while in his company. He is always kind and merciful and looks upon all with compassion. He possesses no ill feelings, and sees no distinctions between receiving praise or blame. His is always the giver and never the receiver. He earns his own livelihood and is not a burden on anyone. He serves the needy and seeks no reward. He accepts nothing for his teachings because they are as free as the gifts of nature. He gives all credit to the Lord and his own Master for whatever he does.

The Master looks upon no one as an enemy and does not complain of anyone's behavior. Even if someone has wronged him, the Master forgives. He does not criticize or slander anyone and has love for all. He loves even those who show enmity towards him. The principle of 'love thy enemy' is present throughout his life.

He is imbued with purity, knowledge and spirituality. His entire life is dedicated to both spiritual realization and the liberation of others. He does not adopt any particular garb to distinguish himself from others, nor does he resort to any ascetic practices to control his mind. He does not display his miraculous powers and though he possesses them, he wisely keeps them hidden. He has a magnetic pull, and his very presence is uplifting and produces a state of peace and bliss. His voice attracts listeners, and his eyes have a sublime light which pierces the heart. His speech has a unique effect

and penetrates the very core of the listener's heart. His teachings dispel all doubts, and he delivers them boldly and without fear.

The Perfect Masters know our inner condition as clearly as one sees the contents of a glass bottle. They see our faults clearly but do not disclose them. He sees the same Lord in all creatures, and all castes and creeds are the same to him. He looks upon all human beings equally and as children of God.

The Perfect Master does not ask anyone to give up their religion and adopt another. His concern is only with one's soul. All the Master asks is that the disciple have a sincere longing for the Lord. Fearlessly, he gives only pure spiritual teachings and has no concern with the observance of rituals and ceremonies. One would not hesitate to receive benefit from a true Master, wherever he may be found and to whatever caste he may belong. Maulana Rum (a Perfect Master) says:

If you wish to go on a pilgrimage, go with one who has already made the pilgrimage. It is immaterial whether he is a Hindu, a Turk or an Arab. Do not give any importance to his external appearance. Look at his aim and his reach.¹⁵

In the book 'Hinduism', Dr. K. R. Sundararajan says that the Perfect Master is free from hatred, anger, fickleness and fear. He does not go back on his words under the influence of either desire or greed. He always practices forgiveness, speaks well, eats nourishing food, extends courtesy to all, is pure, is sweet in speech, is free from jealousy, and is truthful. He is

inclined to do well towards others, is free from sins, and is never happy on seeing others in trouble.

Many people visit with and see the Perfect Master. They hear his discourses and form their own views on him. There are only a few amongst these millions who actually see the Lord residing within the Master. In reality, he is not a simple human being. Unless the perfect master, who is truth incarnate, chooses to reveal himself, one cannot recognize him. Very often, even the members of a Perfect Master's own family fail to recognize his superior qualities. Paltu explains the good fortune of those individuals that can see God within their Master. He says:

*When Master, the grinder, you meet, then
would be rubbed off the age-old rust of
karma.*

*Then would be rubbed off the age-old stain,
four your mind is covered by layers of rust.
And the deep stain will not go without the
perfect Master.*

*Get the pumice stone of love and devotion
from the master; rub hard the rusting
sword of your mind.*

*The quintessence will come out when you
cleanse the spirit, filing off the rust
and crust of karmas.*

*The melody of the Word is the emery stone,
and knowledge esoteric the corundum.*

*Follow meticulously the Master's instructions,
then alone will go the stain of mind.*

*Clean thy scimitar, O Paltu, and sharpen its
edge on the hone of inner detachment.*

*The age-old stain will be rubbed off only when
Master, the grinder, comes to help you.*

*Master sikleegar milen, tab chute purana daag.
 Chute purana daag, ghada mann murcha mahin.
 Master pure bina, daag ye chute nahin.
 Chamma leva jog, teg ko male banayi.
 Johar de nikar, surat ko rand chaliye.
 Shabd maskla kare, gyan ka kurand lagave.
 Jog jugat se malee, daag tab mann ka jaave.
 Paltu saif ko saaf kar, baad dhare bairag.
 Master sikleegar milen, tab chute purana daag.¹⁶*

In another Poem, Paltu Sahib stresses the need of a living Master:

*So act, O Paltu, that your mind does not
 become impure,
 For, remember, the washerman will not live
 forever.
 Make haste, therefore, and get your sheet
 cleansed.
 Dhobi phir mar jayiga, chadar ligiyai dhoi.
 Chadar ligiyai dhoi, maal hai bohat samani.
 Chal Master ke ghat, bhara jahain nirmal pani.¹⁷*

In this scientific time, artificial can easily mask into original and it is very difficult for one to identify what is true and what will cheat them. This is suffice to say with as complex as a task as to find a Perfect Living Master.

After discussing in detail the importance of recognizing the characteristics of a Perfect Master as well as how to do this, we must now question his role in reuniting us with the Lord. This matter will be discussed in the following chapter: “The Role of the Perfect Master”.

Chapter 4

ROLE OF THE PERFECT MASTER

As discussed in the previous chapters, our soul is a particle of God but has been held captive in the cage of the body. The Perfect Masters come from the True Home for the purpose of taking souls back with them and uniting them with the Lord. Throughout history worldly people have always been against the teachings of the Perfect Living Masters. However, it is once these Masters leave this world that the people begin to worship them. Perfect Masters lovingly teach us that in order to attain permanent happiness we must devote ourselves to the Lord. We must understand that the Masters do not choose to come here. They come here by the will of the Lord. They travel the world searching for souls that have been marked by the Lord, so that they can reunite them with Him. Paltu explains these points in the following poem:

*Parswarat ke karne,
 Sant liya autar.
 Sant liya autar,
 Jagat ko ra chalawen.
 Bhakti karen updesh,
 Gyaan de Naam sunave.
 Preet badame jagat men,
 Dharti par dolen.
 Kitno kahen kathoor,
 Bachan be amrit bolen.
 Unko kya hai chah,
 Sayeth hain dhuk ghaneera.
 Jeev taran ke haith,*

*Mulak firtee bahatera.
Paltu Master paye ke,
Das beha nirvar.
Parswarat ke karne,
Sant liya autar.¹*

Similarly, the tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, says:

*From two we became one.
I did not like to come;
The Lord willed it,
And sent me to this world.²*

In the above, Paltu Sahib says that since we separated from the Lord and came into this world, we have been miserable. When the Lord sees us in pain, he takes sympathy over us and sends a Perfect Master here to help guide us back to Him. Perfect Masters always have been and always will be coming to this world on their mission of mercy. Soami Ji says:

*Sat Purush hath assumed a physical form;
In the form of the saint hath he become the king
of the world.
This final order hath he given:
Without devotion can be no salvation.
Without devotion to Master, no one can go across.
Without (transcendent) knowledge got from Master,
no one can go across (the ocean of phenomena).³*

This same truth is again stated in the Master Granth Sahib (holy book of Sikh religion), on page 749:

*Saints are without birth and death,
Saints come for the benefit of worldly people.
They give the initiation,
To unite others with God.*

The Perfect Masters do not bar us from undergoing our worldly duties. However, they kindly ask us to restrain our lust, control our greed, limit our social life, suppress our desires of personal ambition, eliminate our anger, live honestly, devote some time for meditation every day, and increase our devotion. These restraints do not inhibit us, but rather they enable us to perform our duties with a stronger will. Spirituality is founded on an individual's attempts at achieving victory over the mind.

We have a zucchini plant in our backyard at home, which unfortunately had not yielded us any zucchinis. During the season, it grew flowers but these flowers never grew into any zucchinis. Once, we had a friend visiting us who was a horticulturist. He was taking a tour of our backyard and when we told him of this useless zucchini plant, he immediately told us the reason and how to fix it. He told us that there are male and female flowers but they were far apart. We had to put both the male and female flowers together in order to mate them and produce zucchinis. We did that and from then on, we enjoyed zucchinis every season. Again similar to the coconut example, we had the tools in front of us. Just as a disciple we have the human body ready for God-realization. We had assumed that having the source of this zucchini plant was enough for us to grow this vegetable. We needed someone that had expertise in this field to teach us how to properly craft and use this resource. I had deemed the zucchini plant as useless and assumed that my job was simply to water and plant it. If I had not met my friend and asked him about this plant, I would continue to be ignorant about this. That is what a true master does. A Perfect Living Master is immediately

able to identify the issue or the obstacle we are facing to realize our goal and offer us a solution. We put our tools and faith in His hands and he takes the ingredients and produces the results that reap us benefits.

The Perfect Masters are one with the Lord. Their goal in this world is to reclaim human souls and connect them with God. The first step of the Perfect Master is to initiate his disciples and teach them the correct method of meditation. As the disciples continue to follow his instructions, they are eventually able to see the Divine Light and hear the Nam (Divine Melody) which resides within them at all times.

When a Perfect Master initiates a man, his Radiant Form comes into the Third Eye focus of the man. This form remains there for the disciple's entire life, providing him with all of the necessary help he requires. When the soul goes inside, either during meditation or at the time of death, the Radiant Form of his Master receives the soul and takes it to higher realms. Soami Ji says that we should behold that Radiant Form of our Master by concentrating our attention at the Third Eye.

*O behold thou the form of thy Master,
By making thy seat in the 'Til' (Third Eye).⁴*

*Master showeth thee this wondrous form,
Whose glory cannot be described.
When his human form doth he show thee,
Then doth he draw up thy mind.⁵*

The true existence of the Master is the Nam (Divine Melody) ('Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody)) (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine

Melody))’). If we listen to it with love and devotion, it transforms our being and eliminates all of our weaknesses. The real Master is this ‘Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam or Divine Melody).

*To the Shabd form of Master do thou ever listen;
By this means do thou burn all thy lower desires
and worldly inclinations.⁶*

*Draw thou thy senses, mind and soul
within thy body;
And by ascending to the (inner) sky
do thou meet the Shabd form of thy Master.
Ever do thou listen to the Melody of Anhad Shabd ;
And behold thou the wondrous ‘Flame’ of God.⁷*

We cannot have any success on the path to God-realization without the grace and help of a Perfect Living Master.

*Without the grace of a saint, none doth find
(the Lord);
Without the saint, nothing is gained.
Even the practice of Shabd is told
by the saint;
Without his grace ‘tis all vain effort.
So, the vital thing is grace and kindness
(of the Saint);
Fall thou at his feet and seek thou his protection:
saith Radha Soami .⁸*

During meditation, the soul goes inwards and upwards like a kite. It is at all times connected with a string which rests in the hand of the flier. When play is over, the kite returns downwards just as the soul comes back into the body after having reached the bliss of higher spiritual planes. There

is no doubt that this is like temporary death. This condition is similar to dreaming except that in dreams the soul goes downwards into the throat center, whereas in meditation the soul goes higher up into the Third Eye. Throughout the entire spiritual journey, the Master remains with the disciple, but in his Astral Form.

In 2002, I had a chance to go to China on a business trip. A bus picked us from the hotel in the morning and dropped us back in the evening. Unfortunately, I missed the bus to the hotel one day. I was very scared because since language was a huge barrier I couldn't understand any of the signs. Show organizers told me that there was another bus going close to the hotel. After taking the bus, I managed to find an interpreter who took me to the underground sub-way. He showed me the train to take and told me to come out after two stations. I was thankful that he had given me the route and obliged. When I stepped out after my second station, I was shocked to see no hotel there. It was dark, I couldn't understand the writing around me, and it was hard to find someone who could understand my problem. I was very terrified especially being in a new country and worried I had misunderstood the instructions. With God's blessing, all of a sudden I met a student who could speak English. It turned out he was an employee at the same hotel and told me that we could not see the hotel because it was one floor above us. I was relieved and also a little embarrassed at how I could find the hotel so close to me. Like our lives, we are enveloped in darkness. We blindly grasp at corners trying to find our way to escape through this cycle of birth and death. We need someone to open our eyes, shine an inner light and allow us to see what is in front of us, a palace within. In this example's case, it was a hotel employee. In order to find our true home, we

need a Perfect Living Master to help us shine that light within us and realize that our true destination has been within us all along. Master comes to us in many forms to guide us. I had show organizers tell me about the bus that would go near my hotel. I found an interpreter to tell me about the subway. He sent me a student, that turned out to be working at that very same hotel, to take me from the bottom to the top. We should never think we are alone if we have a Perfect Living Master, He is there with us from beginning to end and through out it all.

Paltu explains that the Master gives his disciples Nam (Divine Melody), which makes them fearless and immune to all harm; no one can injure even a hair on their head. He says:

*The Melody of the Word makes the seeker
indifferent to the crown and turns him into
a fakeer.*
*The Word of God turns the king into a fakeer
and attaches him to the Lord.*
*The sweet Melody of the Word makes the
world insipid and tasteless.*
*He who is struck by the Word, how can one
bring him back to worldly life?*
*His object is achieved and he cares not for
the world.*
*Wounded he wanders from place to place,
grievously injured by the Word.*
He dies while living, but resurrects eternally
*O Paltu. he whose heart is pierced by the
arrow of Nam (Divine Melody)*
*Grows indifferent to the crown and becomes a
fakeer.⁹*

Nam (Divine Melody), or the Name, gives life to all creatures. Moreover, it nourishes, develops, perfects, and protects them. One can only receive Nam from his Master. Paltu exclaims excitedly,

“I have been transformed from a sinner into a saint, rescued from the pains and sufferings of the passions, taken out of the clutches of desire and consequent transmigration, and brought to the feet of the Lord through His Nam (Divine Melody). Therefore, let us worship the Nam (Divine Melody) of the Lord. As oil becomes perfume when mixed with sand, so have I become fragrant by the fragrance of Nam (Divine Melody). He who does not worship the Nam (Divine Melody) is the lowest of the low, unworthy to be called a human being. He should have died at birth.”¹⁰

Nam (Divine Melody) is the one and only power which can take over the mind and establish control over the passions. Baba Jaimal Singh (A Perfect master) confirms this:

“If you listen for ten minutes or five minutes or four minutes or two minutes or even one minute to this Nam (Divine Melody) or Nam (Divine Melody), with love and devotion, millions of sins will be washed away and obstacles removed.”¹¹

Paltu says:

*There is no salvation without Nam (Divine Melody),
no Nam (Divine Melody) without a Master,
and neither is possible without the grace of God.¹²*

The Master is more than willing to give the gift of Nam (Divine Melody), but few are willing to receive it. In truth, people want worldly treasures, not spiritual wealth.

Perfect Masters advise their disciples to die while living. They say that one who dies this death awakens to everlasting bliss, and avoids the cycle of birth and death. Through daily meditation, one's mind begins getting

absorbed and is eventually pulled from within. By the grace of the Master, the Nam (Divine Melody) and Light soon follow. Paltu describes what happens at this time:

*The Melody of the Word pierced him like an
arrow and Paltu died that very moment.
Paltu died the very moment he set his foot on
the battlefield.
His head was the first to go and then he
fought with his trunk.
Wounded in every pore of the body, his
entrails came out and trailed along the field.
The beholders, stricken with awe,
wondered at the fierce battle Paltu fought.
It was, indeed, the Master who shot him
right in the heart with an arrow.
The arrow went whizzing like a whirlwind
and piercing his heart went deep within.
Words are easy as the wind, the number of those
who merely preach is legion.
But Paltu gave away his life the moment
the Melody of the Word pierced
him like an arrow.¹³*

Often, seekers begin to wonder why one can not simply follow the instructions given in the many holy books and find God this way. However, the books themselves tell us that without the guidance of a Perfect Master, we cannot achieve success on the spiritual path. Paltu recites from his own personal experience that when he practiced the traditional methods of worship, he was unsuccessful in seeing the Lord. However, when he found his Perfect Master and followed his method of meditation, he was finally able to see the Lord within. He says:

I sought Him for a long time... I, then,

*repeated the holy Nam, undertook penances
and counted endlessly the beads of rosary.
I also looked for Him in the six systems of
Hindu philosophy and scriptures. None of
these devices could reveal to me the Secret.
Not till I put myself under the charge of my
Master and followed his instructions, could I
attain the Lord.¹⁴*

Since God is not a material object, he cannot be found in the material world. It is only from within ourselves that we can merge with the Lord, and this is accomplished only with the aid of a Perfect Master.

When a Perfect Master initiates us, he does not simply give us some words to be repeated, but essentially joins our soul with the Nam (Divine Melody). Over time, the seed of the true Name, which the Master has sown in the disciple, sprouts and becomes a full-grown tree, bearing the fruit of supreme insight and the final union of his soul with the Lord. That seed of ‘Nam (Divine Melody)’ can not be destroyed by any power, and its effect can not be destroyed by anyone, whether he is in heaven or on earth. Soami Ji says:

*When once hath a Saint put the seed of Shabd in the soil of one's being,
Who is so powerful as to burn that seed?
In course of time doth that seed sprout forth;
Whenever saints come into the world,
The man with the seed ever remaineth with them.
They water the little plant
(by their spiritual discourses, etc.),
And into a big tree doth that plant
of devotion grow up,
Bearing sweet and delicious fruit
(of transcendent bliss and knowledge),
Which by his Master's grace doth the man enjoy.¹⁵*

When a Perfect Master has willingly bestowed Nam (Divine Melody) on a person, no power whatsoever can obliterate the power of that Nam.

The Master gives man nothing directly from Himself. However, in a deeper sense, the role of the Master is vital. If a great treasure is hidden in the house of a man who doesn't realize it, that man will technically remain a poor person. However, if someone were to come along and tell him not only where the treasure is lying but exactly how to get it, that someone has in essence turned the poor man into a king. This is the role played by the Master for his disciple. Since the wealth of the Word is already within man, the Master simply provides his expertise and guidance. Although it seems here that the Master provides little to the disciple, in truth, he gives him everything.

The Master can help us get rid of all of the karmas we have accumulated both in this life and in past lives. The Lord has sent the Master to help souls who are miserable in this creation and yearn to go back to Him. These souls have been marked by the Lord and it is the goal of the Master to put these souls on the right path and lead them back to Him. The Master can only accomplish his work 'while it is day', meaning while he is in his body. It is said in the Bible:

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.¹⁶

Here, Christ himself indicates that we must go to a living Master, for he is the Light of the world only as long as he is in the world. In order for the disciple to be accepted by the Master, both the seeker and the Master must be in the human body. Once the disciple has been put on the path, it makes no difference whether or not the Master or seeker is within the body. For the disciple, the Master who initiated him never dies; moreover, the disciple's spiritual progress continues whether the Master is in this world or the next.

Only through a living Master can we go back to the Lord. The Lord sends each Master into the world at an appointed time to help particular souls on their spiritual path to God-realization. Each Master is the Light of the world just as long as he is in the world. If we could now go to the Lord through Christ, who has long left the world, then there would never have been a need for any living Master to come into this world in the first place. However, we cannot contact him directly because the Lord himself has intended that we go back to Him only through a living Master.

One must seek a Master of one's own time and surrender to him completely. Only through his grace can one's inner eye be opened and the inner light be seen. The Master is the ladder whereby one can climb to the Immortal Abode. Dariya Sahib, a Perfect Master, explains the necessity of a Perfect Living Master:

*One must accept a living Master;
He is the authentic messenger of the Lord.
Seeing this authentic messenger,
Yama flees very far away.¹⁷*

*Delusion is destroyed by the true Sound,
If a perfect Master is obtained.
No one can go to the other shore without a Perfect Master;
The world is rotating in delusion.¹⁸*

Guru Ravidas (a Perfect Master) says that the Master is the only one who can help us achieve union with God. Only the Master can teach us the way back to our True Home and wash away all of our sins. He connects us with the Nam (Divine Melody) which resides within us.

*If the blind findeth the Master,
The blindness of the disciple is removed.
Without the eye of wisdom bestowed by the Master,
O Ravidas,
How can the snare of delusion be destroyed?*

*At the sight of the flame of delusion,
Men rush like moths.
Without the wisdom imparted by the Master,
No one escapes, O Ravidas.¹⁹*

The moment at which one comes in contact with a Perfect Master is indeed a blessed one. The place in which the Master sits and walks is sanctified. He comes to this world on a mission of mercy, rescuing all of the souls with whom he comes in contact.

It is natural for the human mind to indulge in sense pleasures, and it is therefore constantly restless until it finds something superior. It is only when the mind takes refuge in the Master and follows his instructions that it withdraws its attention from the outside world. This is when the mind witnesses radiant light within and tastes the Divine Nectar of Nam (Divine Melody). These things give the mind a feeling of peace at which time it

becomes completely controlled. Many sinners have thus been saved through love and devotion to the Lord's Name.

Those who are initiated by a Perfect Master fortunately receive his grace and companionship. Eventually, the disciple becomes confident that God pervades everything and nothing exists without him. The disciple becomes increasingly detached from the world and is instead absorbed with thoughts of love for God. Sultan Bahu (a Perfect Master) wrote:

*My Master has planted in my heart
the jasmine of Allah's Name.
Both my denial that the Creation is real
and my embracing of God, the only reality,
have nourished the seedling, down to its core..²⁰*

Aside from spiritual development, the Perfect Master takes care of his disciple's worldly life. Bahu says that the state in which the disciple lives is determined by the will of the Master, for he knows what is the best for the disciple. He always keeps the disciple in his thoughts and takes care of his interests and well-being. In fact, the Master himself guides the understanding of the disciple. Eventually, he transforms the disciple into his own form.

Even the hardships that a disciple undergoes are according to the will of his Master and are in the best interests of the disciple. Related to this is the example of the potter who slaps his pot in order to remove its defects and give it a proper shape. However, even as the potter beats the outside of the pot, he supports it with his other hand on the inside. Similarly just as a tailor

cuts cloth to make a garment, a carpenter cuts wood to proper dimensions, a goldsmith beats gold in making an ornament, a blacksmith melts iron to give it proper form, and a sculptor carves stone to make a beautiful statue, so too does a Master, with the well-being of disciple in mind, mould him into a pure form to make him worthy of union with God.

Mira writes a poem in which she is determined to remain in the company of Saints. She has exchanged wealth, reputation, and worldly comforts for the gift of Divine Love. Her mind is at all times absorbed in meditation and she longs to rest at the feet of her beloved Master. She is even ready to lay down her life for this.

*Let people try to restrain me,
O friend, I will not be stopped.
I will remain in the Saints' company
And gain the bliss of the Lord's love.*

*I will not bother with the world;
If all my wealth goes, let it go;
Even if my head be severed
I will not complain.
My mind is absorbed in simran;
I meet all censure with cheer.
Mira's Lord, Thou everlasting one,
Grant me the shelter
Of my Master's feet.²¹*

The Perfect Master always comes into this world to tell us our real purpose in life, which is to go back to our true Home with the Lord. However, only a select few actually listen to and follow his teachings. The

rest of the world is not interested in gaining any spiritual benefits. The following story illustrates this:

“Once upon a time there was a foolish merchant. He loaded a sack of wheat on one side of his horse and balanced it with a sack of sand on the other side, so that the horse would not feel any discomfort.

A poor man, watching him loading the horse, asked him, ‘Sir, may I ask you what you are doing?’ The merchant replied, ‘On one side I have put wheat, and on the other, sand, to balance the load.’

‘Would it not be better,’ asked the passerby, ‘if you divided the sack of wheat into two equal parts and put one on each side?’

‘...replied the horseman testily- ‘Keep your fancy theories to yourself, lest I too become a poor man like you.’”²²

In this example, we humans are like the foolish merchant, as we too are unwilling to take the advice of others, no matter how much it may benefit us.

The Perfect Masters not only play a vital role in connecting our soul with the Nam (Divine Melody), but they also improve our lifestyle. After receiving initiation from the Master, we have a firm belief that we reap whatever we sow. We look down upon cheating, lying, stealing, or any other bad habits because we know that the Lord resides within us and watches our every action. When in the company of a Perfect Master, we are really impressed with his character and dealings. Having him as a role model, we begin to change our character to reflect his. The following story shows how Kabir Sahib changed the life of a man who originally had no morals.

Once, during the rainy season, a group of holy men came to Kabir Sahib’s house. There was not a scrap of bread in the house, nor did Kabir have even one coin in his pocket. Kabir) was a weaver by trade and had been unable to sell any of his cloth because it was the monsoon season. He asked

his wife, Mai Loi, if she could buy some provisions on credit, as they could always clear the debt later.

But the difficulty was, who would give credit to a poor weaver without a steady income? Mai Loi went from grocer to grocer without any luck. In the end, one grocer did agree to give her rations on credit but, not knowing who she was, he put the condition that she spend the night with him. Mai Loi was upset by his lecherous intentions but did not say anything. She brought the rations home and told Kabir about the deal that the merchant had proposed.

That night Kabir reminded Mai Loi about her promise to the merchant. He consoled her by saying that everything would be fine. As she was ready to leave for the grocer's place, he told her, 'It is raining and the path is full of puddles. Wrap a blanket around yourself and I shall carry you on my shoulders.'

The house was soon reached and Mai Loi went inside, while Kabir waited for her outside the door. Delighted to see her and unable to believe his good fortune, the grocer nevertheless noticed that Mai Loi's slippers, despite the rain, had no mud on them and nor were they wet. 'How is it that you walked through the muddy street,' he asked, 'and yet there is not a trace of mud on your slippers?'

'There is nothing to wonder at,' she replied. 'My husband, Kabir Sahib, carried me here on his back, and is now waiting for me outside the door.' On hearing the name of the great Saint spoken, the grocer was suddenly overcome with shame. Going to the door, he begged Kabir to come inside and dry himself. Then, falling to his knees, he begged both Kabir and Mai Loi to grant him pardon.

'Rise up, my good friend,' said Kabir. 'It is a rare man indeed who does not go astray.' Kabir and his wife took their leave, and the grocer sat in his corner far into the night, pondering on what had happened. In the end, he came to the conclusion that there was only one good path to follow in this world, the path of discipleship. In the morning he sought out Kabir and became one of his most devoted disciples.²³

The company of Perfect Masters is essential in increasing our love and devotion for the Lord and in bringing about self-purification. Dadu, a Perfect Master, strongly urges one to keep the company of Masters and avoid the company of evil people. Dadu says:

*In the company of the unholy, a barrier
is created,
And the taste of piety and devotion
disappears.
In the company of the holy, bliss
is generated,
And one is overfilled with joy.
Even by having recourse to ten million
means,
One cannot attain perfection without
the company of a Saint.
Without the true Master, one can never
be purified, O Dadu.²⁴*

The Master's power is not restricted to guidance in this lifetime only. At the moment of death, when all relatives and friends are helpless in rendering any help to the dying man, it is the Master who comes to his rescue. Bulleh Shah (a Perfect Sufi Mystic) explains this:

*Your testing time will surely come,
When all near and dear ones will desert you.
At that time the Sultan of Bullah
Will help you to be ferried across.
Put your mind in spinning. O girl!²⁵*

A disciple experiences a miraculous change as a result of the tremendous amount of spiritual influence that his Master has on him. He becomes an entirely different person after his contact with the Master. Bulleh Shah writes about the change he experienced:

*My Guide taught me a lesson,
 No stranger had admittance there.
 He showed me the beauty of the Absolute Lord.
 And a tumult of unity overwhelmed me!
 Who can now recognize me?
 Now I have become a different person.²⁶*

Different religions have different rituals and practices; however their underlying purpose is similar. The following example clarifies this: an electricity-generating station produces electric power which is used in various ways and in countless institutions. It produces light through bulbs and tubes; it allows us to listen to radio programs and to watch T.V. shows and we use it for cooking and heating. The form and level of each of these uses is different, but the underlying power is the same. So also, it is the same spiritual power operating in the whole world. Not only that, it is the same power that is active in the Lord, the Master, and the soul; although the level at which it operates is different in all three. Using another example, one can see that the water in a drop, wave, and ocean is the same, though it appears in different forms. Similarly, the reality of the Lord, the Master, and the soul is the same. It is for this reason that a drop (the soul), blending with a wave (the Master) can merge in an ocean (the Lord).

The Master is like an engineer who connects a machine with a part that has become detached from it. In reality, the Master connects the separated soul to its source, which is the Lord. He uses the means of the Word to bring about this connection. The entire creation emanates from the Word but while the creation is perishable, the Word is eternal. Once the connection between the soul and the Word has been made, a man is able to

live in this world like a lotus flower, which lives in water but remains dry. One who has been able to attach himself to the Word during his lifetime is a man in the world, but not of it. Furthermore, he is free from all delusion and lives in a state of pure bliss.

The Master comes to this world with many duties. However, his primary role is to connect souls with the audible life stream and thus take them out of this world to their True Home with God. The Master also teaches the way of healthy moral living to his disciples. It is he alone who can guide the soul within. Without him, the soul wanders around aimlessly in this world. Without the Master's help, a soul cannot gain salvation. A disciple may rise a little and gain the first, maybe even second region on the journey upwards, but is halted here because only a Master can show him how to obtain progress beyond that. The Master's wisdom and personal help are necessary if one wants to advance on the spiritual path.

The Perfect Master is the supreme example for all mankind to follow in terms of character, nobility, and spirituality. He is the ideal man and the perfect example of character and conduct. The Master is not only a great spiritual light, but is also a perfect being. Thus, in taking his company, disciples automatically alter their lifestyles to mirror his, and slowly, they develop good habits while eliminating negative ones.

The Master brings light and love into the world so that all men, not only his disciples, can benefit. There is not a living being in the entire world who does not receive benefit from the Master. The Master is the light of the

world and he increases the light and love in the whole world so that each individual may receive some advantage.

Masters do not come into this world for the purpose of performing miracles. While miracles do sometimes occur, they are not the goal of the Masters. The real miracle that the Masters perform is giving us initiation, which is a new birth that helps to unite us with the Supreme Being. Without this, we would never be able to escape from the cycle of birth and death, nor would we ever reach the Kingdom of God.

No man can go back to the Lord unless he seeks the help of a Perfect Living Master who has himself come from the Father. Even Christ could not go back to the Lord until he had been initiated by John the Baptist, who came from the Father. Even a Master needs a Master before he can become a Master. Everyone who wants to go back to the Father needs a living Master. If we could go back solely through our own efforts, there would never have been a need for Jesus Christ or any other redeemers to come into this world. Therefore, unless we seek initiation from a Master who has been sent by the Father, we cannot go back to Him. This is a Divine Law, taught by all Perfect Masters.

Garibdas (a Perfect Master) was born in District Rohtak and conducted discourses there. He wrote 10,000 devotional songs. On the topic of the role of the Perfect Master, he said the following:

*I found a Master who is free from all bondage and
anxiety.
He is the Perfect Man, the Supreme soul;*

*And in every particle of him there is the light of
the sun and the moon.
I found a Master who opened the impenetrable
cupboard [of the body]
Leading to the Spiritual Home.
He resides in the Region Inaccessible
And carries me across the Valley Impassable.²⁷*

The following quotes are taken from successive Perfect Living Masters, and highlight the necessity of the Perfect Master in this world:

*Without a contemporary Master
You cannot practice devotion.* - Soami Ji

*One will not be saved by any
but the living Master.* -Baba Jaimal Singh

*Out of compassion, grace and mercy does He
take the human form and comes down to this world
as a Teacher of Master...All races and countries can
learn from Him.* -Maharaj Jagat Singh

*God is Infinite and cannot be easily approached
in His Infinite and Universal form; But He is
localized, as it were, and centered in His saints and
devotees.²⁸* -Maharaj Charan Singh

We should depend only on our Master for whatever we need and never accept favors or help from any other being. All of our love and devotion should be to our Master. He is everything for us; our protector who controls and watches over our entire life and destiny. Our Master looks after our well-being in every walk of life; in the external world as well as in the spiritual realms. Whatever we need, we can get from him and whatever is to be done is done by him.

The Perfect Master is the one from whom we should seek all of our desires. Just as the child cries to its mother for whatever it wants; we too should ask our Master, who is our real parent, for whatever we want. However, we must keep in mind that we will not necessarily get all we ask for. Just as a mother will not give her child poison no matter how much he begs for it, the Master will not give us things which are morally detrimental for us.

The sole purpose of the Master in coming into this world is to reunite us with the Lord. In order to do this, he has to travel all over the world to find the marked souls whom he is responsible for. These marked souls are then introduced to Satsang (spiritual discourse) so they can understand and learn their true purpose in life. The Master satisfies all of our questions and feeds our intellect. After providing the disciple with the necessary knowledge, the Master proceeds by initiating him. At the time of initiation, the Master teaches in detail the techniques and secrets of the spiritual path. Overall, the Master does not just take care of us spiritually, but looks after our total well being in this pain-infested physical world.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Perfect Masters always have been and always will be coming to this world. No matter what time, religion, or country they are born in, they always have the same message to deliver and the same spiritual truth to interpret. The delivery of this message may differ among different Masters, the times they live in, the language they use, and the audience to whom this truth is delivered. Despite these differences, the spiritual teachings of the Perfect Masters are ultimately the same for all seekers.

The Perfect Masters are indistinguishable from the Lord. The question arises in one's mind as to how we may know whether or not we are following the right master since there are so many false Masters in this world. In the beginning, we should just consider him a teacher or a guide. When we remain in his company, we will slowly begin to realize what he truly is. It is not until we go inside that we will realize what he can do for us. At first, we should simply take him as a friend who has put us on the path to God. Even if a seeker spends his entire life searching for a Perfect Master, this is time gained, not lost. It allows one to build a strong foundation until he finds a Perfect Master. We should never take on a Master blindly, without first doing our research. We must satisfy our intellect before we can progress on the path.

Some people, when trying to find a Perfect Master, look for distinctions. They look for someone who dresses, lives, eats, and sleeps differently from the rest of society. However, the Perfect Masters always live simple moral lives and don't believe in outward displays of greatness. The way to set them apart from the phony teachers is to listen carefully to their teachings. We will find that they preach about the inner experience as opposed to how one should live outwardly. They don't preach by merely reading scriptures and relaying back to the disciples what the scriptures say. They speak from their own personal experiences.

Even though disciples tend to deny the fact that their own Master ever needed a Master himself, they believe this only out of respect for their Master. They think that their own Master was so great that he never needed a teacher. Moreover, they feel as though their Master will not be considered as great if they admit that he had a teacher. In reality, all Perfect Masters need teachers. Before they become Masters themselves, they are devoted disciples.

The Masters come into this world with a human form so that they may unite souls with the Ultimate Reality. They alone hold the key to the gate of the prison house in which we live, and they alone can open this gate and lead us back to our True Home.

The role of the Perfect Master, our teacher, brings a personal example to mind. In India, we used to make fresh butter every week out of yogurt through churning. When I came to Canada, I often attempted to make butter, however, could not do so. I followed the same procedure that I underwent in

India, but was not fruitful. As a result, I consulted many friends and family members, and even went as far as reading cooking books, but still could not make butter. Ultimately, I was told by a friend, who would make fresh butter every week in Canada that the problem I was having was because of the type of yogurt I was using. Only after I switched to a richer yogurt (with 50% cream) was I able to successfully churn butter. This made me realize that even small tasks require experienced people to teach their methods to us inexperienced beings. Following this, it is obvious that the much more arduous spiritual task also requires an experienced person- the Perfect Master- to show us the way.

To fulfill this purpose, the Masters first help us to understand the ultimate goal of our life. It is in human nature to seek happiness and try to escape pain. To achieve this happiness, we search for more comforts, possessions, and sense pleasures. However, no matter how many things we possess or how much pleasure we receive, we remain unhappy. This is because the comforts and pleasures we run after in this world are only temporary. To have permanent happiness, we must attach ourselves to something which is permanent. We feel as though we lack something in life. This emptiness we feel is the desire for our soul to merge back with the Supreme Being. As long as the two are separated, one can never be entirely at peace.

All Perfect Masters tell us that God is not to be found outside. Although God is omnipresent and exists everywhere, He can only be found within each one of us and not outside in the physical world. Performing external rites and rituals will never lead us to Him. The Perfect Masters do not give vain hopes of salvation after death. The path of the Masters is a 'cash

transaction' and not an account of the future. God-realization and salvation is to be attained in this very life, not after the time of death. It is vital that we experience the Lord within ourselves through meditation during this lifetime.

The teachings of the Masters are simple, practical, and common for all. They do not ask us to leave our home and family and live alone in jungles or mountains. They simply ask us to carry on with our everyday duties, but at the same time fulfill our spiritual responsibilities.

Perfect Masters come to teach us the Truth and to untangle us from the outward rituals of the material world. They connect people with the True Nam (Divine Melody) of God and give them the secret of going within. This True Nam (Divine Melody) of God cannot be written, read, or spoken. All holy books and scriptures are filled with praises for the Lord; however, God is to be found within our human body.

There are millions of spiritual scriptures written by the Perfect Masters of the past. However, just by reading these scriptures, we cannot reach the ultimate goal. For example, even for my Ph. D. degree, I needed the aid of many teachers. Although I consulted many books written by scholars and past Masters, I still would have been unsuccessful with my project if it had not been for the guidance I received from my presently living teachers. For whatever we learn in this world, we always need a teacher, or someone who has knowledge of the subject at hand. No doubt, the path to God-realization is a million times more complicated, which means the need for a living teacher with practical experience is that much more.

If one follows the instructions of the Perfect Master exactly, then he will get to see the inner light and hear the inner sound. This is the light which directs us on the spiritual journey, while the sound is what helps us establish which direction our home is in. So it is the combination of both the light and sound which helps us find our way back home. Similarly, we are lost from our True Home with the Lord, and He has kept the sound and light in each one of us to guide us back to Him.

All Perfect Masters are the same. They are all waves of the same ocean. Our real Master is that Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam or Divine Melody) which exists at the eye center. Masters take on the form of a human body merely to guide us on our spiritual journeys. The Masters are composed of nothing but Shabd, Power, and Nam. All Masters are one and there is no difference between them. When we follow the techniques given to us by the Master at the time of initiation, we will see his Radiant Form within ourselves.

Just to give another example of necessity of an expert in any field, this book was first written to be published in India. Therefore, certain common native words had been used throughout. When it was proposed to be published in North America, I felt it necessary to translate these words into English to make the book understandable to the reader. Having little knowledge of computers, I thought I would need to go through the entire manuscript and translate the words. However, one of my friends, being familiar with computers, guided me to use the 'Find and Replace' function in the computer to make my task much easier. Similarly, a Spritual Master can

guide us in finding the functions hidden within us which can also make our journey into the Spiritual world much easier.

Every soul which has the seed of initiation ultimately merges back into the Lord through the Master. Once this seed is sown within a disciple, it can never be destroyed. Similarly, it is only a matter of time until we merge back into the Lord; however, we cannot assume that because we have been given the gift of initiation, we do not need to make any efforts. It is both our personal effort and the grace of the Master, which allow us to cross the spiritual path and reunite with the Lord.

After discussing the many aspects of the Perfect Masters, it is an obvious conclusion that without meeting a Perfect Master, this human life of ours is gone to waste and we do not accomplish the mission which was handed to us. This human birth gives us an opportunity to wash away the millions of sins that we have accumulated and to cleanse our souls. Real happiness is what we all want. Now that we know that this happiness lies in spiritual bliss, we must begin our journey to attain this. By finding a Perfect Master and following his teachings and techniques, we can get back to our True Home where the Lord, our Father, awaits us.

GLOSSARY OF ORIENTAL TERMS

Adi Granth	Holy scripture, originally compiled by Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Sikh Guru
Baba Jaimal Singh	(1839-1903) A Perfect Master of Radha Soami
Bhakti	Devotion; meditation
Bulleh Shah	(1680-1758) A Perfect Sayyad (Muslim) Master
Dadu Dyal	(1544-1603) A 16 th century Perfect Master of Rajasthan (Northern India)
Dariya Sahib	(1674-1780) A Perfect Master of Bihar, India
Faqir	Arabic term for saint or Master
Farid	(1181-1265) A Muslim saint of Multan in current Pakistan; also known as Baba Farid or Sheikh Farid
Gharib Das	A highly evolved disciple of Soami Ji born in Punjab
Guru	One who gives light; spiritual teacher
Guru Amar Das	(1479-1574) Third Master of Sikh Religion
Guru Arjan Dev	(1563-1606) Fifth Master of Sikh Religion; compiled the Holy Book (Guru Granth Sahib)
Guru Nanak	(1469-1539) Founder and first Master of Sikh Religion
Guru Ravi Das	(1414-1532) North Indian Saint; by birth he was a cobbler in Banaras, India

Hazrat Mohammed	Prophet and founder of Islam, the Muslim religion
Kabir Sahib	(1398-1518) A Perfect Master who lived in Benares, India; a low-cast weaver by birth
Karma	The law of action and reaction; the fruit of past thoughts, words, and deeds
Krishna	Name of God in Hindu religion; known as Lord Krishna.
Maharaj Charan Singh	A Perfect Master of Radha Soami
Maharaj Jagat Singh	A Perfect Master of Radha Soami
Mai Loi	Wife of Kabir Sahib (a Perfect Master)
Maulana Rum	A well-known saint of Persia; known as Rumi
Maya	Illusion or delusion; all that is not real
Mirabai	(1498-1563) A Rajput Princess and a devotee of Lord Krishna until she met her Guru Ravi Das; her poetry is still sung throughout India
Murshid	A Sufi term for Perfect Master
Nam Dev	(1270-1350) A Perfect Master from Maharashtra, India
Paltu	(1710-1780) A Perfect Master in Ayodhya, a capital city of Lord Rama
Radha Soami	Lord of the Soul; another name of God
Rama	Name of God in Hindu Religion; also known as Lord Rama or Ram

Sant Mat	Teachings of the Saints
Satsang	Association of individuals who partake in spiritual discourses
Soami Ji	(1818-1878) Perfect Master of Radha Soami Path
Sukhdev	Son of Rishi Ved Vyas; known to have been spiritually enlightened while in his mother's womb
Sultan Bahu	(1680-1758) A Perfect Master of current Pakistan; known as Bahu or Hazrat Sultan Bahu
Tukaram	(1577-1650) A prominent Marathi Saint and religious poet in India
Tulsi Sahib	(1764-1848) A Perfect Saint of Hathras, near Agra, India; He wrote two books, <i>Ghat Ramayan</i> and <i>Ratan Sagar</i>

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER ONE: Life's ultimate goal

1. John, 1:1-4
2. Paltu Sahib Ki Bani, Pt. III, Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody)) (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody)) 100
3. Kabir (a Perfect Master) (a Perfect Master) Sakhi Sangreh, p. 106
4. Adi Granth, p. 754
5. Luke, 17:21
6. Paltu Sahib Ki Bani, Pt. I, Poem 169
7. Sar Bachan, Chhand Band, p. 152
8. Sant Nam (Divine Melody)dev Ki Hindi Padavali, Poem 228
9. John, 6:38
10. Sar Bachan, 19:13

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1. Sar Bachan, 8:1
2. Adi Granth, M. 5, p. 495
3. Adi Granth, M. 3, p. 1046
4. John, 14:6-7
5. Tales of the Mystic East, p.16
6. Philosophy of the Masters, Series V, p. 93
7. Paltu Sahib Ki Bani, Pt. I, Poem 2
8. Paltu Sahib Ki Bani, Pt. I, Poem 14
9. Paltu Sahib Ki Bani, Pt. I, Poem 6
10. Sar Bachan, 23:1
11. Sar Bachan, 18:6
12. Sar Bachan, 8:1
13. Bhagvad Gita, Chapter 4, Verse 34
14. Katha Upanishad (a holy Hindu scripture), Chapter 1, Pt. II
15. Philosophy of the Masters, Volume V, p. 98
16. Philosophy of the Masters, Volume V, p. 99

17. Tulsi Sahib (a Perfect Master): Saint of Hathras, Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody)) (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody))avali, Pt. I, p. 47
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41. Adi Granth, M.5
42. Adi Granth, M.1
43. Sar Bachan, 18:12
44. Paltu Sahib Ki Bani, Pt. I, Poem 6

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 9. Paltu Sahib Ki Bani, Pt. I, Poem 88
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 14. Paltu Sahib Ki Bani, Pt. III, Shabd (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody)) (Word or Logos or Nam (Divine Melody)) 100
 15. Sar Bachan, 38:7
 16. Bible, 9:5
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26. Bulleh Shah (a Perfect Sufi Mystic), p. 110
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Note: RSSB – Radha Soami (Lord) Satsang Beas

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Dr. Narinder Ravi Goyal was born in Barnala, India in 1954. He completed his B.A. with Honors in Political Science at the S.D. College in Barnala. He then joined the Punjabi University in Patiala, where he completed his Masters degree in Philosophy, Master of Literature degree in Religious Studies and his Ph.D. degree in Comparative Religion. He taught in Government Colleges in Punjab like Government College for Women in Ludhiana, Government College for Women in Amritsar, Government College in Mukhsar, and Government College in Kotkapura until 1987. After this, he came with his wife and two young daughters to Toronto, Canada, where he became a permanent citizen and opened up various furniture stores in the GTA. At the age of 53, he retired, and has begun writing books, religious and political newspaper articles in Canada. His current goal is to produce two Punjabi books Kathputli (puppet) and Seva & Simran.