

The world today is pulled apart by religious strife: people massacre one another, societies fight bitterly over dissenting belief systems and nations are at war.

Yet in direct contrast to this, people have for centuries believed that religious faith is the moral guiding light by which they can strive to live their lives.

How can man reconcile these two? Or is it simply that religion – and its purpose in our lives – has reached its expiration date?

In this collection of talks, Osho outlines a crucially different approach:

“Religion is fundamentally something that happens in aloneness. It is what a man does in his aloneness with himself.”

Osho



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in Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Punjab, and Ludhiana, India



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Preface

The world needs a great revolution where each individual finds his religion within himself. The moment religions become organized, they become dangerous; they become really politics with a false face of religion. That's why all the religions of the world go on trying to convert more and more people to their religion. It is the politics of numbers; whoever has the greater number will be more powerful.

But nobody seems to be interested in bringing millions of individuals to their own selves. My work here consists of taking you out of any kind of organized effort – because truth can never be organized. You have to go alone on the pilgrimage, because the pilgrimage is going to be inside. You cannot take anybody with you. You have to drop everything that you have learned from others because all those prejudices will distort your vision – you will not be able to see the naked reality of your being. The naked reality of your being is the only hope of finding God. God is your naked reality, undecorated, without any adjective.

It is not confined by your body, not confined by your birth, not confined by your color, not confined by your sex, not confined by your country. It is simply not confined by anything. And it is available, so close: just one step inside and you have arrived. You have been told for thousands of years that the journey to God is very long. The journey is not long, God is not far away. God is in your breath, God is in your heartbeat; God is in your blood, in your bones, in your marrow – just a single step of closing your eyes and entering within yourself.

Osho

The Hidden Splendor

CHAPTER 1

science, religion, and art

My beloved ones.

Science is the search for truth, religion is the experience of truth, and art is the expression of truth. Science comes first; it is the first step. If science wants, it can exist without religion for a long time because its sole aim is to seek out the truth.

I have said that science can live for a long time without religion, and until now it *has* lived without religion. And not only has science lived without religion, it has lived in denial of religion. It has been possible for science to live this way because if a path wants to, it can exist without a destination. But as science develops, man starts not only wanting to know the truth, but to be the truth. So science cannot live without religion forever. Every day this becomes more and more clear.

The greatest scientists of this century and the last: Einstein, Max Planck, Eddington – all the great scientists – talked about religion in the last days of their lives. This is very significant. In the coming century, science will become more religious with each passing day because it cannot reach its fulfillment without a destination. A path can exist without a destination, but a path without a destination is meaningless, irrelevant, even absurd, because a path that doesn't

lead anywhere can hardly be called a path at all. A path *has* to accept a destination one day. No path can be meaningful unless it has a goal. Hence in the West, where science has made a deep impact, there is an increasing sense of meaninglessness with each new day.

Science has to become religion. Religion means the desire to be one with the truth, to experience truth. Man cannot be content with just asking about truth; he can only be truly content when he becomes one with the truth. We do not only want to know about love, we want to be in love. We do not only want to know about wealth, we want to be wealthy. We do not only want to know about the truth, we want to experience and be the truth. Knowing is never more than the first step toward being.

So the second step in man's search is religion. Religion can live without art for a very long time if it wants to. Just as I have said science can live without religion if it wants to, so too can religion live without art for a very long time. But when the experience of religion is very deep, what you have known will want to be expressed because what you have become is not enough in itself. What you have become must also be expressed. Not only do we want to know how light is born, we want to become light. And once we have become light, we cannot rest there: we want to spread the light's rays far and wide. When the experience of religiousness is intensely felt, you begin to overflow. When you profoundly experience what it is to be religious, your experience will want to flow from within you and to spread all around. Then art will be born.

If it chooses to, religion can avoid art for a long time – but not forever. When an experience is profound, it demands to be shared. When the clouds are full, they want to pour forth their rain. When the river is flooded, it wants to rush toward the ocean. When love fills your heart, it wants to shower on all those around you. When the seed reaches its final stage, it is ready to break open and sprout.

Therefore, the experience of truth is not the end of the process. Truth must also find its own inevitable expression. And the amazing thing is that when you express whatever truth you have attained through experience, through that very act of expression the truth is multiplied a thousand times. What we give others always comes back to us a thousand times over. Something which we share with others, something which we invite our friends to share with us, always returns to us multiplied many times over.

The experience of truth finally evolves into the expression of truth. Science is the first step of man's journey, religion the second, and art the final one. But this sequence does not occur easily. Historically, the process has been just the opposite. Historically, religion has come first, then art – and science has only come last of all. So I would like to say a few more things about this to you.

A religion that precedes science is bound to be unscientific, superstitious. A religion that precedes science will be closer to blind faith; it cannot be scientific. So the religions that appeared on the earth before the advent of science deeply touched the lives of only a very few people: Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Mahavira, Confucius. But these religions could not be anything more than blind faith in the lives of everyone else. Only when a religion comes in the wake of the proper development of science can it be scientific. This is why there are so many religions in the world, even though there should be only one.

There are many types of disease, but only one type of health. I might fall sick in one way, you might fall sick in another way, and there are thousands of different diseases. One person might be sick with tuberculosis, another with cancer, but when you are healthy you are simply healthy; there are not different names for ways of being healthy. You cannot say what sort of health you are experiencing. You are simply healthy.

In the same way, there can be a thousand types of false religion, but true religion can be only one. False religion is sickness, true religion is health. So there can be only one way of being truly religious. But this was not so in the past because whatever comes before science can only be blind faith, it cannot be scientific.

For the first time on earth, the right prerequisite for religion to arise is happening now. The religion of the future will not be Hindu, will not be Muslim, will not be Jaina, will not be Christian. It will simply be religion. And only when religion permeates mankind will we be free from all the nonsense that happens in the name of religion – not before.

It is not surprising that ordinary people are Hindus or Muslims; that is to be expected. What is surprising is that even seekers of truth are still Hindus, Muslims, Christians, or Jainas. Seekers should be simply religious, without any qualifying adjectives, but even this has not yet been possible. This is surprising, and it is happening because they are affected by the diseases of their society. The limitations and

adjectives which surround society surround the seekers too. The seeker of truth is bound by the same slavery and bondage that holds the rest of society.

Religion already exists. A few people have experienced it deeply in their lives, but there was no way it could begin to touch the lives of the masses until science cleared and prepared the right soil for it. Now science has prepared the soil rightly, and now religion cannot be acceptable if it is unscientific. That is why there is so much difficulty in the world today. Those who live in blind faith think the world is becoming irreligious, but the reality is that the whole world is only trying to free itself from blind belief. And the possibilities for the birth of a new religion are now becoming manifest for the first time ever.

The situation is very strange. Today, contrary to the ideas of society, a man who does not go to the temple, who does not believe in the old scriptures, who does not believe in the old doctrines, will probably be more religious than those who go to the temple, more religious than those who pray and worship. The fact is, in this century no intelligent or thoughtful person is willing to confine himself to the prisons religions have constructed. It is not that people have become irreligious; the only reason for this situation is that now religion is trying to be scientific and to let go of its unscientific currents. And it is succeeding.

If we go back to Buddha's or Krishna's time, we will find it was the most intelligent people who were religious. Today the opposite has happened. If we look at religion today, it is the most unevolved people who seem to be the religious ones. The least educated, the least intelligent, the most backward seem to be the most religious people today. But in the days of Krishna, the most evolved people, the most intelligent people were the most religious ones.

This is an extraordinary phenomenon. Why does a man who is well educated, who can think for himself, appear irreligious today? It is worth considering. We could say today's education is wrong, that the logic man is being taught is at fault, and that is why people are becoming irreligious. But it is not like that at all. Just the opposite is the case. These days, religion is trying to become scientific, is trying to be more logical. And whenever religion tries to be scientific, intelligent, thoughtful people of necessity drop its more prevalent, rigid forms.

Religion can be scientific now because science has grown to maturity. For example, a hundred years ago scientists denied the

very existence of God. But today's scientist cannot deny the existence of God with the same intensity as his predecessors.

Einstein said that when he began his scientific research, he thought everything would be discovered in the near future, or at least before very long – and Einstein is one of those few members of the human race who knew more than most people. But just two or three days before he died, Einstein told one of his friends, "Today, all I can say is that all I *do* know only makes me aware there is so much I don't know, more than that I cannot say. That which remains to be known is so much vaster than the little we already know. We cannot even compare the two."

Before he died, Einstein said, "I am dying as a mystic, not as a scientist. For me, the universe has become increasingly mysterious with each passing day. The more I discovered, the more I found there were still so many other dimensions to be discovered. The more doors I opened, the more I found there were even bigger doors ahead of me. The more pathways I followed, the bigger the highways that stretched in front of me. The more keys I found and the more locks I opened, the bigger were the locks I found still ahead of me."

Eddington wrote in his memoirs: "When I began to think about the universe, I thought it was a thing, an object. But now I can say that the universe looks more and more like a thought – not like a thing at all." If the universe is a thought, science has taken a leap into religion. And if the universe is an infinite mystery, whether we use the word God or not, we are already standing at the very threshold of godliness. And if the mystery of the universe is not solved by our knowing, if the mystery of the universe is not solved by our simply knowing, the time is not far away when we will be able to say it cannot be solved through knowing at all – that it can only be solved by being. Knowing is not enough; being is needed as well. It is not enough that we look at the world from a distance; it has now become necessary to be one with it, to be absorbed in it, to drowned in it and know.

Perhaps there is now only one way to know, and that is to be. Today, science is searching for a way toward religion, and art has not yet made an appearance in the world. I believe art can only truly be born when religion is here on a big enough scale, when it is universal.

What has appeared so far in the name of art? Ninety-nine percent

of what is called art is based on latent sexual desires – ninety-nine percent. Whether poetry, painting, sculpture or music – at present, all that exists in the name of art is nothing more than a way of stimulating our sexual desires. I am saying ninety-nine percent. The epics of Kalidas and Bhavabhuti, the poems of Byron and Shelley – whatever has been created so far in the name of art has been nothing other than a way of stimulating man's senses. The fact is, real art can only be born when religion exists, and religion itself has not yet been truly born.

I have left out one percent. Ninety-nine percent of what is created in the name of art is merely an extension of man's sexual desires. And the remaining one percent? That one percent contains the tiny contribution of those who knew religion and were able to give birth to art as well: Meera's devotional songs for example. Meera's songs are no ordinary songs. Meera's songs arise as an expression of religiousness. She had an inner experience which then expressed itself in her songs. Something was attained, and she shared what she had attained. Generally, people think Meera attained the divine through her singing. This is not so. Meera started singing devotional songs only after she attained the divine. How can anyone attain the divine by singing? The divine is not so cheap that you can simply sing a devotional song and attain it.

No, singing is not Meera's means of attaining the divine. It is the expression of her having attained the divine. It is the fulfillment of her having attained, of her contentment. It is her thanksgiving, not her effort to attain.

Chaitanya dances. He does not dance in order to attain the divine – otherwise all dancers would attain. And there have been many better dancers than Chaitanya in this world, there have been many better singers than Meera. But there is something special about Chaitanya's dancing. It is not agile and graceful so he can attain the divine, it is agile and graceful because he has already attained. The divine has entered him. Now it is not Chaitanya who dances; it is the divine itself dancing. Now his cup is full and is overflowing, and an art born from an overflowing cup has no equal.

Krishna's flute! There have been, and there will be, better flute players than Krishna. There can be no guarantee Krishna would ever win a flute competition. But nothing compares with Krishna's flute playing. As far as playing is concerned, there may be people who

play better than Krishna, but as for Krishna himself, there is no comparison because the place from where these notes arise has no Krishna anymore; there is only the divine. His flute transmits a message: it communicates on the outside what has already happened on the inside, it carries with it the reverberations which have been born within him.

This one percent of art can really be called art. The remaining ninety-nine percent is nothing more than something serving man's desires. And I would also include art which opposes desire in this ninety-nine percent.

It will be a little difficult to understand this. Desire exists in two ways. In one way, desire stands tall, upright. We are all familiar with this type of desire. But sometimes desire stands upside down, in a headstand, and we are not as familiar with this way. When desire does a headstand, we can mistake it for some spiritual quality. No. Desire remains desire. Even standing on its head, it does not become spiritual.

Let me give you an example. I have seen a picture in Harikishan Das's diary: it is a picture of a beautiful young woman. Beside her picture is another picture, of an old woman. The caption beneath the two pictures says something like this: "Youth does not last for long. Remain aware of old age."

I would not call this message spiritual because the thinking is still focused on youth. Youth is condemned only because it does not last for long. But what if it did? What then would happen to these pictures? If not today then tomorrow, science will discover ways to make youth last. Then what will happen to these pictures? And the person to whom we are saying, "Youth does not last for long. Remain aware of old age" may get entangled with another idea: something which does not last for long should be enjoyed as much as possible. Both possibilities are there. What is more, although you are emphasizing youth does not last long, youth remains valuable to you and old age remains undesirable to you.

As far as religiousness is concerned, old age is accepted as valuable too. Old age has its own beauty. Who says old age is not beautiful? Childhood has its own beauty, youth has its own beauty, and old age has its own beauty. For a religious man, it is not only birth that is beautiful; death too has its own beauty. The sun is not only beautiful when it rises in the morning, it is also beautiful when it sets in the evening – and so is a man who becomes old in the right

way. But very few are able to manage this because youth has such a strong hold on most people they do not age in the right way.

If someone grows old in the right way, he will be more beautiful than any young person. True, there is an excitement in being young, there is an outpouring of energy. But the beauty of old age is a serene beauty. The beauty of old age is the beauty of the evening. In the morning, the tensions of life are there, all the troubles of the coming day are just beginning. In the evening, all troubles are subsiding, the night's rest is close at hand.

How can you compare anything with the evening twilight? The birds have begun their journey home, the trees are moving into silence and sleep, the sun is setting, darkness will soon envelop the whole earth. Everything is becoming quiet. Soon everything will, in a sense, dissolve back into existence. Old age is such an evening twilight.

But when we make a picture of youth and old age together and we say, "Beware! Old age is coming!" two things are clear: youth is valuable to us and we are opposed to old age.

I cannot call this a religious picture; it is only perverted passion. It is only passion standing on its head. But this saying does not mean the same thing to someone who is indulging his passions as it does to the person who is opposing them. The person at the mercy of his passions will start running after youth even faster. He will say, "Old age is coming closer, the sun is starting to set; whatever we are hankering after must be done soon!" He will say, "Eat, drink and be merry. Be quick to eat, be quick to drink, be quick to dance, enjoy. Old age is coming ever closer." And the reasoning of the two is similar; their reasoning is not in the least different. Both are reasoning in the same way: "Old age is coming! Death is coming!" No. I would not call these religious pictures.

Very little religious art has been born on this earth. Either there is art which is obsessed with passion, or there is art which is against passion – and the person who is against passion is also obsessed with passion, the person who is the enemy of desire is also afflicted with desire. The person who says pleasure is ephemeral, hence the only thing to do is to leave it behind, is not really asking you to leave pleasure. He is saying pleasure is not worth having because it is only ephemeral.

But if pleasure were eternal, what then? Then you would not have to drop it. That is why they tell you to renounce women on

earth so you can enjoy the *apsaras*, the divine nymphs, in heaven. These are your so-called religious people! Renounce wine on the earth and in the heaven there will be fountains of wine flowing, and you can bathe in them. Avoid women on earth, and then in heaven? – *apsaras* who are never older than sixteen. Get ready!

Would you call a man like this religious? – a man who is telling you to drop your desires on earth because in paradise there are wish-fulfilling trees, under which you can sit and wish for anything you want and all your desires will be fulfilled? It is so hilarious: drop all your desires so you can attain the wish-fulfilling tree.

Is this the attitude of someone who really wants to let go of his desires? – no. To me, such a man seems to be absolutely self-indulgent, the most self-indulgent of all people. Inferior people are content to indulge themselves with the ephemeral, but this so-called religious man is a great renouncer. All he is really saying is that he is leaving the ephemeral because he wants pleasures which are eternal. We renounce beautiful women because we want the beauties of heaven. We renounce the women who are on this earth because they become old. We want the *apsaras* of heaven who never become old. We renounce pleasures which come and go because we want pleasures which will never leave us once they have come. Is such a man spiritual or a hedonist? He is a perfect hedonist. No one can compare with him and his hedonism.

These hedonists have created heaven. They are not religious; they are seducing you. They are saying if you renounce women here, there are better women waiting for you there, in paradise. If you renounce this wealth here, infinite wealth is awaiting you in paradise. Renounce this body and you will receive a more beautiful body, the body of a god.

No. This is not religious thinking; this is desire standing on its head. Hence those who really want to understand should look behind the facade of this kind of thinking and realize it is nothing but our unfulfilled desires making their demands, our suppressed desires making their demands. It is not in any way virtuous, it will not give birth to any spirituality. Spiritual art is born from a spiritual consciousness, and there is no spiritual consciousness without the experience of the ultimate.

So I believe very little spiritual art has come into being on the earth. Science has become a little real, religion is less real than

science, and art has found it very, very difficult to be real at all. Great poets have not yet been born, although sometimes you may get a glimpse of such a poet. In an Upanishad you sometimes get a glimpse of such a poet, in a Gita you sometimes get a glimpse, in a verse of the Bible, in a line of Kabir – but it is only a glimpse. The great epics have yet to be written, the great sculptures have yet to be carved. Sometimes there have been glimpses – at Ajanta or Ellora – but these are only glimpses; the earth is not yet covered with them. What is being done in the name of art is still a sickness, and there are two kinds of sickness. One encourages desire, the other attempts to suppress desire, but both are focused on desire.

If you understand things correctly, art will be the highest peak of your life. You don't have to carve a statue, you don't have to paint, you don't have to play the flute, but your whole life can be creativity. When you walk, there can be poetry in your walking. When Buddha walks on the earth, even the sound of his footsteps has poetry in it. And when Jesus looks at people from the cross, there is poetry in his eyes. He does not have to create a painting – but he can if he wants to.

In Japan, Zen mystics have created many paintings. Nothing compares with their paintings. But they have created them only after experiencing meditation. In China, Taoist mystics have carved so many statues, but only after entering meditation. In those statues, in the paintings of the Zen mystics, in the dances of the Sufi dervishes, in the songs of Kabir and Dadu, in the poetry of Nanak and Raidas, in the flute of Krishna, in the songs of the Upanishads, there are rare glimpses; but the earth has so far been mostly deprived of real art.

There is poetry in silence too. Ultimately, the truth is that when a poem comes to perfection, when a work of art comes to perfection, it is bound to be silent. But when I talk about art, I am not referring to what has so far been accepted as art. What we have so far understood to be art only supports or suppresses human desires: in either case, its focal point has still been on desire. The soul has yet to become the very core of art.

And the soul can only become the core of art when the artist is not in a hurry to give something, to create something. Rather, something must begin to be created through him, to be shared through him without him standing in the way. Art happens when he is so full he has no choice but to share what he has with others. But this needs to

be backed by something solid. After all, we can only offer to the world what we have. How can we give the world what we don't have?

But sometimes a unique experience does occur. You might be reading a poem, and suddenly it feels as though the poet were writing from within the very temple of existence. If by chance you see the same man sitting in a restaurant, there will be a problem. Were those poems really written by this man? You see a painting, and it seems as though the artist has brought a message from some unknown paradise. But when you meet him in person, there is a big problem. Did such a man really create this painting? There seems to be nothing in him which could have created it.

What is his painting, then? It is not a creation, it is merely a composition; and it is important to understand this difference. There is a vast difference between creation and composition. For composition, you don't need to be an artist; you only have to be a technician: you only have to know how to spread colors on a canvas, how to draw lines. You can learn these things in schools and colleges. They will teach you how to spread color and draw lines. But you will only be a technician, not an artist. You will be able to compose anything you want. If someone asks you to paint a picture of a beautiful woman, you will be able to do that. If someone asks you to draw a picture of an ugly woman, you will be able to do that too. If someone asks, you will be able to make a sculpture that is full of desire; and if someone asks, you will be able to make one that is chaste. You will be a technician, not an artist. You will be able to construct whatever you want because you have learned a technique. But it will be a construction and not a work of creativity.

Creativity is a very different matter, and it is possible for a creator to have absolutely no technique at all. I cannot even imagine Krishna learning to play the flute at a school. I cannot imagine Meera learning to dance at some school. I cannot imagine, it seems so very unlikely, that Chaitanya studied devotional singing and how to play the *mridangam* drum.

Chaitanya's whole education was in logic. He studied logic, he was a scholar, an amazing thinker. But one day he exhausted his thinking, one day his logic reached a point from where it could go no further. It was then that Chaitanya threw away his thinking, abandoned logic, and picking up the *mridangam*, began to dance.

It is important to correctly understand the difference between

a technician and an artist. A technician constructs what he wants through thought, while an artist shares from the abundance that has filled his heart. A technician lives through his mind, while an artist lives through his heart and his soul.

This is where the problem arises: technically, a man may be a good poet, but good poetry will not necessarily emanate from him. And someone else may not be a good poet, but good poetry can still be born in him.

Technically, the seers of the Upanishads might not have been the greatest poets. It does not seem they bothered much about meter and rhyme; their minds were not so small as to concern themselves with meter and rhyme. Those who leap into non-calculation, those who leave all calculation behind them, do not bother about such trivial things. But what has come from them is immortal poetry. Their poetry is absolutely special. It is not mere poetry, it is not a mere arrangement of words, a calculated arrangement of meters – it is an outpouring from their hearts. An overflowing has happened from deep within them and found expression. The poetry is in that very outpouring.

Trains run on rails, they follow the iron rails exactly. Rivers don't follow tracks. Rivers are disorderly. Their paths follow the unknown and the unfamiliar; nothing is decided in advance. The Ganges follows no ready-made path, but there is life in the flow of the Ganges. There is no life in the progress of a train.

A technician follows the path set down by tracks that are already there. He uses the paths he has learned. An artist enters the unknown and the unfamiliar; he has no idea what will happen. When a technician makes a painting, he knows how it will turn out. He knows what he intends to do; he has already planned it. But when an artist creates a painting, he is as surprised as everyone else when he completes it. He has no idea what he wants to construct; he simply places himself in the hands of existence. So great artists never say, "I have created something." They say, "Something has been created through me." They remain simply a medium.

So let me say one last thing to you. The person who becomes a medium for existence says, as Kabir has said, "I am merely a hollow bamboo, nothing more. The melodies are not mine. I am a hollow bamboo; the melodies come from the divine. Yes, it is possible the hollow bamboo will fail at some points, the tunes may be distorted, and that will be my fault. But if the melodies are beautiful,

if they make your heart dance, then offer your thanks to existence." As Kabir says: "I am a hollow bamboo."

Art is born the day you become a hollow bamboo. Art is born the day you say, "I am not; only you exist," on the day your fingers do not work in response to your ego, but in response to the divine.

An artist once painted a portrait of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and took it to him. There were about two dozen people with Ramakrishna when the painting arrived. When he saw the painting, Ramakrishna stood up and started to dance. Then he bowed down in front of the portrait, even though it was a portrait of himself.

Some of his disciples who were sitting near him asked, "What are you doing?" Disciples always try to protect their master; they are always afraid he will do something strange. The disciples asked, "What are you doing bowing down in front of your own portrait?"

Ramakrishna replied, "Thank you for reminding me. I forgot it was my own portrait. All I felt was the deepness of the samadhi there: what a picture of samadhi, of ecstasy it is. That is why I began to dance. That is why I bowed down to the painting. It is good you have reminded me; otherwise people would have laughed at me."

Couldn't this man even recognize his own portrait? What was the matter with him? In fact, he no longer had any identity of his own; otherwise he would surely have recognized his own portrait. He was only a hollow bamboo. Even in his own portrait he could only see the divine and bowed down before it. He could not see himself in his own portrait. He saw samadhi, superconsciousness. Ramakrishna even said, "For thousands of years to come, people will bow down to this picture because it is a picture of superconsciousness."

A man said to him, "Please don't say such things. What will people say? You shouldn't say such things about yourself. It sounds very egotistical to say people will bow down to your portrait for thousands of years to come."

Ramakrishna replied, "You have misheard me. I didn't say, 'my picture.' I said, 'this picture.' This picture doesn't have anything to do with me. It is a picture of superconsciousness."

Art is born on the day the artist disappears. As long as the artist is present, art cannot be born. As long as the ego is present, art cannot be born. As long as "I am" is present, there is composition

but not creation. Existence was able to create this vast universe because existence is not there at all. But if we try to make a small painting, a small statue, we are still there completely.

There was once a great sculptor who carved a statue from stone. Everyone who passed by it praised him: "You are amazing!" they said, "You have made such a beautiful statue."

The artist always replied, "I wonder why only stupid people pass by here. I didn't make this statue. I was walking by a big rock and saw the statue was hidden in the stone. It called out to me for help. I simply removed the unnecessary pieces of stone to release the hidden figure. I used my chisel to remove the pieces which were not needed. The statue was hidden inside the rock."

"As I was passing by, the statue called out to me, 'Where are you going? Just chip away the bits that aren't needed.' And now I know the one who called out from within the rock was the same as the one within me who heard that call. Otherwise, how could I have heard it at all? If the speaker within the stone and the listener within me were not one and the same, how could there have been any communication between us, any dialogue? I heard the call because the one hidden in the statue is the one hidden within me. It told me what to do, and I simply chipped off the bits of rock which were not needed."

When the artist dies, the statue is born. When the painter dies, the painting is born. When the poet dies, the poem is born. When the artist ceases to exist, art is born. And the art of ceasing to exist is called meditation. So, let me say a few final things about meditation.

Meditation does not require you to do something. People say, "I am meditating." There is no meditation as long as there is an "I." People say, "I am doing my meditation." If you are "doing" meditation, that is not meditation either.

Have you ever thought about this? When you talk about love as "making love," you are using wrong language. How can love be a doing? Has anyone in the whole world ever experienced love as an act? Leaving actors aside, of course. And if love is an act to you, you are only an actor. It makes no difference how far your stage extends or how permanent the cast of actors is, no difference at all.

Love cannot be done. Love is not something you do. How can you

do it? If I say to you, "Okay, now start loving," what will you do? You will suddenly find that love as a doing is not possible. You will say, "How can I 'do' love?"

Love is not an action, something you make; love is a state of being, it is not done; it simply happens. That is why those who are most in love can only say, "I have been captivated by love." They will not say, "I decided to love."

And the other interesting thing is that when love is present, you are no longer there. As long as you exist, there can be no love. Where are you when you are near your lover? Nowhere. You have been completely erased, there is just a void. When two lovers are about to meet, they often think about all the things they are going to say to each other. They will say this and this, and that as well. But when they come together, they cannot say a word, their talking vanishes. It is like a pitcher of water. When the pitcher is half full, it makes all sorts of noises. When it is full, it is silent. When two lovers meet, they cannot even say "I love you."

You may want to object: "No. Lovers say 'I love you' all the time." But keep this in mind: when someone says "I love you," the moment of love has passed. They are speaking from memory. When there is love, there is no desire to say "I love you," to say "I am." When there is love, the love itself is so much there is no room for "I" and "thou."

Rumi has written a song. In the song, the lover knocks on the door of his beloved. A voice calls out from behind the door: "Who is there?"

The lover replies, "It is I. Can't you recognize my voice?"

The beloved replies, "As long as *you* are there, and your voice is there, and your identity, how can the doors of love open?"

The lover goes away and comes back after many years. Again he knocks on the door and the beloved asks from within, "Who is there?"

This time the lover replies, "I am no more. Only you are."

Rumi says at this response, the doors open.

That is not what I would say. I feel Rumi allowed the doors to open a little too quickly. I would say the beloved replies, "As long as the 'you' exists, the 'I' must still be there."

The "I" must still be hidden deep inside the lover's words because once the "I" disappears on the inside, the "you" disappears on the outside as well. "I" and "thou" are two sides of the same coin. While the "I" remains, "thou" must still exist. That is why when a devotee tells the divine "Only you exist," he is declaring he is still fully present. In his declaring he is no longer, in this very denial, the "I" exists. In order to deny something, the "I" must still be present.

The true devotee does not even say "Only you are" and "I am not." The devotee doesn't say anything at all. He is simply there. He says neither "you" nor "I." He is silent.

This silence is called meditation. If you attain this silence through love, the path is called the path of devotion. If you attain this silence through reasoning, the path is called the path of knowing. If you attain this silence through doing, the path is known as the path of action. The silence itself is called meditation.

The "I" must become silent – the "I" that continues to say "I" asserts itself in every breath. When the eyebrow moves, it says "I." When the foot moves, the foot says "I." Every breath says "I." This "I" must become silent in every possible dimension. The moment must come when even if you search inside yourself, you will not find any "I" present. Then you will wonder, "Where has the 'I' gone? Where is it now?" Then you will have really attained meditation.

But we are such extraordinary people. The worldly man has his "I," but the "I" in so-called religious people is even stronger. A householder has his "I" and he has to have it, but the ego of those whom we call spiritual seekers is absolutely unparalleled.

An ascetic's "I" is far more intense. Have you seen a so-called devotee walking down the road? He has such airs. Just because he has some mark on his forehead, he looks down on those who don't have one as if their places are already booked in hell. "If you don't go to the temple, you will surely rot in hell." That is his firm opinion. Meditation means just one thing: the disappearance of the ego. But instead, his ego becomes more and more intense.

The tricks of the ego are endless. Its ways are subtle. Wherever you try to run away, your "I" will always catch hold of you. Even when you run away from your "I," in subtle ways it will still catch hold of you. In the middle of the marketplace, the so-called religious man who is supposed to have no ego declares he has less ego than

anyone else, that he has no ego at all. This is too much: the ego is declaring he is the most egoless person there is.

The ways of the ego are subtle. When there is wealth, the ego says, "See how wealthy I am!" When the ego renounces wealth, it says, "See how much wealth I have renounced." But the "I" still hides behind each of these statements. It puffs itself up with worldly things. It can puff itself up with divine things too. It can say, "My God is real. Yours is false."

How can God be "your" God? But the ego even wants to own God: "If you burn my temple, I will burn your mosque." That is because the temple is the temple of "your" God. Those who "own" temples go on destroying mosques. Those who "own" mosques go on destroying temples. Christians believe Hindus are lost forever. Hindus believe Christians are lost forever. The followers of the Gita assume those who follow the Koran are lost. Those who follow the Koran believe the followers of the Vedas are lost. What sort of madness is this?

Where there is an "I" there is madness. Behind the "I" there cannot be another madness: "I" itself is madness. The greater the "I" becomes, the greater the madness in us becomes. The smaller the "I" becomes, the more the madness within us disappears. On the day the "I" disappears, you will no longer be mad, and not to be mad is to be religious, is to be in meditation.

So the last thing I would say to you is: try to be aware of the ways of the ego, the "I." Be careful not to fight with it. If you fight, the "I" will say, "Look! I am fighting!" Don't fight. Simply recognize the ways in which the ego reaches out from its various hiding places and takes hold of you. From dawn to dusk, know the ways of the ego. And when it catches hold of you, try to recognize it: it wraps itself around your legs and you start walking filled with pride, it takes a hold of your back and you immediately assume the lotus posture, it takes hold of your head and you draw the mark of your high caste on your forehead, it catches you in the temple and you start walking differently. These are the ways of the "I"; it has taken a firm hold of you.

When you recognize the "I" you will understand Buddha's statement that thieves do not enter a house that has a light on inside. And when the guards are awake, thieves will find it hard even to come close to the house. But if the guards are asleep, if the lamp has gone out, already the house almost belongs to the thieves. In the

same way, when our inner guard is awake, when the witness is watching to see from which places the "I" is trying to take hold of us, the thief, whose name is "I," will stop coming to attack us. When the lamp of consciousness burns within you, when the lamp of silence is lighted, then the thief that is the ego will not be able to enter you.

There is only one thief: the "I" itself; it has stolen the divine from us. It is not a petty thief; it is a great thief. The one who steals the divine from us is no ordinary thief, even though he only needs to breach one wall, your "I."

I was watching a child on the street making soap bubbles with a small piece of hollow bamboo. He dipped the bamboo in the soapy water and then, when he blew through it, the bubbles formed and floated away into the sky. The morning sunrays split into the seven colors of the rainbow as they passed through the bubbles. It was so beautiful! The child was running here and there after the bubbles, but they kept rising up and up into the sky.

I realized something very interesting that day. The soap was lying on the ground, and it wasn't beautiful at all. But when a drop of that same soap was blown up in the sunlight, it was extremely beautiful. Beauty is just like this. In the beginning it is mud, and then when the sunlight shines through it, it is beautiful. In one place this beauty becomes a flower, in another a man; in one place a woman, in another the moon. It is the sunlight shining through them which makes them beautiful.

Beauty happens when the things that are lower rise up. Beauty is when those things which were lying in darkness come into the light. It was a simple soap bubble, but it became so beautiful. The pot was lying on the ground, full of soapy water, and there was nothing beautiful about it. But in the sunlight the bubbles were tremendously beautiful. And the most surprising thing was the way in which the bubbles rose into the sky. They seemed to be rising by themselves.

You may have seen soap bubbles rising into the sky, but have you ever wondered why they move upward? The bubbles move upward for the simple reason that the air coming from the child's mouth is warmer than the air around him. Cold air falls, hot air rises. The cold air makes way for the warm air and the bubble rises even though it wants to fall. Everything wants to fall, but the air is warm. It is thinner than the air around it. The surrounding air is colder and

denser. The surrounding air is more egotistical. The ego of the bubble is lighter and it begins to rise. It has less sense of "I." The air inside is less dense and it begins to move upward.

But there is one more interesting thing: as the bubble rises, it becomes bigger. Anything that rises begins to get bigger. The bubble becomes bigger as the air pressure around it decreases and the soapy water continues to expand. Then the moment comes when the bubble bursts, and we think it has come to an end. So the child starts making another bubble. But has the first bubble really gone? What has gone? Has the air within the bubble gone? No, it is still there. Is the soapy film that contained the bubble's air gone? No, it is still there too. Nothing has gone. Nothing has died. It is simply that the bubble grew so big the soapy film could no longer contain it. The film shattered and the bubble became one with the vast ocean of the infinite.

It is the same with meditation. Each day you grow lighter, less dense. Then one day the so-called "I" bursts like a soap bubble. We do not cease to exist, but the "I" has ceased to exist. It does not really die; that is only a word for what appears to have happened. It is the illusion that has died. The part of vastness contained within our bubble becomes one with the greater vastness.

That day, dance will begin. That day, music will begin. That day, art will begin. That day, creativity is born. That day, an individual's life of suffering comes to an end and the veena of bliss begins to vibrate.

The notes which arise from this veena of bliss are called art. The paintings born from the notes of this bliss are art. The sound of the ankle bells dancing to the melody of this bliss is art. Whatever arises from this bliss – silence, dance, music, song, poetry or literature – is art. Or if nothing arises, just silence, then that too is art.

I have said three things to you. Science is the first stage; the first stage is logic. When logic fails, religion comes as the second stage. Religion is the experiencing. And when experiencing begins to crystallize, the rain begins to shower – that is art.

Art is attained only by those who are in meditation. It is a by-product of meditation. Before knowing meditation, an artist is focused on his passions. But an artist who has come to know meditation, his life, his actions, his creativity will all be offered to the divine and will be full of the divine.

So do not search for art; search for meditation, and let art follow meditation as though it were meditation's shadow. Do not seek art; seek silence, and let art follow later. Art will always follow behind, like a shadow. The man who looks directly for art will be lost in the land of shadows. That is why we say artists – painters, sculptors, poets – all wander in a world of shadows. They are unable to make contact with the real world, the world of truth. They remain lost in the world of dreams, and they simply go on adorning and decorating them. Art has nothing to do with dreams. Art is connected with truth and reality just as much as science and religion are.

The things I have told you may not all be correct, and maybe not even one of them is correct. You do not need to agree with anything I have told you, but it will be enough if you can think a little about it, if you can try to experience it a little for yourself. And then you can let that experience grow and be shared with others.

I am very grateful you have listened to me with such love and silence. And now, to end, I bow down to the divine that dwells in all of you. Please accept my offering of respect.

CHAPTER 2

religion means entering your own consciousness

I would like to begin my talk with a small story...

Once in a small village, on a dark night, the sound of someone shouting loudly was heard coming from one of the huts: "Help me! There is a fire. I am burning, please save me!" The pleading was so intense, so urgent, so filled with pain that the sleeping neighbors woke up and came running with buckets of water. It was dark and, coming close to the hut, they could see there was no sign of fire. It was a small hut, and the yelling was coming from inside: "Fire! There is fire!" although there was no sign of fire. The crowd pushed against the door, but it was already unlocked.

There was no need for locks on the door; it was only the hut of a very poor woman. Inside, the woman was crying loudly and beating her chest. The neighbors were worried: "Where is the fire? We will put it out!"

The woman started laughing and said: "If the fire was outside, you could certainly put it out; but the fire is inside me, and only I will be able to extinguish it. So please go back. And when you reach

your own houses, check there is no fire burning there also. Rather than coming to put out someone else's fire, look in your own house. Perhaps there is also a fire inside you that needs to be extinguished."

It is doubtful the neighbors could have understood what she was trying to say. She was a woman mystic called Rabiya. There has always been a fire burning inside each human being, and all sorts of efforts have been made to extinguish it. But up to now, mankind has not been victorious in putting out the fire. A few people may have extinguished it in themselves, but the rest of humanity is still in pain, suffering from the fire within.

Just as that night people came running with buckets of water to extinguish the fire in the woman, all sorts of effort have been made to put out the fire in people from the outside. The fire is within, and all the efforts to extinguish it have been from the outside.

The efforts to extinguish this fire from the outside have led to the birth of science. But the fire is within, man's suffering is within. His misery, his worry and his anxiety are within, and the efforts to extinguish it are from outside. Science became the search for a way to put out the fire from the outside. It is based in that effort.

Hundreds of years of human effort have led to many peaks of scientific achievement, but the fire still burns within man, where it has always been. Perhaps today our suffering has deepened even more. Once we could hope that scientific research, knowledge, and prosperity would someday quench the fire, but today the search seems to have been fruitless. The hope that was there has gone.

On the outside, science has grown very quickly and great progress has been made. But on the inside, we seem to be even poorer than before. We are just as we have always been. Inside we are as poor as ever. And this poverty has increasingly led to worse and worse outcomes. In the last hundred years, two world wars have happened. And in those two world wars, ten million people were murdered, and ten million is not a small number. When one person dies, we can imagine what he goes through. Ten million people murdered! And after those wars, still preparations have gone on so that perhaps we may wipe out the entire human race. This seems possible.

Just a few days before he died, someone asked Einstein, "Which weapons will be used in the Third World War?"

Einstein said, "I cannot say anything about the third war, but about the fourth I can surely tell you."

The man who had asked was amazed. He said, "If you are unable to say anything about the Third World War, how is it possible you can say something about the fourth?"

Einstein said, "There are two possibilities. The first is the Fourth World War will not happen."

The man asked, "Will people stop fighting?"

Einstein said, "No. The war won't happen because there is no possibility of people surviving the Third World War. People won't be there for the Fourth World War. Secondly, perhaps there may someday be a fourth war, but it won't come until thousands of years later. The weapons that will be used in the Fourth World War will be the same as were used in ancient wars – weapons made of wood and stone."

The fear and possibility has arisen that perhaps the entire human race will disappear. After so much progress of science, if people's inner soul does not evolve, such power in immature hands becomes dangerous.

When Nadirshah was marching with his army from Iran toward India, on the way he met a very knowledgeable man. Nadirshah asked the man, "I hear it is bad to sleep in the afternoon, and also that too much sleep is bad for you. Could you advise me if I should sleep more, or less?"

The old man said: "This will depend on each person. For people like you, it is good to sleep more because if you stay awake, some trouble or other is bound to occur, some problem or other will take place. If bad people sleep, it is good."

In the same way, it is good if power does not come into the hands of an ignorant person. If only ignorance is inside and if you have power, nothing but disaster can happen. Science has given people the power, but inside there is no peace to use the power in a balanced way. Troubles have increased, and the situation is becoming ever more dangerous.

When a man is troubled, is unhappy inside, is worried inside, is suffering and in pain, there can be only one happiness, only one

single happiness for him: to pull others into suffering and pain. His only happiness is to put others in as much sadness as possible. He can't even imagine another way to be happy.

People are unhappy inside and there is a fire burning in their souls, so the power of science is very dangerous. We have so many opportunities to put others in great difficulty. It seems for the last fifty years we have been constantly searching for ways to bring about as much grief and death as possible. This is a great problem here.

Certainly man's mind must be morbid, must be sick and distorted. Otherwise, there could not be so much planning and so much thought given to bringing about death.

I will tell you a small story. I love the story. Although it is absolutely false, absolutely untrue, perhaps no other story can be truer for today.

I have heard...

God was very concerned about the situation humanity is in. He was quite perturbed. What has happened to people? What kind of suicidal effort are they involved in? So God called in representatives from three big nations: America, Soviet Russia, and Britain. This story must be old, otherwise who would include Britain? This story is a little bit old. At that time Britain must have been in power in many countries, and that's why it was included.

He told these three representatives, "I am very upset. All your power has become focused on killing. I'm worried you will finish the entire human race. And not only this, but perhaps the entire animal kingdom will also be finished. Because of this, I am giving you another chance and am granting each of you a wish. Whatever you wish for will be fulfilled so life on earth can be saved. What do you want? What is the purpose behind this race you are running?"

The representative from America said, "O God, we do not have a great desire – only a small one. If it can be fulfilled, you can rest assured all these troubles will disappear."

God said, "Speak, say it. I will fulfill it."

Perhaps God hadn't imagined what he would say. The representative said, "O father, just a small wish has to be fulfilled: let the world remain, but let there be no trace of Russia in it. Then there will be peace everywhere. There is only one problem, and that is Russia's continued existence."

Up to then, God had granted many wishes. There are many stories in mythology. But such a wish had never been asked before. God was taken by surprise. He turned his eyes toward Russia.

The Russian representative said, "Sir..." Or it is possible he may have said "Comrade," I do not know. He said, "Sir, we do not believe you exist. Years have passed since the revolution, perhaps fifty years. We have taken you out of our temples, mosques, churches, and have said good-bye to you. In our country, nobody prays to you and nobody lights a candle before your image and no flowers are offered. We have been freed from your illusion for a long time. But if you want, we can start praying to you again and start accepting that you exist. We can blindly accept whatever you say if you grant our small wish. If the wish is fulfilled, it will be enough evidence of your existence. We wish for a map of the world, but there should be no America on it. The color that was America should not be there."

God was becoming really frightened, and he looked toward Britain. What the British representative said is worth keeping in mind. He said, "O great father! We do not have any desire; if the wishes of these two are fulfilled simultaneously, our wish will also be fulfilled."

This story is not true, but this situation is true. Such things are going on in our minds. We are eager for such destruction. And it is a mistake to include only America, Russia, and Britain in the story. People can be living in any corner of the world, and still have the desire to cause suffering and pain to others and to get rid of them. This goes on at the level of nations and also at the level of individuals.

Imagine you build a big house and are very happy. Your house is the biggest in the neighborhood. This feeling of happiness doesn't come from having a big house and it won't last long. By having the biggest house, you have made many people's houses smaller, and that's why you are so happy. If an even bigger house is built next to yours, your house will become the reason for your misery.

We are happy when we are able to make somebody else's house smaller. We are happy when we are able to defeat someone. We are happy when we cripple someone, disable him. An unhappy mind has only one quality: it is happy making others miserable. And a blissful mind has only a single quality: it becomes happy by sharing happiness. We can only give that which we have.

We can give only that which we have, and misery runs deep in

man. The scientific power in his hands is dangerous. Our capacity to cause suffering has increased and we are miserable inside. Our capacity to bring death has increased and we are miserable inside. Our capacity to destroy life has increased and there is no bliss, no beauty, and no music inside us. The natural result of this is war.

Mankind's search for scientific power has proved fatal. Also remember, man's mind always sways in extremes. There are countries and cultures such as India that have been extreme in a different direction: their search for religion. And this search for religion can also prove fatal. Science is not alone in being dangerous, fatal.

Religion has been fatal because although on the inside peace increases, on the outside powerlessness, weakness, suffering and poverty rule. Up to now, in all the cultures that have developed in the world, no culture has been able to find a balance between the exterior and the interior, has been able to find a harmony between religion and science. Countries in the East have followed religion in such a way that on the outside they became poor, miserable and slaves. The people in the West have followed the outer in such a way they have lost their souls.

Man's mind has swayed between these two extremes. Even today, most of the world's intelligentsia is either biased toward religion or toward science. Such a bias when thinking about man is dangerous. We should see and embrace man in his totality, in his wholeness. Man is neither just a body nor just a soul. If he were only a body, science would have been enough. But man is an amazing combination of the two, of the body and the soul. He is an amazing balance of both. He is an entity born out of the alchemy between the two. Any culture or civilization that chooses only science or only religion will go astray. And up to now, all the civilizations of mankind have gone astray. They have all been unidirectional.

I remember a small parable...

A Roman emperor once became very sick. He was treated for many years: physicians from near and far were called, but the emperor did not get well.

No disease could be diagnosed because the sickness could not be understood. Finally, the physicians said it would be impossible for him to go on living for much longer. It was just a question of a day or two and then he would die. The emperor could no longer

open his eyes and his breathing was wavering. He lay in his bed almost dead.

Just then, his chief minister came with hopeful news, "There is no need to worry. A strange monk has appeared in Rome. People are saying he has such powers that he is able to raise the dead back to life. Right now you are still alive, so at least you can be saved from dying."

The emperor opened his eyes and said, "Please hurry, do not delay because I cannot rely on my breath: the one going out may not come back."

The minister ran and brought the monk. The monk said, "This is not a disease. That's why the physicians have been unsuccessful. There is no sickness at all, so how could they find the disease? It is the medicines they have been giving that have brought the emperor so close to death. There is a very simple cure for this."

The emperor, who had been lying on his back for months, suddenly sat up and asked, "What cure?"

The monk said, "It is very simple. Send your ministers into the city to find someone who is both prosperous and happy. Tell them to bring the clothes of that person back to the palace and then you put them on. That's all. Before the night passes you will be alright."

The ministers were delighted and started dancing. All the extinguished lamps of the palace were relit. Through the halls, music was heard once again. It was a matter of great happiness: the treatment was simple and the emperor could be cured.

The ministers ran to get the clothes of someone who was prosperous and also happy. But after inquiring at many houses, their frustration began to grow. Whoever they went to said, "I would give my life to save the emperor, but my clothes will not be effective. I am rich, but happiness – I am unacquainted with happiness. I have wealth, a big house, power, a high position, but happiness I have never known. I still desire it, I dream about it, but I have not attained it."

As they left one house after another they were becoming more and more disappointed. The evening came, the sun was setting, and the ministers gathered. They said, "It seems difficult to save the king. We have been in an illusion."

A servant who had been with them the whole day said, "I understood from the very beginning it would not be possible. As ministers, you could not give your own clothes to save the life of the emperor.

How could you find others in the city who were prosperous and happy and would be able to give?"

The ministers understood the point the servant was making. One said, "It seems the emperor will die. How can we go back having failed?" So they thought, "Let's wait till dark, let the sun set, and then we will go."

As the sun was setting, they started walking back to the palace. The river flowed near the palace, and from the further shore they heard a melody floating across the water. Someone was sitting on a large rock and playing the flute. There was a kind of magic, a kind of blissfulness, a fragrance of happiness to the melody. The ministers wanted to make a last effort. Perhaps this man was happy. His notes were filled with such joy, with such love, with such happiness. The ministers went, and in the darkness stood with folded hands in front of the man. They said, "Our emperor is on the verge of dying and we are in search of a man who is happy, whose clothes can cure our emperor. Will you be able to give your clothes?"

The man started laughing. He said, "I am happy, but you are not able to see in the darkness. I am sitting naked; I don't have any clothes."

People were found who were rich but not happy, and a man was found who was happy but not rich. The emperor died that night.

Man is also suffering from such a disease, and is nearly on the verge of dying. Up to now, no clothes have been found that have both happiness and wealth in them. In some cultures there has been a search for inner peace, but on the outside people have become poor and pitiable, as has happened in India and in other countries of the East. In other cultures there has been a search for wealth, but happiness has diminished and the hope of being happy has withered away.

This has happened because the outer and the inner have been seen as opposites. This has happened because we see the body and mind as each other's enemies. This has happened because we have not seen the search for happiness as a search for wholeness. We have divided man into pieces. Up to now, we have not accepted man as an integral whole, and the wholeness of life. Those who accept man as a body deny his soul, and those who talk about the soul, knowingly or unknowingly become the enemies of the body.

A civilization is needed that can become a bridge between man's inner and outer, that can join the two. The reality is that both of them are joined. So neither a religious nor a scientific culture is needed. Either one alone is one-sided and extreme. A culture is needed that can accept the whole nature of each person and can take that undivided nature toward bliss. And it must be remembered any search for a man's soul is impossible without the support of the body.

When Saint Francis was dying, he said good-bye to everyone and then stood with folded hands. People thought perhaps he was thanking existence. But Francis said, "O my beautiful body, I have harassed you and troubled you and have always fought with you as though you were my enemy. Today, while my eyes are still open and the lamp is still lit in my heart, I am able to see you were my constant companion. You were not my enemy.

"You have accompanied me in every joy and sorrow, and even though I have harassed and troubled you, you have remained my companion. The soul that I have finally been able to understand would have been impossible to know without your support, without having climbed up your stairs. I am grateful to you, and ask for forgiveness for the wrongs I have done to you."

Those who can see man's individuality correctly will be able to see that body and soul work in the same way as a staircase and a goal. Those people who can look at man's life closely will be able to see science and religion function in the same way as a means and an end. If science is left alone, it can be dangerous. Only a staircase remains, only the way remains; there is no goal to reach. And if only religion remains, there is a goal, but all the ways to reach it break down, life becomes crippled. Up to now, life has remained crippled this way.

There is a dimension we can call the dimension of the outer, where science has looked at matter, has searched for its mysteries. There is another dimension we can call the dimension of the inner, where religion has found some truths. But the truth of science has proved to be more influential because science is a commonly accepted truth. The truth of religion could not be so influential because religion means Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, Jaina, and Buddhist. To this day, religions remain fragmented, are against one another, are divided into

opposing camps. Hence the influence of religion could not be as great as the influence of science. Science stands as an undivided truth. As far as science is concerned, the distances between the East and the West have disappeared, the distance between cultures has disappeared, and even small regional differences are gone. The beliefs of individual tribes disappeared and the science of an entire humanity came into existence.

Until now, a religion of the entire humanity has not come into existence. Hence religion is being defeated every day, and it is not because religion is not strong. It is because religions are divided and fighting among themselves. When the Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, Jainas, and Buddhists fight among themselves, naturally their power diminishes with their infighting. Meanwhile, the power of science goes on increasing. And the fault is not with science; the fault is only with the religious people.

In today's world, a man who is truly religious will be independent from being a Hindu or a Mohammedan. It is only because of these labels that real religion is not able to be born in this world. There are some three hundred faiths on this earth and they are all in opposition with one another. Three hundred are standing against each other and all their power is wasted fighting among themselves.

Religion can be as much a power as science. The truth of religion is universal, like science. But we are so biased in the world of religion, and our religions are three to four thousand years old. How can this thinking stand up in front of science? It is not a single power and will continuously be defeated.

A few things have to be understood about this. The first thing is that no matter how many advances science makes on the outside, sooner or later man's inner poverty and neediness will start troubling him. It doesn't matter what I achieve, it doesn't matter how big my house is, how big my car is, how many things I have – if I am unable to experience the blissful dance of the soul inside me, whatever I have attained will become a bondage for me; whatever I have will bring me pain.

The capacity to experience happiness corresponds to a certain viewpoint, an approach to looking at our lives from a certain angle. When we find a certain unique place within, a vantage point, we can look at things in life and they become blissful. If we cannot find that space within, life seems painful.

One morning a man arrived in a village. Stopping his bullock cart, he asked an old man, "What are the people of this village like? I am thinking of living here."

The old man said, "Before I tell you what the people of this village are like, would you please say something about the people of the village you have come from?"

The man said, "Just the mention of those people makes my eyes fiery, my heart burn with the flame of anger. It seems impossible to find such horrible people on this earth."

The old man said, "Friend, that is why I asked. The people of this village are unimaginably evil. I know because I have lived with them for seventy years. Go and seek another village. The people of this village are even worse than the people of the village you have left."

The man went away. Just behind him another bullock cart came and stopped. The traveler asked the same question to the old man: "What are the people of this village like? I would like to settle here."

The old man said, "First, tell me about the people in the village you come from."

The man's eyes filled with joy, and tears of happiness came to his eyes. He said, "Even to remember those people fills the heart with good memories; to find such good people on earth is difficult. The sad thing, the unfortunate thing is that because of some business, I have to leave the village. But I have gone with the hope maybe, if not today, then someday I will return to that village. To find such beautiful people is difficult."

The old man said, "Come, you are welcome. I have lived in this village for seventy years, and I can tell you the people of this village are even better than the people of your village."

If you have a blissful inner way of seeing life, everything on the outside is blissful. If your inner way of seeing life is filled with misery and darkness, everything is dark on the outside.

Science is useful for making a better outside world, and this is certainly needed. Only lazy, lethargic people can accept the world as it is today – people who have no enthusiasm for life, no desire to transform life. Certainly an effort must be made to change it: it can be rebuilt in a better way. But any talk about it will be incomplete and full of mistakes because the outside world can reflect only as

much as the man is ready to give on the inside. If the inner man is wrong, even the best world on the outside will become a hell.

The problem is absolutely not about how the outside world is. At deeper levels, the problem is about how the inner man is. If our way of looking at things on the inside is unhappy, the outside world will be miserable.

If we see it correctly, all the so-called religions of the world have made the sorrow of the outside world into a device to be used in their favor. They say the world is filled with sorrow, life and death is full of misery, and therefore you must search for liberation, for a place where there is only bliss. This is a false and stupid idea because it focuses on condemning the outside world while forgetting the inner man.

The world has been blissful for very few people, and the question is not about someone renouncing life and running away somewhere. The big question is how to transform yourself so what you know as suffering and hell becomes bliss and liberation. The fundamental task of religion is to transform a person's capacity and worthiness to see the inner. Science's fundamental responsibility is to make living comfortable, and religion's is to see life with the utmost blissful approach. Without religion, science will be incomplete; without religion, science will be fatal; without religion, there cannot be a ray of bliss in life.

Remember, by religion I do not mean Hindus and Mohamedans. By religion, I do not mean all that has been told to us down the ages, the scriptures and tradition. By religion, I mean living life in a blissful way. Anyone – he may be a musician singing songs, he may be a sculptor carving statues, he may be a scientist doing research, he may be a teacher, he may be a shopkeeper, he may be a cobbler making shoes – anyone who becomes capable of seeing the totality of life with a blissful approach, I call religious. Anyone who becomes capable of looking at life from a point of bliss, I call him religious. Anyone who is capable of remaining in a state of ultimate freedom no matter where he is and what is happening around him, I call religious.

Someone who searches for liberation far away, somewhere far away in the sky, is not religious. Someone who searches for liberation beyond life and death is not religious. But someone who this very moment, now and here within himself, is capable of finding freedom – he is religious. Attaining ultimate freedom means his

approach to seeing, his approach to looking at life has changed.

One evening, two monks were returning to their hut. The rainy season was approaching: clouds filled the sky and if not today, maybe tomorrow it would start to rain. Both monks had been traveling for many days and they were eager to reach their hut before the clouds broke. They were running toward it.

But when they reached there, they were shocked to find the winds had blown away half the roof. One of them shouted to the heavens, "O God! What have you done? Why have you given us reason to doubt you?"

The monk continued, "This makes me doubt your existence. In the city, the big palaces of the sinners remain standing, and you somehow found the hut of two poor monks to blow away? If the winds had to be tested, you should have tested them on a palace. If your heart wanted to destroy something, you could have flattened a big palace. Don't you feel ashamed destroying the huts of poor people?"

He turned to the other monk and said, "You can see it too!" But seeing his friend, he became very surprised. The other monk was kneeling down and looking up to the sky with folded hands. From his eyes, tears of joy were flowing. The first monk was surprised. He shook the other and asked, "What are you doing?"

The kneeling monk said, "I am thanking God. His kindness and compassion is great. Who can trust the winds? They could have blown the whole hut away. But they left half the roof intact. Who can trust the thunderstorms? They could have made the entire roof fall down, but they left half the roof. How can I not be grateful? His kindness, his compassion is great."

Both of them slept in the hut that night. The first monk could not sleep the whole night; the whole night he was worried. The other slept soundly and when he woke up the next morning wrote a song. The song went: "O God, I did not know the happiness of half a roof. Had I known, you would not have had to trouble your winds. We ourselves would have made half the roof fall. In the night, from half the roof, whenever my eyes opened, I saw your stars in the sky, the moon in the sky. And now the amazing thing is: when the rains come, we will sleep under half the roof and in the other half drops of rain will fall. Their music will fill our ears. We had never thought this

could happen. Had we known, we would not have troubled your winds; we ourselves would have made half the roof fall."

The first monk had also been inside the hut that night, but he was in a state of anger and rage the whole night, he was worried the whole night.

Of these two monks, I call the second one religious; I do not call the first monk religious. A person who becomes capable of seeing life from a viewpoint full of bliss and light is religious. Such a man does not have to search for any liberation; he has already found it. He does not have to go anywhere. Wherever he is, there – in that very place, in that very situation, in that very dimension – he attains that which makes life into beauty and gratitude.

By religion I mean attaining a blissful approach toward life. By science is meant understanding the outside world that is spread all around us. That too is God. Matter is also God. Seek out the secrets and mysteries of existence; once you have found those mysteries, life can become rich. But this is not enough if there is no vision to look rightly at life, no vision that can derive bliss from things. If that vision is missing, life will become even more miserable. Inside there will be suffering and outside there will be power – and nothing else will happen.

I am not talking about the established religions with their well-known names. Rather, I am talking about religion as a fundamental revolution in people's minds. It needs to be thought over; people have to search to find it. It is not that you go to the temple every day and so you are religious. Yes, if you just want to deceive others, you can show you are religious by going to the temple every day. This is not so much of a problem. You can start wearing a loin cloth, start reading the Gita or Koran first thing in the morning. But remember, this has absolutely nothing to do with being religious.

Being religious is connected with how you approach life each moment: blissfully or in misery. As life appears in front of you, do you welcome it with love or take it as a burden? Up to now, the so-called religious people have taken life as a burden. They say they are seeking liberation from birth and death.

While he was on his deathbed, Rabindranath Tagore told one of his friends, "There is only one prayer I want to make to God: if you think I am worthy to have another life, I am grateful because I have

been so blessed by having this life. I have known so much that was loving and blissful. And if I have not been able to know something, it must have been my mistake. It was not your mistake."

Only someone who looks at life with such bliss is religious. But we all know those people who look at life with a long face. We call them religious – so sad and serious. They are morbid people, the sad and serious people are morbid. Blissful and ecstatic are they whose life echoes with song and music.

There once were three wandering monks in China. They had become known as the three laughing saints. When they came across a village, they didn't preach. Rather, they would stand at the cross-roads of the village and start laughing. All three would laugh so loudly, their laughter was so free and blissful, that slowly, slowly a wave of laughter would spread throughout the village. And for the few days the three saints would stay there, the people of the village would keep on laughing. They were able to come to know something in that laughter.

Someone who takes life seriously is not able to know that. Someone who takes life as a child, innocently and in a blissful way, only he is able to know it.

One day, one of those saints died. The people of the village said, "Now certainly his two friends will become sad and miserable." But the two companions came out dancing in the village that morning. People asked them, "Today you are only two. What about the third one?"

They said, "He is blessed, he has gone on the great journey before us. And by dancing and singing songs, we are preparing for his farewell. It would be a betrayal to our friendship to bid a sad and tearful farewell to a man with whom we have passed so many blissful moments. We are preparing by dancing, singing songs, and laughing; we want to give him a farewell, laughing."

Before he died, the third monk had thought: "When I die, the people who will put me on the funeral pyre will be very unhappy. It won't be good if they say good-bye in their unhappiness." So he told his friends, "Don't remove my clothes, the clothes in which I die. Put me on the funeral pyre in those very clothes." That was his last wish, so it was done that way.

The whole village was sad, although the dead saint's two friends

went dancing and singing to the cremation ground. But as soon as the fire was lit under the body on the funeral pyre, great laughter started spreading: the people around the funeral pyre started laughing and dancing.

What happened?

The dying saint had hidden firecrackers in his clothes. They started going off and people started laughing and they said, "Even while dying, he is making us laugh."

A religious person is one who lives blissfully and dies blissfully. For someone who finds the secret of living blissfully, death also becomes bliss. To him, death becomes a meeting with the ultimate truth. It is not a farewell to life; it is meeting with a greater life.

I call a person religious who is in search of bliss every moment. I do not call those religious who wear religious robes, leave their homes, leave their villages, leave their families, and go off on a far-reaching quest for liberation wearing a pained and troubled expression on their face. They are all greedy people: their desires, their greed cannot be satiated by this world, and so they start desiring liberation.

These are very sensual people. They are not satisfied with the momentary pleasures of this world. They want permanent pleasures, they want happiness that can never be destroyed, a liberation that is never lost. They don't find any happiness in the small things of life. They want to attain the ultimate truth. They think only by attaining this will they be happy.

I want to say to you that someone who has not found happiness on life's small road with its small blooming flowers will not be happy even after meeting the ultimate reality. Someone who has not experienced the thrill of blissfulness in the smallest stream of life, in its tiniest droplets, even if he reaches the ultimate liberation, will not be blissful. He will remain what he was and his perception will remain the same. His way of seeing things will remain the same. Even if you put him in the state of ultimate liberation, he will occupy himself with some practices with the purpose of becoming liberated from that state. Someone who is busy attempting to be liberated, even the ultimate liberation, will remain busy in his attempt to be liberated.

Religion is less about becoming free and more about living life in all its depth. This desire for freedom has deprived us from living life

fully. And because we don't see religion in this way, only science and life at the level of the body have remained.

Just next to what we know as life is a greater life available to us. A person who is seeking happiness in ordinary life will have to look a little further. He will have to be a little creative in seeing the bliss that is all around, in seeing the greater bliss of creation. Where a stone was seen, now God can be seen: you only need the eyes to see it. Where there was nothing to be seen, now there is everything to be seen. Only a heart is needed – a heart that can see more.

I was telling you about Rabiya...

One day people saw her outside her house searching for something. A passerby asked, "What are you looking for?"

She said, "I lost my needle, I am searching for it."

The man was kind and wanted to help the old woman, so he also started searching for the needle. Other people were passing and they too started searching. Then someone stood up and asked, "The needle is very small and the road is very big and it is becoming dark. Can you tell us exactly where you lost the needle? Otherwise it will be very difficult to find it."

Rabiya said, "It is better if you don't ask. The other people who are searching have not asked. Why are you asking?"

The man said, "It is not a very strange thing to ask."

The other people also stopped searching. They said, "Why didn't we think of asking where the needle was lost?"

Rabiya said, "I lost the needle in my room, but I am a poor woman so I don't have any oil to light a lamp. When the needle was lost, it started getting dark inside so I went outside to the doorstep where there was still a little bit of sunlight. Later, that too went away. So now I am searching on the road. How can I look for it if there is no light?"

The people said, "You are mad! Whenever you do something, you create some madness. Now what is this? If the needle was lost inside, we have to take light inside rather than searching outside where the light is. No matter how much you search there, the needle cannot be found."

Rabiya laughed and said, "I was searching for the needle just to make you understand that. I have not lost my needle. But I see every man searching outside for something. And no one asks the one who is searching if it was lost outside."

Our eyes search outside, our hands are spread outside, our ears listen outside; all our senses throw our energy outside. That is why we search outside without knowing where it was lost.

An understanding person will want to know what he has lost and where it might be. And if he doesn't get an answer to this, it will make sense that before he begins to search all over this big earth, he should at least first search for it within. If he does not find it there, he can go outside and search.

The experience of those who have looked within is that they find what has been lost. Not a single person in the whole history of mankind has looked within and not found it. And not a single person has said he searched outside and found it. The outside search has always been unsuccessful, and the inner search has always been fruitful.

Who is in? To enter that search is religion. Opening your eyes toward religion is looking at what is within.

In tomorrow's talk I will talk about how those eyes can open. Today I have talked about the world of religion and the world of science. Just now I have told you about these two things. Tomorrow I will say something more about how to open your eyes toward religion.

To finish, I would like to emphasize one more thing. The scriptures may say one thing, and a master may say something else. But until *your* eyes have opened, you cannot say you have experienced anything of religion. The case with science is more convenient in a way – something can become an established practice: science is not a personal experience. We switch the light on, and we don't know anything about how it works. We just push a switch and it comes on. Somebody may know how it works, but it is not necessary for the rest of us to know. Everybody uses science; it is not about each person knowing it.

Religion is the opposite. In order to use religion, you have to know about it, have to experience it; otherwise you cannot use it. Religion is very individual; it is a very personal experience. Just as the experience of love is personal, so is the experience of godliness absolutely personal. Your eyes cannot open through someone else's experience. Through someone else's experience nothing can be known.

If we talk to a blind man about light, he will not learn anything. But if his eyes open, he will know light. In this way, religion is an absolutely personal realization. We can know only if our eyes open – only then; there is no other way. Nothing can happen in the world of

religion by borrowing and by learning from others.

That is why science can be taught in colleges and universities, and religion cannot be taught there. There is no way to teach it. Science is public property, religion remains a personal experience. And whenever we make it communal property, a Hindu is born, a Mohammedan is born, a Christian. These are diseases; they are not religion. Whenever we make religion communal, a dangerous organization is created.

Remember, whenever there is an organization, the Devil is the first to catch hold of it. The Devil is always on the lookout wherever people gather so he can catch hold of them. And if people do not gather, the Devil invents reasons they should gather.

Once, the Devil heard some news from some of his friends. He has many friends all over: the newspaper publishers are his, the journalists are his, and the news agencies are his. They told the Devil that some people were beginning to attain truth. The Devil took his companions and rushed to earth. On the way, some friends came and told him he was too late: a man had already attained truth.

The Devil said, "Go spread the news in the villages; go to each and every village and beat the drums to announce that person has attained truth. People will gather around him and with great enthusiasm will create an organization. And as soon as they do that, the truth will die. Truth is absolutely personal, and where organization exists there is only turmoil."

The Devil was not worried. His friends spread the news in the villages and cities, people started gathering, crowds started gathering and they made an organization. In the organization, the lamp of truth that had been lit in that man was extinguished.

All organizations murder truth. Religion is totally, absolutely personal. It has no relation with organization and with the masses. It has a relation with each individual entering his own consciousness. I will talk about how your eyes can rise toward that truth tomorrow.

Existence has brought everybody to science. May it slowly, slowly also bring everyone to religion. This is my prayer.

You have heard me with such peace, such love, and I am very grateful. I offer my respect to the godliness that is present in all of you. Please accept my respect.

CHAPTER 3

service above self?

Beloved friends.

Service above self – it seems like a very simple and straightforward doctrine, just like two plus two equals four. But often what seems simple and straightforward is not so straightforward. Life is so complex and mysterious, and it does not fit such easy doctrines. But rarely will you find a person who will disagree with this idea of service above the self. To find a person on this earth who does not accept this doctrine is very difficult. But as it often happens, the more people who accept a doctrine without thinking, the greater is its possibility of being wrong.

There was a time when the earth was thought to be flat, although it is not. For thousands of years, millions of people thought the earth was flat. People believed the sun goes around the earth. Of course, now we know it does not go around the earth, but still the words sunrise and sunset are very difficult to erase. The sun rises, the sun sets; there is nothing more wrong than this, but in language it is all right.

A situation is often completely opposite to what appears to be

the obvious truth. In general, we never question that which we accept as the truth. That is why we don't deny anything. If an obstacle arises because of some belief, perhaps then we may think about it. But in life, no obstacle usually arises. We don't make our accepted doctrines a topic of discussion because life goes on without giving much thought to our beliefs.

You have heard about service before self many times. It seems to be common sense that we keep service above the self. But many times common sense proves to be nonsense. There are a few things we will have to consider about this. The first thing I would like to say is that in this world, it is not possible to keep anything above the self. It is an impossibility. Nothing can be kept above the self. It is unnatural, it is impossible. And whenever you put service above self, if you look a little deeper, you will find you have not really done that.

Suppose a man is drowning in the river. People are passing by, but they are doing nothing to help the man. So you decide to put your life in danger and jump into the river, save the man and bring him out. Certainly we will say you put service above yourself. You put yourself in danger and saved the man. But psychologists would say the truth is very different. Although you had no relation to the man, seeing him drowning made you feel distressed and miserable. It was to overcome your own misery that you saved the man from drowning.

So in that situation you didn't put service before self; you remained with the self. And up to now, no man has put service before self. If people say Bhagat Singh died for his country, do not imagine this was really the situation. Bhagat Singh died for his own idea, which was that it was necessary to free the country. All the martyrs of the world sacrifice themselves for their own ideas. If their idea happens to benefit you, that is a totally different matter. Then they are selfless heroes. But their idea is for their own happiness.

Hence when a person like Bhagat Singh is hanged, he is not miserable; he is happy, he is fulfilled. Whatever he wanted to do, he did it – and he did it to the extent that he erased himself. He took the risk of erasing himself. But in a deeper sense, this too is the happiness of the self. In a deeper sense this too is self. Yes, it is another matter whether the letter *s* of self is put in lower case or as a capital letter. I will talk to you about this. But on this earth, up to today, no one has been able to keep service above his self.

When I say this, it will seem strange because we have heard about so many famous public servants. Our history books are full of their names. But I would like to say to you that this service was the happiness of someone's self. A man who tries to put service above self will never be happy in service. He will always be miserable. He would like to fulfill some greater thing by his service. He would like to have fame, he would like to have money, or at least he would like to have his name in the newspaper.

When a public servant goes to do his service, he never forgets to take a photographer with him. He inquires whether the news media are nearby or not. Here in India, we have recently seen how these public servants have captured the country's attention. If we go into the depths of psychology, we can understand that the person who starts by massaging someone's feet will complete the job by strangling his neck, if not today then tomorrow. Remember, it is not without reason someone massages your feet.

In fact, going outside yourself is as difficult as lifting yourself up by your own shoelaces: it is not only difficult, it's impossible. Whatever you do can only be done for the self. If people are searching for God, it is only for themselves. If people want ultimate liberation, it is only for their self. If people have died for a cause, have somehow erased themselves, it is also for their own sake.

No one has ever gone above the self, nor can anyone ever go there. But what does this mean? Am I saying everyone is equally selfish? No, I am not saying that. There can be a self that can take you on a journey to hell, and there can be a self that can take you on a journey to heaven. But both are the self. There can be a self that can make you a Ravana, a villain, and there can be a self that can make you a Rama, a hero. But both are the self. There can be a self that can fill your life with misery and pain, and there can be a self that can make your life blissful and full of music. Both are the self; there is no difference as far as their being the self is concerned.

I would also like to tell you that a man who takes his "self" on a journey to hell may or may not be able to make others go to hell with him, even though he may be very successful in taking himself to hell. But a man who takes his self on a journey to heaven will not only reach heaven, his fragrance will reach others and he will become a light for others on the path to heaven.

If someone goes through life without having fulfilled his self, no

service can ever arise from his life. Service cannot be above the self. Only a fulfilled self becomes service; the more the self is fulfilled, the more it overflows and becomes service. Service is an overflowing; you can only give to others what you have in abundance. It may be happiness, love, money – whatever you will be able to give will be an overflowing. And remember also that whenever you attain service through overflowing, the person who receives your service becomes grateful to you.

A man who expects gratitude for his service, who says you must be grateful to him, does not know anything about service. A man who truly serves will be grateful to you for having received his service. He will be happy you received his overflowing. Something had become full inside him, like clouds when they become full and want to shower. The clouds are grateful to the ground that drinks their rain. When a flower is ready, it opens its petals and wants to spread its fragrance all around. It is grateful toward the winds that take its fragrance far away. And when a lamp is lit, its luminosity spreads all around. The lamp does not give its light to anyone in particular; the lamp has light in abundance, and so the light is spread.

When a person's self is filled, that fulfilled self is transformed into service. And if the self is full the service becomes boundless, the self does not remain a small s, but becomes a capital S. At that moment a mystic is able to say: "*Aham brahmasmi* – I am the ultimate reality." He is able to say he is the ultimate truth. He is able to say that now the small self is the supreme self. Now he can say he is the whole.

When I am saying to put self above service, you still believe the other exists. And as long we believe in the existence of the other, we see him as our enemy. He cannot become our friend. The otherness is the enemy. When I say I am doing service, I mean I am serving someone. In reality though, in a total moment of service, the other does not remain. Only then is service possible.

A mother is always willing to serve her son, but it is not because the son is the other. If a day should come that the son becomes the other, that very day the mother fights back, then she does not want to sacrifice herself for her son. Before this, she feels the son is an extension of herself, an extension of her own hands and legs, an extension of her own body. She feels she has been reborn through her son: he is her extension, her own body has grown further. She has taken birth again, her body has developed further. It is the mother herself in the

son's birth, he is only a mirror for her. The mother is not able to serve anyone else as long as she feels the son is part of herself. If we say it rightly, she is basically serving herself. Those who have served, have served themselves. Their "my-ness" is big. Their "my-ness" is so big the other disappears in it.

You must have heard the saying of Jesus, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." But no one can love his neighbor as himself unless the neighbor disappears and only his self remains. No one can love his neighbor as himself, as his own self. When there remains no sense of neighbor, when the neighbor does not remain at all and the person remains standing alone, only then can he serve as he would do to himself.

This doctrine of keeping service above self has also led us to another danger because it has not given rise to service; only hypocrisy has been born. We cannot put service above self, but at least we can show off, at least we can put on a face that shows we are sacrificing for others. Actually we cannot do it, but we can deceive. And deception goes on.

Mankind's ten thousand years of culture has been the culture of deception. And the doctrine that says to put others above self, to keep service above the self, is at the core of this deception. Once again, this is not possible, not possible in man's very nature. This is an impossibility. How can you keep someone else above yourself?

I have heard...

A father is telling his son one should serve others. The son asks, "Why?"

His father said, "God has created you so you can serve others."

If he was a son in the old days, he would have accepted it. But he was a son in recent times. He said, "Okay, I understood God created me to serve others. I would like to know why he created others. Was it only so I serve them? Or were the others created so they could serve me, while I was created so I can serve others? It seems God's mind is very confused."

The son said, "It is better if I serve myself and others serve themselves. What is the need for so much trouble, for so much complexity?"

I am saying this as a joke, but often jokes are really the great truths of life, while life's great truths are really jokes.

It is just like this. If you think about it, you will not come to the conclusion that you can put someone else above you; there is no way for this. It is psychologically impossible. You cannot keep the other above yourself. Yes, it is possible only in one way – when the other does not remain the other. Then only you remain, and the other is not there at all.

What we call service, if it arises from the impossible desire to keep the other above the self, that service will be ego centered. It will fulfill the ego. That is why it is difficult to find a more egoistic person than a public servant. Service strengthens his pretentiousness, this ego that says: "I am a man who serves." The ego of a true public servant will disappear. He should not even know he exists. He should not even know he has served. Service that becomes conscious of itself is not service. A service that asserts someone has done it, that service is not service. The humility that says "I am humble" is just another form of the ego.

Life is very complex; true service only becomes possible when we drop the effort to keep the other above ourselves. Rather, we should try to expand ourselves. I am saying there are two ways. One way is to serve others and by that service live in hypocrisy. We can only create hypocrisy. That is the way service is happening in the world and there has been no end to misery. Service is being done and the world is going even deeper into its misery. As service increases, turmoil increases.

Political leaders are serving, religious leaders are serving – teachers, soldiers, doctors, and lawyers are all serving. All are serving, everyone. And they have left people in such a state one wonders how many days someone can stay alive in the midst of all these public servants. How can humanity save itself with all these public servants? There are a few reasons behind this mess.

A great hypocrisy was created: whenever we try to do something impossible, hypocrisy is created. By trying to create the impossible, hypocrisy is created. Life grows by doing whatever is possible, but it becomes hypocritical and false by boasting about what is not possible. Putting service above self is one of those things that is impossible, and will never be possible.

So what is possible? There is another way, something totally different is possible. It is not possible that you serve someone else, but what is possible is that you grow, you expand and become so big there

remains no place for the other. The other is no longer there, there is no possibility for the other. Then a service that is real service will come into your life. But that service will be like a shadow coming behind you; it will not walk in front of you like a crowd. You will not walk around announcing you are someone who serves. Service will come like a shadow; even its footsteps will not be heard.

I have heard...

In Greece, a mystic became enlightened. The story says the gods came and said, "We are very happy with you and would like to grant you a wish. Whatever you wish, we are willing to do."

The mystic said, "But now no wish remains. You have become happy too late. You did not come when I had desires. Now no desire remains, and you have come. What shall I ask for? You have put me in a difficulty. I have no desires remaining. Please go back. The person that could ask for something is no longer there; he is no more and desire is no longer there. You have come very late. If you had come a bit earlier, there would have been many desires: then the one who could ask for something was there."

When man's demands are at an end, the world wants to give to him in abundance; existence wants to give to him. Beggars never get anything; only emperors do. There is a saying from Jesus: "Those who have only a little, more will be taken away from them. And those who have in abundance, more will be given to them." This saying is contradictory, but in life, great mathematics is contradictory.

The gods ignored the mystic and told him, "You will still have to ask for something."

The mystic said, "Then give whatever you can think of."

The gods replied, "Then, if a person you touch is sick, he will be cured; and if he is dead, he will come back to life. If you touch a withered flower, the flower will bloom again."

The mystic said, "But this is very dangerous. If curing a sick man by touching him happens right in front of my eyes, the man may be cured, but I will become sick."

The gods said, "We don't understand."

The mystic said, "I will be able to see I have cured the patient, that the patient has been cured by me. He will be cured of his small

illness, but a greater disease will catch me – the disease of the 'I,' of the ego. Please have mercy on me and do not grant me such a wish."

The gods said, "We are sorry, but wishes once granted cannot be taken back."

So the mystic said, "Can you grant it in such a way I don't come to know the service has been done by me? A service that becomes known is poisonous."

The gods were in great difficulty, but in the end they found a way. They said, "We are taking back the wish we granted you and are giving it to your shadow. Wherever you are, if your shadow falls on a withered flower, the flower will bloom. If your shadow falls on a sick man, the sick man will become well. If your shadow falls on a dead person, he will come back to life."

The mystic said, "Grant me another wish. May my head never turn around. Please grant that I can only look ahead."

Service, what we really call service, does not come by keeping it higher than the ego. It comes by erasing the ego. But what does erasing the ego mean? Should we cut out the ego? Even if we try to cut it out, we will not be able to. Because who will cut it? *No*, to erase the ego, cutting is not the way. Many people have become involved with trying to cut out the ego: they renounce money, they renounce power, they abandon their palaces, they drop everything and stand naked at the crossroads. But the ego is really very clever, and subtle are its ways. In your nakedness you will start declaring you have renounced everything: "There is no greater renouncer than me." But the ego is there even if you renounce all. It does not stop pursuing you. If you cut it out, it will say "I am the one who has cut it out."

No, there is only one way to dissolve the ego, and that is for the ego to become so big nothing else remains. It keeps on expanding. All the boundaries called the "other" disappear. Slowly, slowly the "other" disappears and only the "I" remains. The day when you are alone, when the self is the only reality, that day neither service remains nor the "other" remains. That day, service will flow through the self just like a flame from a lamp, just like fragrance spreads from a flower, just like rains fall from the clouds in the sky. It will flow just like that. The fulfilled self becomes service. The total self becomes service. The supreme self becomes service.

This doctrine is worth understanding. Up to now, people have

believed in the doctrine of keeping service above self. What should we be doing? – a man may earn a thousand rupees and then give five rupees worth of service. In reality by earning a thousand rupees, he will not only want to earn a thousand rupees, but he also wants to earn a "certificate of service" for five rupees. This man is smart, this man is clever; you can say he is cunning and good at mathematics, calculating. He says to himself that if he can get this recognition for service for only five rupees, it is worth not letting the opportunity pass. So he buys that certificate. In this man, in his mind, the ego is the center. He will carry his service in front of him like a flag. And wherever service becomes a flag, it becomes cunning and trouble begins.

No one has created as much turmoil in this world as public servants have. If they could take a rest for only one day, go off on holiday for twenty-four hours, you would find wars like Vietnam would not happen. Wars are the creation of public servants. You would find massacres like the Cultural Revolution would stop: they happened because of public servants serving China. You would find Hindu–Mohammedan riots would end for those twenty-four hours because nobody would be doing service for the Hindu religion and nobody would be doing service for Mohammedanism. If someday existence sends all the public servants on holiday, you will not want to let them come back. You will say, "Forgive us, but without you, twenty-four hours passed so peacefully. Please don't come back."

Mark Twain told a story...

Once it happened that the people of the world had the idea there must be people like themselves living on the moon. Unlike today, at that time there was no way to travel to the moon to meet those people. Space travel exists only today, long after Mark Twain's death.

People had long thought there would be humans on the moon. But how could they send a message, how could they talk to them? Then all the people of the world decided that on a certain day at twelve noon, everyone on earth should together make the sound "boo." For a single minute, the world would be filled with the sound "boo." If the whole world could shout together, the sound would surely reach the moon. And if there were people there, they would certainly reply.

The great day came. People stood on the roads, on their terraces, on the mountains – wherever people could find a space outside, they were standing with their heads looking upward to the sky.

The bells of the temples and churches started ringing, announcing the time for the sound "boo" from the whole world to start. But there was complete silence. No one shouted because no one wanted to miss the great opportunity to hear such a great sound. They thought if they were involved in the shouting, they would not be able to hear it. And when the whole world is shouting, what difference will one person not shouting make? This sound of "boo" would be so terrifyingly loud it would reach the people of the moon. Everyone thought this, and for one minute, there was complete silence in the whole world. For the first time, people discovered the peace they were missing by continuously carrying on their useless talk.

This story must be quite ancient because again we have forgotten about silence and are always engaged in useless talk. We have to try to make the sound "boo" again.

If public servants could be given a holiday for twenty-four hours, for the first time humanity would realize that ninety-nine percent of its troubles were coming from this service. If anyone decides to serve, there is bound to be trouble. Service should just happen; nobody should try to do it. Service should flow. It cannot be your doing. Service cannot be an act; it must come through living.

And if someone tries to do an act of service, he will do at least fifty acts on the same day that will destroy that service. But a man who lives service will not be able to do anything against service. So how can serving become life? Serving will become life when serving becomes the self – or, to put it another way, when the self becomes service. Before this, it cannot become our life.

Yes, we can go on keeping our life to ourselves and do some small act of service. I have heard a story...

In a Sunday school, a priest was teaching the children they should do at least one act of service every week. He said this was their biggest duty toward God. After seven days, the children came back and the priest asked the children, "Did you serve anyone?"

One boy raised his hand, then a second boy, and then a third; out of thirty children, three boys raised their hands. The priest said, "It is more than enough that even three children have done some service because up to now, not many people are ready to do anything to help others. What kind of service did you do?"

The first boy said, "I did exactly as you suggested. I helped an old lady cross the road."

The priest had told them if there was an old lady, to help her cross the road; if someone was drowning, to save him; if there was a fire, to run and put it out. He said, "You did well; well done. God will bless you." He then asked the next boy what he did.

The boy said, "I also helped an old woman cross the road." The priest became a little doubtful, but there was no scarcity of old women. He thought it is possible this boy also met an old lady. There are so many roads too.

He then asked the third one, who said, "I also helped an old lady cross the road."

The priest became more doubtful. He said, "All three of you found old ladies?"

They said, "No, there were not three ladies. There was just one old lady and the three of us helped her cross the road."

The priest asked, "Was the old lady so weak all three of you had to help her?"

They said, "Weak? The old lady was very strong, she didn't want to go in that direction, and it was very difficult to get her to cross the road. She was going in the other direction, but we managed. You said we should serve someone in this way, so we did it."

If someone decides to serve, service becomes a sort of profession, it becomes a business. But service cannot become a business, a person cannot *do* service. Yes, a man can live a life of service, but he can live this life only when the other drops and the "I" expands. The "I" becomes so vast the other disappears. Who will I be serving if there is no other? It becomes service of self. We can only serve ourselves. Only that is natural and spontaneous. We can expand our self, which is natural and spontaneous. And it is this expansion of the "I" that finally becomes the disappearance of the "I." When the "I" becomes so vast the other is no longer outside it, there remains no other. The day there is no "you," no other, the "I" also disappears because they are related terms. "I" can survive only with "you." The "I" disappears along with "you."

I have told you this because I would like to put you in a bind. Service above self *is* possible. I have been talking completely against this doctrine; I was telling you it wasn't possible. I was antagonistic.

I said service cannot happen above self. But the "I" can expand so much that the whole of life becomes service. The whole time I was talking against it, but the whole time I was really talking in favor of it. That's how life is: when we are speaking in favor of something, we aren't necessarily speaking in its favor. And when we are speaking against something, we aren't really speaking against it. Often our established doctrines need to get a jolt; only then can we understand the deeper meaning. The old structures must be broken. Only then can the true nature hidden in something emerge. We have only rote learned the saying "service above self." We have written it down and hung it up on the wall. But by this, nothing has happened in our minds. The doctrine has died. We have heard it so many times that now there is no life in it.

Great truths, when they are heard repetitively, become worse than untruths because no sting remains in them, no thorn remains in them, no sharp edge remains in them. Hence, even great truths have to be destroyed and then created afresh again and again. They have to be scattered, broken up, and then have to be rearranged.

I have talked about what the person who wrote the saying "service above self" intended to say. I did not tell you what you may understand by the doctrine. I have only said what the person who created this saying meant – what his ambitions, his longings must have been.

Words are very weak and cannot express obvious truths. And whenever a saying sits rooted in truth, slowly, slowly the truth disappears and only the words remain in our hands. They just lie there without meaning. I have made the journey from the other end.

I have told you to drop the emphasis on service. It has already been given too much emphasis and people have not been benefitted from it. Now give emphasis to the self. But remember, what I am saying may not be the truth tomorrow. If an institution is created and my words, what I have said, are put up on great signboards, in just a few days' time even those truths will become old and useless. Dust will gather on what I am saying too. Listening to it repeatedly, you will become too used to it.

Man's greatest difficulty is that he absorbs everything. He becomes used to hearing something and when that happens, he goes to sleep. He turns over and has a nice nap. Your turning over

and going back to sleep needs to be destroyed. Often people like me have to undo the work done by those who came before me. If someone made you turn left in the past, I have to come and make you turn right. It may seem to you I am doing the opposite of what those who went before wanted. What was turned left, I am turning right. But the man who made you turn left wanted to disrupt your sleep just as I am disrupting your sleep by turning you right. Man's whole life needs to be reshuffled; he falls asleep again and again, and in his sleep again starts dreaming. We all make a pillow out of truths and then have a good sleep. Service above self is the pillow on which we have laid our heads and gone to sleep. Everybody believes in it.

Remember, when everybody believes in a truth, that particular truth doesn't have the capability to awaken anymore – otherwise, not all the people would agree with it. While the truth still has the power to awaken, not all people believe in it. But when the truth becomes a pillow, everyone believes in it.

Hence what may seem to be an obvious truth is just the corpse of a truth. When the first person said to keep self above service, what did it mean? Its meaning must have been very different. Its meaning must not have been what we understand, which is that above our self, we should do a few acts of service.

No, its meaning is as I have told you. What I have said is that service has to become our life, service has to become our self. We become the serving. And the day you become the serving, you will not even know you have served.

For instance, if you ask a mother how much service she has done for her son, she will not be able to tell. Yes, she will certainly be able to say what she was not able to do. She was not able to provide proper clothing, she was not able to give proper food, she was not able to give proper education. She will be able to say everything she was not able to do. But she will not be able to make a list of what she was able to do for him. However, if a secretary of some institution is asked what services he has done in the past year, even things he has not done will be added to the list.

The secretary of an institution works on it. Service just happens around a mother. A nurse can say how much service she has done, but a mother cannot. And the day the mother will be able to say what she has done, understand well that she has been doing the

work of a nurse; she was only in an illusion of being a mother.

I have been telling you many things against service so that serving can begin to happen. I have said things against service so the flowers of service can come into your life. But don't pick up the thorn of being a public servant. Being a public servant is a thorn, service is a flower. Don't become a public servant. As soon as you become a public servant, trouble begins. Life should be a natural service.

Streams flow; they don't stop to brag that you drank water from them, that they have done you a great service. The sun gives off light and never says it has done you a great favor – it has sent light to your courtyard. God has been creating infinite lives and we have never even been grateful. But he has never come to our doors to receive our gratitude. Perhaps he is in hiding and waiting for the right moment for us to express our gratitude.

An infinity of lives created – if God was a public servant, he would have become bored by now, he would have become tired, he would have become afraid, he would have gone mad. By now he would be in the madhouse. But God is not a servant; God is service.

If you become a public servant, you will be in trouble. Then, the worry and anxiety of being a public servant will catch hold of you. But if serving becomes your life, you will be beyond anxiety. Then it will not be that you have to make an old lady cross the road. Then it will not be only by giving money that you can serve. Then it is not only by massaging a sick person's feet that service is done. Even the movement of an eyelid can become service. Simply giving someone a smile when you meet them becomes service.

Madame Blavatsky came to India. Whenever she would travel, she would take something out of her bag and throw it out the window. People would ask her, "What are you throwing?"

She would say, "These are the seeds of wildflowers."

People would say, "Have you gone mad? Throwing seeds out of a moving train is madness! When will you pass this way again?"

She would say, "It is only remotely possible that I will pass this way again because in life, one is not even sure of the next moment. But if someone's eyes can one day see the beauty of these flowers, if someone's nostrils can smell the fragrance of the flowers and if he smiles looking at them, I can be satisfied in this moment."

Service is not an act; it is natural life. Every breath can become service.

It was the last day in Buddha's life. Before dying, Buddha told his disciples, "If you want to ask anything more, ask." The doctors had told everybody not to ask Buddha anything because it was very difficult for him to speak. But Buddha said, "Nobody should hold back as long as I have the breath to speak. If somebody has a question, I don't want to be blamed for not answering. Right now I still have breath, and someone here may be thirsty. They should not leave with their thirst unquenched."

The disciples said, "We have asked our whole lives. Now please depart in peace. Now we don't want to ask anything."

Buddha went behind a tree, closed his eyes, and went into meditation. Just then a man from the village came running. Buddha had been in that village many times before. Many times people had told this man, who was called Subhadra, "Buddha has come, go and listen."

Subhadra had always said, "When he comes again, I will listen; but right now there are many customers and my shop has to remain open." Buddha had been through the village many times, but Subhadra had never found time to leave his shop. But today he had heard that the moment of Buddha's final departure had arrived, that he was on his deathbed. So Subhadra closed his shop and came running. He asked the disciples, "Where is Buddha? I want to ask something."

They said, "It is too late. Now it is not possible. Buddha has gone to rest; he is about to merge into the ultimate nirvana. Now his drop is about to fall into the ocean and the question cannot be asked."

But Buddha overheard. He stood up and came out, saying, "You should not put this blame on me that a thirsty person came and returned unquenched. Subhadra, what do you want to ask?"

Each and every breath, even the blinking of the eyes, even the lifting and dropping of the hands, even walking on the road, even a word of truth coming out of the mouth, everything can become service. Just don't become a public servant.

How is this possible? I have told you to expand the self, but to say expand is not correct; it is a language error. We are mistaken in thinking the self is limited to our body. If the fire of the sun, which is millions of miles away, extinguishes, I will become cold, you will

become cold, even though we may not even know the sun has extinguished. The sun, which is almost a billion miles away, that too is my self. Without it, I cannot remain alive even for a single moment.

We take light from the sun, which is millions of miles away; we take warmth to live from it. Life on this earth is an interdependent life. And here there is no bigger illusion than the ego. Here, the idea of "I" is a great madness. Here, each wave in the ocean thinks it has an "I."

When a wave is dancing in delight, why does it believe it is separate from the neighboring wave? It is true that the neighboring wave seems separate. The neighboring wave falls and it itself does not fall. The neighboring wave rises high and it itself is not able to rise. So how can a wave believe it is the thousands of neighboring waves? But if the wave looks a little inward, it will find it is the ocean, the source of all the waves.

We should go inward, into this "I." If we do, we will find the ocean is seen when the self and the other disappear and all that remains is that which *is*. The life that is born out of that experience is called service. It is not a doing by some public servant; it is the name of the life of a religious person.

I have been talking to you about service; there is no need to believe the things I have said. I am not a public servant who makes you understand and then you have to agree. Saying these things is my joy. I felt good, so I told them to you. Contemplate over them. If you feel them to be right, it is right; if you feel it is wrong then it is wrong. If you feel something is good, if after thinking and not by my saying, if after contemplating you feel anything is true, then it will become a reason for changing your life. The truths that are really ours do not leave us unchanged. In the end, whatever I said was so that service above self becomes possible.

You have listened to my talk with such love and peace, I am very grateful for that. And to end, I bow down to the godliness present in each one of you. Please accept my respect.

CHAPTER 4

the art of being a no-mind

Beloved friends.

I have been asked to say something about religion, but my greatest difficulty is you cannot say anything about religion. Religion can be known, but cannot be spoken. So first I would like to tell you a very contradictory thing: what can be said is not religion and what is religion cannot be said.

In life, all the deepest experiences cannot be expressed through words, while whatever is insignificant can be talked about. What is profound remains outside words.

Rabindranath Tagore was on his deathbed. During his lifetime he had written six thousand poems. It is thought nobody has ever written so many outstanding poems. The English poet Shelly is called a great poet, but he wrote only two thousand poems – and Rabindranath had six thousand.

A man visiting him at his bedside said, "Whatever could be achieved in life you must have achieved; what you wanted to sing, you have sung; whatever you wanted to say, you have said it. You can now depart peacefully."

Rabindranath started crying and said, "You are wrong. What I wanted to say, how could I say it? What I wanted to sing, how could I sing it? I have hardly begun, and the time to depart has come. What I wanted to say has remained inside. I ask God what kind of joke this is. Now, just as I am starting to be able to say something, I have to depart."

The man said, "What are you saying? Look at how many poems you have written."

Rabindranath said, "Whenever I sat down to write, I would think I would be able to say something. But after writing, I would look at the words that had come out of me and feel their meaning had remained within. What I had wanted to say had remained locked in my heart."

The greatest difficulty of almost all those who have known truth, beauty, godliness is to speak about their experience. It is impossible. Man's language is very weak. It works well in the marketplace, it is good in day-to-day life. But as soon as an attempt is made to touch a deeper source, it becomes difficult.

If we love someone, in a moment of love, talking stops. The lover may have thought so many things: "I will say this, I will say that." But when he's with his beloved, when he's with a friend, when he's with his mother – whoever he loves – he becomes silent. The words do not come; he remains quiet.

It is very surprising: whatever is important in this world has been said by being silent, by not talking. You remain quiet even in ordinary love because the experience of love is so deep it becomes difficult to put into words. The experience of godliness is so profound there is just no way to put it in words.

In China there was a mystic, Lao Tzu. He was eighty years old and had never written anything. People told him it was time he should write down his experiences, but Lao Tzu would laugh it off. He would say, "Right now, my preparations are not complete."

Finally, his last days came and people said, "At least now, write it down and leave it for us. Otherwise your experience may get lost."

Lao Tzu said, "How can I say it? All my life I have tried, but whenever I made an effort to say anything, whatever I wanted to say was always left behind. And whatever I did not want to say came out in the form of words." But people insisted, so he wrote a

book: *Tao Te Ching*. In the book, the first thing he wrote was: "Whatever I say, do not cling to it because whatever I want to say I will not be able to say."

In the very first chapter he said: "It is just like I am pointing to the moon and someone catches hold of my finger and thinks it is the moon. The same mistake also happens with words. Words can only indicate; they cannot tell the truth. But we catch hold of the words. It's as if I point and someone catches hold of my finger and thinks it is the moon."

The finger is not the moon, and the moon has no connection with the finger. If you want to see the moon, you will have to forget the finger. But you get caught in the fingers. Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, Sikhs: these are the names of those who have forgotten the moon and are clinging to the finger. Someone holds the finger of Nanak and is a Sikh, someone holds the finger of Krishna and is a Hindu, someone holds the finger of Christ and is a Christian. The moon is one, but the fingers can be many. It may be the finger of Christ, it may be of Nanak, it may be of Krishna, and it may be of Buddha or Mahavira. The fingers can be thousands, hundreds of thousands, but the moon is one.

It is one, but religion does not seem to be one. There are so many religions: so many fingers have been caught. If the moon is seen, only one religion will remain; the many religions will not be there. Truths cannot be many, but untruths can be many. If I want to tell a lie, there are many alternatives open to me. But if I speak the truth, there is no alternative. Truth can only be one, untruths can be many. Religion is the ultimate truth. Religion is connected with that which is the ultimate truth. Hence many religions are not possible.

So the first thing I would like to tell you is that nothing can be said about religion, but that indications can be made. But there is a danger that we catch hold of the indicators, which is a great mistake. All indicators need to be let go of. A man who wants to know religion has to leave scriptures behind because they are only indications, pointers. And a man who wants to know religion has to ultimately drop his master because teachers and masters are also pointers. A man who wants to know religion has to drop all pointers: he has to raise his eyes toward the moon. And there you will find no pointer.

So the first thing that has to be understood very clearly is that

people are clinging to the pointers, and the pointers have created immense problems. People fight over them, and the more we fight, the more difficult it becomes for religion to come into our life. Religion cannot come into a fighting mind.

Religion descends only in the type of mind where struggle has stopped. Godliness comes only to a door where there is absolute silence, where there is peace. But there cannot be peace at the door of a Hindu, there cannot be peace at the door of a Mohammedan; there the fighting continues.

I was in Ahmedabad some time back. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan had been there before me. Riots had taken place and he had tried to calm the people. He told the Mohammedans, "You should be real Mohammedans." He told the Hindus, "You should be real Hindus."

After him, Jayprakash Narayan had come and he told the people, "I am a Hindu and I am proud of being a Hindu."

When I was there, dangerous ideas were in the air. So I told the people, "If pseudo Mohammedans can create so much trouble, if pseudo Hindus can create so much trouble, pray they never become real pure Hindus and pure Mohammedans. The trouble will increase a thousandfold; it is not going to become less."

No, the question is not about a Mohammedan becoming a hardcore Mohammedan, the question is not about being a hardcore Hindu. The question is that the Hindu-ness of the Hindu should go and the Mohammedan-ness of the Mohammedan should go. After, what is left can be called a religious person – not a hardcore man, not a hardcore Hindu, not a hardcore Mohammedan. These hardcore shells must go. The man that is left – who is clear and straightforward, who has no label attached, who is not a Hindu or a Mohammedan – that man can be called religious.

If someone wants to meet God, he can't go there as a Hindu, he can't go there as a Mohammedan. As I have said, these religions are pointers. A man who catches hold of a pointer cannot go to the moon. So much misunderstanding is going on; people waste their lives trying to become a hardcore Hindu, a hardcore Mohammedan.

There is no question of being a hardcore Hindu or a hardcore Mohammedan as far as religion is concerned. Being religious has no connection with that. Being religious is a different dimension; it is a

different journey. When a person goes on that journey, all the temples, all the mosques, all the churches, all the gurdwaras become the temple and mosque of the whole. But the problem, our great difficulty is that whenever anyone attains such a religion and starts telling us something, at that very moment things go wrong.

There was a Mohammedan mystic, Farid. He was going on a journey, and Kabir's ashram was on the way. So Farid's followers said, "It will be good if we stay in Kabir's ashram for two days. It would be wonderful to see you talking together."

Farid said, "We can surely stop off there, but the possibility of us talking is remote. What can we talk about?"

And Kabir's followers told him, "Farid is going to pass by. It will be good if we can welcome him and make him our guest. He can stay two days, and when you are talking together there will be nectar showering on us."

Kabir laughed loudly. He said, "The possibility of us talking is doubtful." But the disciples did not understand.

Farid stayed with Kabir for two days. They met, they hugged each other, they cried, they laughed, they sat together. Two days passed, but they did not speak.

Farid's and Kabir's disciples became very anxious and also got a little bored. After two days when the farewell was over, after Farid had left Kabir's ashram, Kabir's disciples caught hold of Kabir, and Farid's disciples caught hold of Farid and they asked, "What did you do, why were you so quiet?"

Kabir said, "There is no way to talk about the ultimate truth. If Farid had not known, I would have tried to make him understand by speaking. But he already knew so there was no need even to talk."

When Farid was asked, he said, "The one who would speak would be foolish because there is no way in the world to say it. Only those who are quiet can enter there."

Farid's disciples said, "You speak to us."

Farid said, "I have to speak. I speak hoping that one day while listening, you will get tired and you will stop speaking too. Listening to my talks, listening to the words, you become silent. That is why I speak. I speak because you do not know. You cannot even understand the words. How can you understand silence? But Kabir knows there is no point in my talking to him."

Up to today, those on this earth who have known have not been able to say whatever they have known. They have tried to indicate, they have given hints. But great errors have been caused by those indications because you can only understand what you know. If you read the Gita, you will only understand that which you are able to understand, not what Krishna has said. If you read the words of Nanak, you will not be able to understand what Nanak has said because to understand, it is essential to be in the same state as Nanak. You will understand only that which you are able to.

Hence so much controversy goes on. There are a thousand commentaries on the Gita; a thousand people have had a thousand interpretations of the meaning of the Gita. They dispute the interpretations and argue their meaning is correct. But Krishna's mind was not so insane that the Gita had a thousand meanings. Krishna's mind was very clear. What he said had only one meaning, but that meaning was known only by Krishna. The commentators don't know anything. They are adding their own meanings. When we read a book, we don't take any meaning from it; we take words from it and add our own meaning. The meaning is always ours. The words are from the book, but the meaning is ours.

Whenever Buddha would finish his discourse, he would tell his sannyasins, "The talk is over. Now become engaged in the real work." This was said every day, and Buddha's sannyasins knew what the real work was. When Buddha finished talking, the "real work" meant now become immersed in prayer, meditation, and no-mind.

One night a thief came to Buddha's talk. After Buddha finished, he said, "Now start the real work for the night." The thief thought it meant he should start robbing houses. A prostitute had also come to listen. When Buddha said go into the real work for the night, the prostitute went to work in her brothel. Buddha had said only one thing.

The thief made his own meaning, the prostitute made her own meaning, and the sannyasins made their own meaning. If you were there, if I was there, we too would have made our own meanings. The meanings are always ours.

All the confusion has happened because the words are there in the scriptures, but the meaning we give is ours. Hence, no one can ever reach the truth through the scriptures. By clinging to the scriptures, we

just keep circling around ourselves. If someone wants to reach the truth, he will have to stop adding his own meaning. He will have to see things as they are and not add any meaning.

If for a single moment you see the world with open eyes and do not add any meaning to it, you will see God here and now. But we are not able to see. If you see someone coming in the distance, you will say your wife is coming. You have added meaning to it. You will say your friend is coming. You have added meaning to it. You will say your enemy is coming. You have added meaning to it. But if you don't add any meaning to all that is happening all around you – if you see whatever is, as it is – a very surprising thing will happen.

When someone does not add his own meaning, what is seen is God. He will see God even in a tree, in a flower, even in a stone lying by the road. We are not able to see that; we have become used to adding meaning. Hence even if we go in search of God, we make a statue and we add our meaning: here is God. In this way we go on adding our meaning. Here too we do not see what is.

I have heard...

Once in Japan, a traveling monk was spending the night in a Buddhist temple. It was winter and the monk was feeling very cold. He got up and went into the main hall where he saw three wooden statues of Buddha. He took one and used the wood to make a fire. The priest smelled the smoke from the fire and came running. He said, "What are you doing? A fire in the temple!" And it was not only a fire: Buddha was being burned.

The priest was mad with anger, but the statue had already turned to ashes. He said, "What have you done? Have you gone crazy? You have burned the Buddha!"

The monk took a stick and started raking the ashes. The priest asked, "What are you doing?"

He said, "I am looking for Buddha's bones."

The priest said, "You are absolutely crazy! Wooden statues don't have bones."

So the mystic said, "It is a very cold night and there are two more statues left. Bring those too, we will burn them and make ourselves warm. You yourself are saying wooden statues don't have bones. You know it is a wooden statue, but you still think it is Buddha. You know it is wood, but you believe it is Buddha. This belief is added by you."

The priest threw the monk out of the temple. When he opened the gate in the morning, the monk was sitting in front of a milestone. He had laid flowers on the milestone and was sitting there with folded hands. The priest thought, "This man is surely crazy." He went and shook the man and said, "What are you doing? Last night you burned Buddha's statue, and now you are sitting with folded hands in front of this ordinary milestone."

The monk said, "I am doing this just to test you. Last night you could see Buddha in the statue I set fire to. I wanted to find out if you can see Buddha in this milestone."

God can be seen only when we do not impose our meaning on life. We have imposed all the meanings. We see only what we want to see. We don't see what is. The atheist sees there is no God. He is imposing a meaning. The theist sees there is a God. He too is imposing a meaning. But a religious person is absolutely a third type of person. He does not impose a meaning; he says, "I will not give meaning to anything in life. I will remain empty and will know life as it is."

A person who is ready to know life as it is immediately becomes capable of knowing the truth of religion. But it is very difficult: we have deceived ourselves so much, we have changed everything from what it actually is. Go to a temple and look at a man kneeling with folded hands in front of a statue. He says he is praying. But if we were able to open his heart, we would surely not find any prayer there. It is possible we may find fear there, but his kneeling down has absolutely no connection with prayer. A fearful man is kneeling down with folded hands. There is fear within, but he is saying it is prayer. He is imposing the meaning of prayer on fear.

We have changed everything; we have put new names on everything. In reality, a roseflower is not a roseflower. The roseflower does not know anything about roseflowers. We have imposed a word: this is a roseflower. We are living with this word. We have never seen what is hidden inside a roseflower. We have never seen what is hidden in life. We have escaped from what is hidden in life; we have missed it. And we will keep on missing it because we are always trying to see something.

I have heard of an incident...

A monk was giving a talk in a village and a few people had

come to listen. A woman's son stood up in the middle of the lecture and told his mother he wanted to urinate. All the people started laughing and looked at the boy. After the assembly had finished, the monk called the woman and said, "Make your son understand if he is in a gathering, it is not polite to say directly that he wants to urinate. He should say something else."

The woman asked, "What should he say?"

The monk said, "Make up a code word. For instance, the child can say, 'Mother I want to sing.' You will understand, but no one else will understand it."

Later that night, the mother explained to her son that whenever he wanted to urinate he should say he wanted to sing.

After a year, the monk returned to the village and was a guest in the woman's house. The woman was away attending a marriage in the next village, and had asked the monk to take care of her sleeping son. It must have been midnight, and the boy shook the monk and said, "I want to sing a song."

The monk said, "Does anyone sing a song at midnight? Go back to sleep."

The boy was quiet for some time, but after a short while he said, "No, I can't sleep quietly, I will have to sing a song." The monk said, "What kind of a crazy boy are you? Does anyone sing a song at midnight? Wait for the morning. Then you can sing."

The boy said, "I will sing again in the morning, but right now I want to sing."

The monk said, "What kind of trouble has this woman left me with? I am tired, I want to sleep, and you want to sing a song. Shut up and sleep quietly. Stop making trouble."

How could the boy sleep quietly? Again he told the monk, "No, it is impossible to sleep quietly. I have to sing a song."

So the monk said, "If you cannot obey, just sing it softly in my ear."

We have also made up codes in life, and don't know things as they are. We are living a life completely removed from the reality; we have falsified everything. We have falsified the facts of life, the truths of life. We have given everything names, and by giving names, we have created problems; by giving names, we cannot see that which is. We invent things that are not there. What *is*, is God. If we could avoid insisting on giving names, we would immediately see God everywhere.

We cannot live without giving names. When we see a flower, we say it is a rose. When we see a man, we say he is a Hindu, he is a Mohammedan. If we see a book, we say it is holy, it is unholy. We are not ready to see things in life without naming them. Hence we miss God, which is nameless. We are not able to see anything without giving it a name.

We have even given many names to God. Someone says God's name is Rama. But Rama was the son of Dashrath, who was the king of Ayodhya. Rama is not the name of God. Rama was a beautiful man, but his name is not God's name. Someone says God's name is Allah; someone says his name is something else: it is Om or Brahma or Ishwar. We have given a thousand names. We are giving names to a God we do not even know, who we have not even met. A man repeats the name of Rama and he thinks he will find God. Does this mean a man who does not repeat the name Rama will not find God? Neither people will find it. By repeating Rama, you are wasting your life; you are just passing the time.

I was recently in a village where there is a temple containing thousands of books. Inside each and every book the name Rama has been written a hundred thousand times. In that temple, that is the only work. One hundred people sit day and night and write "Rama." The devotees of this temple are all over India. From all over India they send books filled with "Rama" to the temple. The person who looks after the library told me, "Do you know that hundreds of thousands of books have come? The shelves are now full; now we do not have any space. We will have to build a new temple. The religion is growing so fast and so many people are writing "Rama, Rama" and sending books to us."

I said, "Is religion being spread or madness? This paper could have been useful for so many children. This paper has been wasted."

The people who are writing "Rama, Rama" think they will attain godliness. God does not have a name. You will not attain it by repeating "Rama, Rama." You will have to drop giving names, you will have to see things without names.

If you experiment with this a little, you will have a new experience. Go to a garden sometime and don't give names to the flowers. Just stand near a flower. The mind will say it is a rose, the mind will

say it is jasmine, but tell the mind not to give it a name. The jasmine does not know its name; the jasmine has no name, the rose has no name. Does the sun have a name? Do the moon and the stars have names? We too have been born without a name, but we are given a name and from that point the deception begins.

A child is born in India; we give him the name Rama. Now his whole life he will think he is Rama. If someone says something disrespectful about Rama, he will stand up and fight. But is anyone born with a name?

We are born without names. Life is nameless. Truth has no name. But our minds are habituated to giving names. We are not ready to be nameless. If we meet someone and he says he has no name, we will say, "You seem to be a little mad." But the man is telling the truth. It is our minds that are mad. Does anyone have a name?

I have a friend who fell down as he was getting off a train. He is a doctor. His head was injured and he forgot everything – even his name. I went to see him but he did not recognize me. I asked him, "Don't you recognize me?"

He said, "How can I recognize you? It has become difficult even to recognize myself. I don't even know who I am."

His father whispered to me, "Don't mind what he is saying. His mind has gone mad."

I asked the father, "Do you know who you are? You are saying your son's mind is injured. Do you know who you are?"

He said, "I know my name; he does not even know his name. After falling down he has forgotten everything."

But are we our names? We are not, but we have given names to everything everywhere, and we have become lost in words and names. If we want to rise above it all, we will have to drop this habit of giving names. We will have to start looking at things without naming them.

If we can live even one hour without naming things, a new door will open in life, a door from where God enters. God has no name; if we can remain even for one hour without naming things, without forming words, thinking will stop. If we don't give names, if we don't form words, thoughts will stop. The process of thinking is the

process of naming. Thoughts will disappear; they will stop, and where thinking stops, there opens the door to God. The door opens in non-thinking. He comes where there is no thought.

We are filled with thoughts. We are drowned in thoughts twenty-four hours a day: words and words and words. Only words go around in our minds. If we close the door and sit in a corner and write down the words circulating in our minds, if we write them on a piece of paper, we will not be willing to show the piece of paper to even our closest friend. Seeing that paper, you will feel you are mad: all this is going on in your head. Words are roaming around like flies in your mind. The mind is filled with words all the time. It is never empty. As long as words continue to fill the mind, that which is beyond words will not be able to enter.

So, the second thing I would like to say about religion is you will have to learn the art of the non-thinking state; only then can you be connected to religion. You will have to learn the art of being silent, both within and without. Only in quietness can his footsteps be heard. Right now, we are filled with such noise we will not hear anything even if God passes our home with a procession and a band playing. His footsteps make no sound. We are so full of ourselves and he comes so quietly we do not notice it.

Rabindranath Tagore has written a story...

There once was a large temple with hundreds of priests and a hundred thousand devotees. That temple had immense wealth: millions and millions of rupees.

The high priest had a dream one night. He dreamed God was coming to their temple the next day. At first, the high priest did not believe it. It is a very strange thing: the people who go the temple put so much trust in the existence of God, but the priests of the temple do not have as much trust. They know the reality of the business. The whole setup is the priests' creation. They know very well there is nothing like God there. It is very difficult to find stronger atheists than priests: it is only a trade for them. They are just doing business. They have understood the whole system, how the business works – and they are not concerned with God. They are concerned with their jobs.

The high priest thought, "It seems like a dream, God has never come." But he decided to tell the other priests anyway.

At first they could not believe it, but finally one priest said, "The dream could be true. Life is very strange: in life what we call true can become a dream, while sometimes dreams can come true. We have to wait and see. What if God really comes?"

The high priest said, "Have you gone mad? I have been saying prayers in this temple for many years and he has never come. I have seen the people who pray come and go, but I have never seen the one to whom the prayers are offered. I have never seen him come. It is a dream."

The other priests said, "Even if it is a dream it does not matter; we can still prepare. If he doesn't come, there is no harm in it. But if he comes and we are not prepared, we will be in great difficulty." So, thinking perhaps he might come, they started preparing the temple. They cleaned, they lit lamps, they cooked food, and made all the preparations for God's coming.

They used to make an offering of food to God every day, and then they would offer it to themselves. That day this offering to God was entirely a different matter: they were wondering if they were in a kind of madness. God might actually come to take the offering of food. For whom were the flowers? For whom was the lamp being lit? The priests were being very religiously correct. Maybe God would come; it was better to prepare.

Then the evening came, and he had not come yet. They went outside to look again and again, but God was not there. Although the one we go out to see comes from within, the priests went outside again and again. From the steps they said, "He has not come."

The high priest said, "You are mad. I told you this morning he wouldn't come. Now we should eat the food we prepared and go to bed. We have worked hard the whole day for no reason. There was no reason for God to come in the dream. He never comes." So the priests ate the food. They were tired and went to sleep.

It was past midnight. It seemed a chariot was stopping outside the temple; the sound of the chariot wheels was heard. A priest woke up and said, "It seems his chariot has come!"

Another priest said, "Keep quiet, you fool. We have been troubled the whole day. Now stop talking. It is not a chariot; it is the thundering of the clouds. The whole day has already been spoiled. Don't spoil the night."

The priests went back to sleep. Outside, someone was climbing

the stairs; the sounds of their footsteps could be heard. A priest who was half asleep said, "It seems someone is climbing the stairs."

The others said, "Please shut up. No one is climbing the stairs. No one has climbed the stairs all day. Who would be climbing the stairs at night? There is no one; you have been hallucinating. You have wished in your heart he would come and so you are hallucinating. Please sleep."

Someone knocked at the door and again one of the priests said, "Someone is knocking at the door."

The high priest said, "You fools, will you allow us to sleep or not? The winds are blowing and they are banging against the windows. There is no one; the wind is just rushing by."

The night passed and when the priests woke in the morning, there were the tracks of a chariot stopping in front of the temple. There were footsteps on the stairs. Someone had knocked on the door. All the priests started crying. They were crying because they had missed the opportunity.

When I read this story, I felt perhaps we all miss the opportunity this way. When the sound of the chariot was outside, they said the clouds were thundering. When someone's footsteps were heard, they said it must be a hallucination. And when someone knocked at the door, they said it was the rushing of the wind. They thought all this while lying in their beds. They didn't get up and look. They made up reasons; they did not go there to see what was there. They gave names, they gave labels; they just thought about it and remained where they were.

We have been doing this our whole lives. It is not that God comes to some temple one night; he comes to our temple every day, he comes every moment. But we talk about it, give it labels, names, and miss it.

There was a mystic, Sai Baba. A Hindu sannyasin used to go to him, although Sai Baba lived in a mosque. It was not certain whether he was a Hindu or a Mohammedan. In reality, you can never be sure about the saints; only with pseudo saints can you be sure if they are Hindu or Mohammedan. What is the belief of a saint?

The Hindu sannyasin who had become his disciple could not live in the mosque, but his love toward Sai Baba was so great he would

visit every day to prepare food for him. He had to walk three, four miles in the sun to come, so one day Sai Baba asked him, "Why do you come from so far away? I will go to you. Tomorrow I will go to you."

The Hindu sannyasin said, "It will be my good fortune. What can be a greater fortune than you coming to my hut? Tomorrow I will wait for you there."

Sai Baba said, "Yes, wait. But will you recognize me or not?"

The sannyasin said, "Me, not able to recognize you? Of course I will recognize you!"

Sai Baba started laughing and said, "I have come before and you have not recognized me."

The sannyasin said, "Tomorrow I will not even blink my eyes. I will recognize you, I will wait for you."

It was midday, it was time to eat, but Sai Baba had not yet come. Then it was one o'clock and the Hindu sannyasin became anxious. He ran to the mosque with the food. He put the plate in front of Sai Baba and said, "Why didn't you come?"

Sai Baba started laughing and said, "I came, but you didn't recognize me."

The disciple said, "But no one came. Only a dog came. He tried to eat the food and I stopped him. I said, 'Go away, dog. Go away.'"

Sai Baba said, "That was me. Tomorrow I will come again, but will you recognize me or not?"

How could the disciple welcome a dog? The word *dog* created the hurdle. As soon as he saw the dog he thought, "A dog has come." A dog did come, but it was God in the form of a dog. There is godliness even in a dog, but the word *dog* was the problem. The disciple said, "Now even if a dog comes, I will accept him." But the dog did not come the next day. Life is not consistent; life changes every moment.

The next day a beggar, a leper came. As soon as he saw him coming from far away, the disciple shouted, "Go away, don't make the food unholy." By that time it was two o'clock and the disciple ran toward the mosque. He asked Sai Baba, "Why didn't you come? Today I waited a long time for you."

Sai Baba said, "Today I also came, but today I came with leprosy."

The Hindu sannyasin started crying. He said, "It is a very difficult task. How will I be able to recognize you?"

So Sai Baba said, "You give your own words to existence. That is the difficulty. That is the hindrance. Yesterday you said it was a dog and everything became difficult. Today you say it is a leper and the thing becomes difficult. Don't give something a name; only then you will be able to see me."

We are all in the habit of giving things names. That is why we can't see God all around. You will have to know God without giving names. If you want to know the secret of religion, the mystery, you will have to break this bad habit. You will have to develop the possibility of wordlessness, the possibility of emptiness, the possibility of silence. It is not that you will find God in some heaven. You will find him in a dog, in a beggar, in a rock, and even in your neighbor. He will be found even there. And if you look within, you will find him inside.

The meaning of "God" is existence. The meaning of God is that which is. The meaning of God is the totality. God is not a person; God is the name of the collective whole, the sum total of us all. If there can be a grand total in which we all are added, that total will be God. You don't have to go to the Himalayas and you don't have to go to Mecca or Kaaba to search for him. Looking for him in Kashi will not help. If you want to find him, you have to change your way of seeing.

Right now, your way of seeing is surrounded by words, surrounded by thoughts. If you want to see him, you will have to discover a way of seeing without words. You will have to find a new eye that is capable of seeing beyond words and thoughts: an eye that only sees and does not think. Such a third eye becomes the path toward the experience of religion. This third eye only sees; it does not think. That is the meaning of just seeing. As we are, we have stopped seeing. Before we see, we start thinking. Whenever we see, thinking comes together with it. We cannot see without thinking.

A religious eye has not yet been born inside us. We will have to develop the capacity to see without thinking: that is true seeing. We are always busy thinking. We think about each and everything. We have never seen a thing without thinking about it. If you ponder over it, you will be surprised. You have never seen anything without thinking. At night if there is a moon in the sky, you cannot see it without thinking. You have never experienced the silence of the night without thinking. But that is a faraway thing. If you are a husband, you have never gazed into your wife's eyes without thinking. If you are

a father, you have never looked into your son's eyes without thinking.

If even for a single second you become capable of seeing without thinking, the door will open immediately. Your wife will disappear and existence will be there. The son will disappear and existence will be there. The tree will disappear and existence will be there. The wall will disappear and existence will be there. This can happen like a sudden clash of thunder. To see without thinking can happen in a single moment. It is seeing without the mind.

When a child is born, it does not think; it only sees. If you put something red in front of the child, it is not able to think "This is red" because it does not know about these things; it only sees. It does not know this is a rattle, this is a doll; it does not know these words. It only sees.

Someone asked Jesus, "Who will be able to see your God?" Jesus said, "Those who have childlike eyes; those who are innocent like children. Only they will be able to see."

I don't think we have understood what it is to have a childlike innocence. Children have a quality that is not there in older people: the child is able to see without thinking. An old man is not able to see unless he thinks about what he is seeing. This is the fundamental difference between a child and an older person. The perception, the vision of the child is pure; no words create barriers. The child only sees. Because of this, it is difficult for older people to know the happiness of a child's world.

All children are close to godliness, closer than we are. As they grow, by giving them organization, schedules, we keep taking them further and further away from existence. An old man is very far away from existence. All children are close. The art of their being close is only that they are able to see the immediate; no word comes in between. On one side what is seen is there, and on the other side they are there; in between there is no word. In between there is no barrier, no obstacle. Their eyes are open and clear.

I call someone religious who has again attained childlike eyes, who has again attained childlike innocence. It is possible; there is no difficulty in it. Except for habit, there is no other difficulty. We have a habit and we are slaves to it.

One of my friends was a lawyer. He had a strange habit: whenever he was fighting a case and the argument got complicated, he

would start turning his coat button. It had become a habit. As soon as he would turn the first button of his coat, he could think more clearly and his argument would become more powerful. So whenever he was in difficulty, he would turn that button.

Even we ourselves, if we are worried, somebody will scratch their head, somebody will put his hand on his beard, and somebody will do something else to get relief.

There was a big case in the court. It was about the settlement of an estate, and my friend was fighting in the case. It was a matter of millions. The opponent's lawyer had been watching for a few days and noticed that whenever he put his hand on his button, he could argue very nicely, very logically. So the opposing lawyer bribed my friend's driver. The driver used to bring the coat to court; he was told to cut off the top button. The next day, my friend was wearing the coat and stood up in the court and started his cross-examination. A difficulty came, and his hand instinctively went to the coat button. It seemed as though everything was suddenly lost.

He told me, "My head started spinning. I felt as though everything was spinning, I immediately sat down on my chair. All arguments disappeared from my mind. It seemed with the loss of the button everything became a mess."

He lost a case for the first time and the reason for his defeat was that little button.

What does a coat button have to do with winning a case in court? It had become a habit.

There was an incident in the life of Napoleon. Perhaps you might not have heard of it because historians miss the valuable things and write about the pointless things. For instance, they say Wellington defeated Napoleon. But do you know why? He was defeated as a result of something very strange. Wellington did not defeat him at all.

Napoleon was a six-month-old baby when a stray cat came into the room and sat on his chest. His nanny had gone somewhere, and when she came back she chased the cat away. The cat had terrified Napoleon. Later in life he could fight with lions, but when he saw a cat he would start shaking. Whenever he would see one, it was as if the cat reached into his unconscious and he would become six months old again. His courage would be that of a baby. In a war

he could stand in front of cannon, but the claws of a cat seemed very dangerous.

On the day of Napoleon's defeat, Wellington took seventy cats and put them in the front line of his army. Somehow Wellington had come to know Napoleon was afraid of cats. When Napoleon saw the cats, he told his next in command: "Take charge of the army. I have lost my nerve; now I don't have the strength to fight, my hands and feet are shaking. I don't have any control over this. Why did Wellington bring these cats? Today a victory seems difficult."

Napoleon was defeated for the first time; it was his first and last defeat. In Napoleon's case, to be defeated by looking at a cat was just a matter of habit.

There is also a fatal habit in our minds: the habit of verbalizing. It is only a matter of habit. We are missing God because we do not have the vision and perspective of being without thought.

Vision with no thoughts is meditation. If we were able to see without thoughts, God could be seen now and here. You don't have to go far away to search for religion. If you think you have to go in search for religion, you have to understand this habit of the mind to verbalize and rise above it. We have not lost God. It is because of a habit in the mind, our being caught in a net of thoughts. It only seems we are lost.

I will finish with a small story...

I have heard a great poet was on a houseboat one night. He had lit a candle and was reading a book by the candlelight. It was a book on aesthetics. It was midnight, and he was tired and blew out the candle. Suddenly he was amazed. While the candle was lit, he had not noticed the full moon outside. The moonlight filled the sky and its beauty was reflected on the lake all around. The poet had not known because he had been so absorbed in his book.

Beauty is not contained in books. The poet was engrossed in his book, but beauty is not in books, even in books about aesthetics. Beauty was showering outside, it was spread all around. But because of the candlelight, the light of the moon was not able to enter the houseboat. It was waiting outside the windows. As soon as the candle was blown out, from the windows, the doors, from each and every crack and crevice, the moon rushed in and started dancing.

The poet was shocked into awareness and he started dancing. He wrote in his diary: "How crazy I am! The beauty was all around and I was seeking it in a book. Beauty was showering all around and I was trying to find it in words. Beauty was radiating all around, flowering all around, and I had lit a small candle and was preventing it."

The day you come to know godliness, you will know it is showering all around. Now you are caught up in books of words, in books of thoughts, and you are in the dim candlelight of the ego. The small light of the ego, the yellow light, is dirty, smoky. There is a greater light just outside the yellow light of the ego. It is the light of existence, the light of the moon. It does not have any haze, does not have any yellowness, any dirtiness; it is always fresh, never stale. The light of existence patiently waits outside. It is waiting for you to extinguish the candle.

We take such great care of our candle. We don't want it to go out. We become ever more engrossed in our book. Wisdom is not in books. The wisdom of religion is not in books. The knowledge of science is in books; hence science is available in libraries, in laboratories, in universities. But there is no library of religion, no laboratory of religion, no university. It is not available so easily because it is not available in books. You can learn about all sorts of things: agriculture, chemistry, physics. Only religion cannot be taught. Religion cannot be taught because it is present all around. To know it, you will have to change the habit of your mind, your conditioning, the ways of the mind. You will have to change it all.

If you can understand this, it is not difficult to change. When you pass by a flower, please do not give it any name. Just see it, what it is. And the flower will suddenly become new; its petals will become the petals of God. At night when you look at the sky, do not give names to the stars; do not even say they are stars. Just see, and so much peace will start showering from the stars – the peace of God. When you look at someone's face, do not give it a name; do not say it is Hindu or Mohammedan, do not give it a caste, and do not give it any description. Only look in the eyes. If you become capable of looking into a person's eyes silently, you have looked into the eyes of God. And afterward it will become difficult to forget what you have seen, who that was.

For me, religion is an experiencing. You can know it only when you have had it. No one can show it to you. There has never been

any way to show it. So what have I been doing here for the past hour? If it cannot be shown, why am I talking about it?

It is true that it cannot be shown, but a thirst for it can be created. I cannot take you to the lake, but there is a lake – I can vouch for it, I can be a witness to it. I cannot take you to the water, but the thirst within you can be evoked.

None of the enlightened people – Krishna, Nanak, Buddha – could give the truth; they only evoked a thirst for truth. They did not give godliness; they only evoked a thirst for it. Once your quest emerges, you will reach the lake yourself. The lake is not far away; it is just behind your house. Just turn your head and look back; the lake is there.

If there were no thirst, why would you bother to turn your head? If you are thirsty, you will look, you will seek the lake. There is a danger: many times people go on a quest only to seek something for their own advantage. If you go on a quest to reach a high position, nothing will happen, the thirst will remain. There is only one position that can erase all desires, and that is the position of God. Before reaching that, no thirst can be erased.

For instance, suppose a man only wants to become wealthy...

In America a millionaire died, Andrew Carnegie. At the time of his death, his wealth amounted to almost half a billion dollars – unbelievable at the time. A friend asked him, "You must be contented. You are leaving a huge amount of money."

Carnegie became very angry and said, "I am leaving peanuts! My idea was to earn a billion dollars."

He said it in a way that seemed like he was leaving only pennies behind. But if he had left a billion dollars behind, would it have made any difference? No, it would have been the same. The desire would have moved forward, he would have said, "What about a thousand billion? I want a trillion dollars." The desire would have moved forward. If he had earned a trillion, would the matter end there?

No, our being longs for a treasure that is infinite, while we are searching for small treasures. The race for wealth can end only after attaining God. It cannot end before because God is the ultimate wealth. After that, there is no need for any other wealth. Even the race for a high position ends after attaining God because he is

the ultimate position. After attaining God, all races to attain something end.

We don't realize we have given the wrong names to the quest for wealth and position. If a man says he wants to become wealthy, in reality he is saying he is not ready to be poor. But he does not know that no matter how much wealth he gets he will still remain poor. Poverty does not disappear by gaining wealth. The wealth increases on the outside and the man who is poor on the inside goes on becoming poorer. His poverty becomes deeper.

What happens by attaining a higher position? Your seat becomes higher and higher, but what difference does it make? Your seat may reach to Delhi, but what does that matter? Just the height of the chair becomes bigger, that's all. This is childish! Small children stand on a chair and say to their father, "Look I have become taller than you." The father laughs and remains silent. People are standing on chairs and saying, "See, I have become more important than you." They are standing on chairs: I have become a minister, I have become president, I have become this, I have become that. They are like children standing on chairs, telling other children they have become big. Inside there is no change: it is all the same pettiness, the same poverty, the same anxiety.

Without attaining God, a man will not become peaceful – cannot. But we have diverted our search for godliness. We have invented many ways to go astray, and given many names to them. All that can be done is to point out what it is people really desire. People's deepest desire is neither for wealth, nor power nor position. Man's real desire is for godliness. The day you are able to see that your desire is for godliness, that very day a revolution will happen in your life. The birth of a religious man will begin in your life. The day you understand you have been caught up in a net of words, and once you can rise above that net of words, with that rising, you reach the world of truth. Where there are no words, there truth is. Where there is absolute silence, there truth is. Where everything is silent, there the temple of the divine is.

Don't cling to these few things I have told you. Clinging to my words can do much damage. My words are meant to be only pointers. My words are like a finger pointing. Forget me, forget my words; raise your eyes toward the moon which is there, which is always waiting for you. The day you arrive on that moon, a shower

of blessedness will take place in your life – a shower of immortality, a shower of life. There is no other bliss than religiousness, there is no other peace than religiousness, and there is no other nectar than religiousness. Don't go on drinking poison.

You have heard my talk with such silence and love, for which I am very grateful to you. And to end, I would like to bow down to the godliness present in all of you. Please accept my respect.

love and non-possessiveness

If we were in a building that was on fire, we would not sit around thinking. In the same way, we should not put forward thoughts about man today, about humanity today. Man is in crisis and so it is not so much a question of thinking, but of doing. It is as though we are all surrounded by a building that is on fire. If something is not done quickly, perhaps man will not even survive.

This is where the question of religion also arises: it is meaningless to talk about God, the soul, heaven and hell. The most essential focus for religion today is human beings. Only later can anything else be worth considering. People are the most important – not God, the soul or ultimate liberation. In the entire history of humanity, people have never been in such danger. This situation has never existed. Perhaps most of us cannot see this; you need eyes to see the problem. Blind people can propose solutions, but to see the problem you need eyes.

At this time, there are very few people in the world who can see the problem, while there are many who are ready to give solutions. Everyone thinks he knows the solution, but it should be remembered that yesterday's solutions are not helpful today. As times change,

solutions must be absolutely new. No matter how ancient the essence of a solution may be, the solution itself must always be new.

Today, in our present state of crisis, the biggest concern is that the solutions are old and the problems are new. People think they know the solution, but very few have eyes capable of seeing the problems. They can't properly see what the problems facing man are today.

Some people think the problems are political: they think searching for a political solution will end the problems. But they are wrong. The problems of mankind are basically not political. Some people think the problems are economic. They think if those problems can be resolved, the world will be filled with peace and prosperity. These people are also under an illusion. No amount of riches, no amount of wealth and prosperity, can dissolve the misery, suffering, and anguish in people's minds.

People's fundamental problem today is spiritual: it is somewhere in the depths, connected with their innermost being. We are lacking the deeper vision that is needed to see the problem. We see very superficially and on the surface, and don't enter deeply. Perhaps we don't want to see deeply because for that, courage is needed. And not only is courage needed, but you need to accept the possibility there may be no solution. Only by accepting this very possibility can a person see deeply inside himself.

A superficial mind immediately accepts a solution without seeing the problem. And it has neither the courage nor the boldness to accept that perhaps the problem may not have a solution at all. We keep repeating old learned solutions, afraid of a situation that is incomprehensible to us. In this way, people's solutions are always borrowed from the past, while the problems are of the present. That is why no understanding is possible. People whose thinking is based on the past are never capable of solving any problems of the present.

If the problems are of today, we need a spontaneous and alert intelligence. If a problem is there right now, an immediate awakening of the intelligence to encounter it is needed. The thinking of the past will not work and traditional solutions will not be helpful. This is the first thing I would like to say. Today the greatest problems and the greatest difficulties are because of this.

If anyone asks for a solution, people will bring up something they have memorized from the scriptures. They may have memorized the Gita, the Koran or the Bible, and from those memorized teachings

immediately bring up something as a solution. Those teachings will not work.

Life renews itself each moment, and similarly truth also manifests itself in ever newer forms. Truth is always transforming itself. If new truths cannot be found within you, the world going into crisis cannot be prevented. I am not saying truth is old or new. Truth is eternal and immortal. But in each age the expression of truth, its manifestation, takes a new form according to the state of mind of that age.

Each person has to discover his own life: you cannot live the life of your parents, of past generations; you have to breathe for yourself, no other person can breathe for you. Similarly, your own truth will have to be discovered by you. No other human being, Mahavira or Buddha or Krishna or Christ, can breathe for you. They cannot become truth for you. The moment you discover your own truth, it will certainly be the same truth as that of Krishna, of Christ, of Buddha and of Mahavira. But you cannot borrow it from them. You will have to manifest it within yourself. When your truth awakens and you realize it, those who have realized before will become witnesses to your truth.

Krishna and Christ can only be a witness to the truth that has arisen in you; they cannot give you the truth. In this world, no man has ever been able to give truth to another man, nor will he be able to in the future. This is just as well: if someone can give you truth, someone can also take it away from you. Truths given by others have no value. You will have to attain truth by your own life force; you will have to find your own nirvana.

This is why I would like to say to you that truth is not something that is apart from you and that you can attain. It is the beautification and refinement of your own self. It is the final refinement of your own being. The last form of your being, when it becomes totally refined, is called truth. Truth cannot be an achievement on the outside. Truth is the self, refined.

Hence I would like to tell you: in the crisis situation of today, of this age, of mankind, the biggest difficulty is that our solutions, our truths are borrowed while the problems are ours. When the truths are given by Krishna, Christ, and Mahavira, and the problems are ours, there cannot be any correspondence between them. The medicines are old and the diseases are new, and there is no connection between them.

That is why today people have fallen into great inner difficulty. There are so many temples, so many mosques, so many sects, so many organizations, there is so much discussion about religion – but even if you search everywhere, you will not find religion on this earth. There is so much thinking about it, so many publications about it, so much literature about it, so many teachings about it – but you cannot find religion anywhere, no matter how much you search for it. The reason is that religion is not in the teachings, thoughts, holy books, scriptures, temples or mosques. Each individual has to discover it in his own individual being; and once it is found there, it is seen everywhere.

I could be walking on a path where there is sunlight all around, but if there is darkness inside me, the path will be dark for me. Or I could be walking on a dark path on a moonless night, but if a lamp is lit within me, the way is full of light for me. If there is darkness within a man's being, there is darkness in the world. If there is light within a man's being, there is light in the world.

One night, a great sage was taken for a boat ride by his guest. As soon as they sat in the boat, the sage took both the oars of the boat in his hands. The guest said, "Forgive me, no one should take someone else's oars in his hands. Give me one of the oars." The sage gave him one of the oars.

After some days, the guest was leaving. It was a dark night, and he said, "It is such a dark night; how can I travel? The way is dark, deserted, and I'm traveling alone."

The sage said, "I will come with you some distance. I will light a lamp for you. Take the lamp and the path will be lit for you." He lit the lamp and gave it to the departing guest.

They had hardly climbed down the stairs when the sage blew out the lamp. With the dark lamp in his hands, the guest said, "What are you doing?"

The saint said, "If someone cannot row your boat, how can he light the lamp for you? When you must row the oars of the boat alone, who can be your companion in the darkness? There too you will have to travel alone."

The journey of truth is made in utter aloneness. There is nobody with you, no companion. In the ordinary world, you can always have

somebody with you, you can always have a companion. But where nobody is with you, where nobody is your companion – that is what is called religiousness. The journey of religion is utterly alone.

No one should remain in the illusion that someone can be a companion and a fellow traveler there. In the world of religion, no one can be a companion and a friend. Hence religion is the ultimate bravery. Only those who have the utmost bravery are ready to be alone. Only those who have the capacity to set off alone in the ocean can enter the world of unknown truth, of unknown self. And the ocean is such you can have no idea where the shore can be found. Such a lonely journey demands ultimate courage, ultimate valor.

In the search for truth, in the search for religion, we cannot have the help of a companion, of scriptures, or of the creators of the scriptures. When we become interested in religion, we mistakenly become interested in religious scriptures, not in religion. But there is a great difference between religion and religious scriptures. When we become interested in religion, we become interested in religious sects rather than in religion. There is a difference between religion and religious sects. And when we become interested in religion, we become interested in religious teachers, although there is a difference between religion and religious teachers.

Religious scriptures and religious sects are not religion. The creators of scriptures and the religious teachers are not religion. Religion can be attained only within your individual self. The scriptures are outside, religious sects are outside, and religious teachers are also outside. Anything outside can never uncover anything of the inner world. Things that are outside will have to be known outside, and that which is inside will have to be known inside. And when that happens, religion is realized. This realization is the ultimate revolution, it transforms someone's whole personality and the direction of his life.

How can we experience the religion I am talking about? If it is not available in the religious scriptures or from the creators of the scriptures, or in religious sects, how can we attain it? I would like to tell you a few things about this. And I would like to tell you that if such a realization is attained, the crisis in the world can be stopped. Even if just a few people attain realization, our age will have the eyes to see and a vision, and perhaps we may be capable of saving the entire world.

People have forgotten all about this type of religion. They say

the idea of breaking away from the dead past is what atheists do, the atheists who deny everything and say only matter exists – what the scientists who say there is no soul, no ultimate freedom do. The religious teachers, the priests, the preachers say these atheists, these scientists, these materialists, these believers in dead matter have distanced people from religion. But this is absolutely wrong.

This is just as wrong as if there is darkness in my house and I say lamps were lit there, but darkness came and extinguished them. Darkness cannot extinguish a lamp. No materialist can wipe out religion. Religion is a great radiant flame, an eternal flame. To extinguish it is beyond materialism. The truth is absolutely beyond this. The reality is that when a lamp is extinguished, darkness enters. The truth is that when religion becomes weak, materialism enters.

People who say religion has been destroyed by materialism are wrong. The reality is that religion has become empty and hence materialism has become strong. This is something absolutely different. I am saying this because people think the power of materialism has become much stronger than that of religion. They worry about what will happen to religion in the future if materialism constantly grows.

If it were true that religion has become weak because materialism is constantly growing, it would also be true that perhaps in the future religion would be totally destroyed. Our involvement with materialism is constantly becoming bigger and bigger. Our intellect is becoming more and more scientific. Scientific ways of thinking have become the most respected, so what will become of religion?

I do not see that religion will disappear. The strength of religion is positive: no atheism, no materialism can destroy that positive energy. But the opposite does seem to be happening, and all the so-called followers of religions and their preachers, to hide their own guilt, go on blaming the materialists and scientists for the downfall of religion. In reality, the disruption of man's relationship with religion is because of the so-called religious people themselves. In the name of religion, they have created the basis for the downfall of religion. What is being thought and taught in the name of religion has uprooted religion from its soil.

No man of awareness can accept the sort of religion we see all around us. There is such stigma happening in the name of such religion. The greatest stigma is when a religion claims to connect people with God; such a religion disconnects people from one

another. And something which disconnects one man from another cannot become a bridge that connects man with God.

Where is God? God is not a person who is sitting somewhere in the sky; God is the name of the consciousness permeating the whole. A religion that creates walls between one consciousness and another cannot make you one with the unified consciousness of the whole.

I was in Kolkata a few days ago. Someone asked me which religion I belonged to. I told him whenever someone asks "Which religion..." at that very moment he is not talking about religion. A person who is religious can only be religious. There is no way for him to belong to any religion. There cannot be a wall between one religion and another religion. In reality, there cannot be two religions. Wherever there are two religions, you can be certain irreligion is there in the name of religion. This must be understood.

Truth does not have two forms; truth does not have many types and kinds. Truth is one, and religion is also one. "Many-ness" in the name of religion, all these religious sects and traditions, has become like leprosy; it is so rotten it is not surprising that intelligent and sensible people stand up against it. The different teachings of these religions have distanced people from religion. If people can be reunited with true religiousness, the solution of the world crisis will be found.

Whoever separates themselves from religion will inevitably find restlessness and anguish. Religion is the groundwork for people's inner health, not blind faith or belief; it is about finding inner health. The more someone is connected with religion, the healthier he is at his innermost core. The meaning of health is peace, the meaning of health is beauty, the meaning of health is positivity, the meaning of health is bliss.

When bliss, peace, and health have come together inside, in that synthesis, in that peaceful state, people's eyes can go beyond matter, be capable of seeing God rising above matter.

Someone who is restless cannot see beyond matter. Someone who is peaceful, his eyes penetrate matter toward God. When someone asks me, "Does God exist, does the soul exist," I do not tell him God exists or the soul exists; I only ask him if he has the eyes to see the soul and God in everything. The question is always of the eyes.

The more restless a man is – the more shaky he is on the inside,

the more tension he has – the more duality and conflict he will have in his mind. His eyes become cloudy, unclear. The duality within, the tension inside, the restlessness within cloud the eyes, and even seeing things that are very close becomes difficult. We have become incapable of seeing things that are close, we are so confused and busy inside that there is no question of opening our eyes to see things that are further away.

I have heard about a man... This can't be a true story, but the man who told it to me had pondered over it:

I have heard a man died, and only realized after he had died that he had been alive.

In his life, he had never found time to know life, he had never found time to relax and look at his life. He had been so busy, so overwhelmed, he had not even known he was alive. When he died, the peacefulness of death erased all his tensions and in that darkness, in that peacefulness, he realized what had happened. He had been alive for so many years and had not known anything.

Most of us don't know we are alive. Most of us don't know what is around us. We keep our eyes shut because of the inner conflict, because of the constant duality within us. And because our eyes are closed, we are not able to see anything other than matter. Matter is the grossest reality; that is why even a blind man comes to know matter is there. But a more subtle power, a more subtle vision is needed to penetrate existence. A subtler person is needed to go to that depth. A blind man will collide with a wall if he walks into it; so eyes are not needed to see a wall: to collide is enough.

I would like to remind you that insight is not needed to know matter; to collide is enough. We are capable of knowing only those things with which we collide. The rest of existence remains unknown, unfamiliar, because in order to know the rest of existence, eyes are needed. It is not enough to collide.

We can feel objects because we can touch them, we can feel objects because our senses collide with them. It is because of the collision that we can feel there is something there. But where there is nothing to collide against, we think nothing exists. Truth lies where we do not collide; that is where the meaningful existence is. Existence is not where we are colliding.

For that subtle vision, the unclarity and restlessness need to disappear from within. What is this unclarity, what is the restlessness, and how can they be removed? I would like to tell you three important maxims about this. If your life can be lived according to these three maxims, you can gain the eyes with which to enter the subtleties of existence. The unclarity will disappear, your eyes will open, and you will become capable of seeing a reality that we are not able to see ordinarily.

God and the soul are not the result of the thought processes of a few men, they are not a logical conclusion people have come up with. But if you ask the theists, the so-called theists, they will talk as if God is a conclusion you reach through argument or logic. They will tell you the world exists and hence there has to be a creator of this world. That creator is God. They present God in a mathematical, in a logical way. But those who give arguments for the existence of God have never experienced or known God themselves.

The question of God's existence is not a question of logic. The question is of experiencing. If within you a center of subtle sensitivity becomes active, if a center of delicate receptivity becomes active, you will start experiencing the movement of subtle energy in the world, where at the moment you only see gross matter. Experiencing the movement of this subtle energy in the world – that experiencing is God. And to feel this subtle energy it is essential the eyes are free of any unclarity, free from duality, free from conflict, free of tension. If there is complete silence within, like a lake that has no ripples on it, all the mysteries of this world unfold.

Hence the question is not about the mysteries of the world; the question is about their being complete receptivity within an individual, within a person. It is about a complete silent receptivity. If that is there, the world becomes new. If that exists, life becomes different. If that exists, a revolution happens. I would like to tell you three small maxims on how such silent receptivity can be born. These three maxims are essential, central to all religion.

The first maxim is expanding love. Anyone who has ever really known life will be able to understand this very precious and valuable maxim: if I am able to love the whole world, all my conflicts with the world will disappear. The beginning of any conflict with another person is the point at which my love for that person diminishes. Whenever I become connected to the world with something other

than love, the world takes the form of turmoil, of conflict, of quarreling. Whenever I become connected with anyone in any other way besides love, that relationship creates all sorts of conflict, all sorts of feverishness, all sorts of quarrel, all sorts of mental struggle and tension. That hatred, violence, anger can create conflict and unclarity within me.

For those who want to know the truth, who want to experience themselves, who want to settle into the experience of the invisible world beyond matter, there is no other way than love. Love means to come together with the world in a relationship of peace and non-struggle. Only love liberates. Ordinarily we think love binds, but what binds is not love. What binds is attachment. Attachment is a form of hatred; it is not the opposite of hatred. That is why attachment so often turns into hatred.

Just a slight change in a situation and the attachment you had can turn into hatred. You thought your attachment was love, but if just a little change happens you are ready to kill the person you thought you loved. The attachment turns into hatred because just beneath this thin layer of attachment hatred is always present. When that thin layer bursts, hatred appears. Attachment is nothing but a form of hatred.

Love is a totally different thing. Love is a way of relating toward everyone, toward the entire world, that has no possibility of turning into hatred.

An incident happened in the life of Gautam Buddha. One morning, a man spit on him. The man was angry with Buddha because he did not like what he was saying. Buddha's revolutionary vision was making the man restless and disturbed. He expressed his anger by spitting on Buddha.

Buddha wiped off the spit with a cloth and then asked him, "Do you want to say anything else?"

The man asked, "Do you think I have said something by spitting?"

Buddha said, "Certainly you have said something. Perhaps you were too angry and were unable to express yourself in words. So you said it by spitting. But you said something, and I have understood it. Is there anything else you want to say?"

The man must have been dumbfounded. He left in silence. The next day he came to Buddha and said, "Please forgive me."

Buddha said, "Why are you asking for forgiveness?"

What the man said is worth contemplating; he said, "It is because your love has always remained available to me. Yesterday when I left you, I thought perhaps you would not be able to love me anymore. You would no longer be able to give me any love. I had with my own hands ended the love that had been available all along."

Buddha laughed and said, "Do you think I loved you because you were not spitting on me? If I loved you for that, the love would have ended."

Love that has a reason can turn into hate any day. Love that is a condition can transform into hatred instantly. Love that is for a reason may sometimes be there and sometime it may not be there. Hence, love that has a reason I call attachment; love that is without a reason, any condition – only that is love.

So Buddha told the man, "Even now I love you because I am helpless as far as love is concerned. I cannot do otherwise. Don't think I loved you because of yourself. I loved because of myself. I am helpless; there is no other way for me. Anything you do – good or bad, favorable or unfavorable, for me or against me – cannot change my love. You cannot change my love. Why? – because I have not loved you for any of your reasons.

"For me, love is similar to the light that shines from a lamp. An enemy passes, a friend passes, and it makes no difference; a good man passes or a bad man passes, it makes no difference; someone you know passes or a stranger passes, it makes no difference. The light of the lamp falls on anyone who passes by. Even if no one passes by and the room is empty, still light shines from the lamp."

Buddha said, "Love showers without a thought on whom it is showering, without a thought why it is showering, without a thought whether anyone is present or not."

When from someone a feeling of well-being and benediction toward the whole world showers like light, things start to happen. He becomes free of duality toward the whole world. And when someone is free of duality toward this world, all dualities start disappearing from within him. The unclarity starts disappearing. When mystics talk about love and nonviolence, or about compassion and kindness, they are not talking about social morality. All these things they talk of are the core of the inner discipline. Without love, no human being

can ever become silent. Without love, no man can create a situation within himself where he becomes capable of knowing godliness.

Christ says, "If someone insists that I give a definition of God, I would say love is God." This small maxim is very valuable. If someone asks Mahavira what religion is, he says nonviolence is religion. There is no other meaning of nonviolence. If someone asks Buddha what religion is, he says friendliness is religion. Friendliness, nonviolence, love: all these are synonymous; there is no difference between them.

If someone wants to experience God, the first step he will have to take inside will be of love. The experience of God will not come by logic but by the expansion of love. God will not be found by thinking but by the experience of love. He will have to develop love.

So the first maxim is: expand your love. Let there be a flow of love toward the whole world – without any cause, without any reason, without any conditions. Sitting or standing, sleeping or awake, in someone's presence, in someone's absence – it may be to birds or plants, it may be to the trees or to the stars in the sky – let nothing but love continuously flow from your eyes.

Once when Madame Blavatsky was passing through a small village in Russia, someone asked her a question. Later she was passing through a village in Tibet and someone asked her a question. Then in India, she was passing through a village and someone asked her a question. The same question was asked in each place, and for the same reason – and Madame Blavatsky gave the same answer each time.

Whenever she would go anywhere, she would carry a big shoulder bag full of flower seeds. She would sit in the train and throw the seeds out the window. People would ask what she was throwing and why she was doing it. She always said, "I am throwing a few seeds so flowers will bloom along the way. It will rain, the seeds will sprout, and there will be flowers."

People asked her, "Why? Is there a possibility you may come this way again? Will you be able to see the flowers?"

Blavatsky said, "Not me personally, but I will be seeing them through thousands of eyes, and the happiness and bliss of those eyes will also be mine."

I am not telling you to also throw flower seeds along the way. But

I would like to tell you there are only two types of people in this world: those who throw flowers for other people and those who throw thorns. These are the only two types of people. And if you don't throw flowers on the path, whether you know it or not, you are throwing thorns on the path where others will come.

As long as you are alive, you are giving out something. Life means giving out. Something or other is spreading outward from your life. As long as you are living, something is radiating around you. Life means to radiate.

So remember, if someone is not throwing flowers, knowingly or unknowingly, he is throwing thorns. Someone who is not radiating light, knowingly or unknowingly is radiating darkness. Anyone who is not radiating feelings of goodness and benediction toward people should remember he is sending out a message of death, suffering, and misery to people. Every human being is giving out either blessings or curses; there is no other alternative, there is no third type of man. Life has no third type of man.

Expanding your love and showering flowers on other people's way it is not a costly affair. Remember, what you shower on other people's way not only benefits others; the moment you shower, it becomes beneficial to you, no matter what may happen to others. When a person with a full heart radiates love, it is not necessary that others should receive the love. It is possible others' doors may be closed; perhaps they may be so unfortunate that their eyes are closed and they cannot receive the message. But the person who is radiating love is simultaneously raising his own consciousness. By radiating love, he himself is rising because as he radiates love, peace is being crystallized within.

When love goes from the inside to the outside, peace crystallizes within. And when hatred goes from the inside to the outside, restlessness gathers. Hatred going out leaves restlessness as a shadow within, while love leaves peacefulness as its shadow within. Peace within is the shadow of the love that spreads outward. Restlessness is the shadow of hatred; hatred spreads outside and restlessness remains within.

If a person wants to have clear eyes, he should develop an expansion of love all around him – he should spread a feeling of benediction, friendliness, and nonviolence toward the whole world. Sitting or standing, sleeping or awake, the more his love expands, the more liberated from the world a person will be. There is no other

liberation than love. Hatred binds, love liberates. Attachments that bind are part of hatred, are bound with hatred. Love is liberation. If I am free from attachment to someone I love, I am able to love the whole world. That is how I can become free from the whole world.

Remember, that which liberates is love, and the more it liberates, the more love there will be. If it liberates totally, it is total love, and the name of total love is nonviolence. This first maxim is in order to attain purity within, to remove the unclarity.

The first maxim is expanding love, and the second maxim is diminishing possessiveness. The more someone rids himself of his possessiveness, his possessions, the lighter he becomes in the same proportion. The more a person accumulates belongings and things, the heavier he becomes in the same proportion. The burden of belongings becomes very heavy on him, and he begins to fall downward.

A sage was traveling outside India and was witness to a sad event. A building was on fire and people were rushing into the building to try and save the things inside. They were able to save almost everything, then they asked the owner, who was standing outside in a state of shock, if there was anything else of value they should try to save. Tears were streaming from the owner's eyes. He said, "I cannot remember anything. Go inside once more and see." But this time the people came back crying.

The crowd asked them, "Why are you crying?"

They said, "We have made a terrible mistake. We were so involved in saving the belongings, but the owner's only son was sleeping inside. He died in the fire."

The sage, who was standing in the crowd and saw this incident, wrote in his diary, "What I saw that day in the burning building, I see inside each and every man. Most people get busy saving their belongings while the owner of those things slowly, slowly dies. The day comes when the belongings are saved and the owner is dead."

A man who is engaged in saving his belongings is irreligious; irreligiousness has no other meaning. Someone who forgets he is the master and is engaged only in saving his belongings – that man is irreligious.

Being a religious man means the vision changes from his belongings to his self. The self becomes primary, and belongings

become insignificant and secondary. Only then does religiousness begin in someone. The more someone becomes engaged in saving his belongings, in the same proportion his life force dies. One day he will almost be a part of his belongings, and the urge to collect more and more belongings will gradually turn him into the greatest beggar. Those whom people think are emperors, people with eyes see as beggars. Those whom people think of as beggars, people with eyes see as emperors.

Buddha was passing by the capital of a kingdom. The king was wondering whether to receive him. He thought, "A beggar is coming. Is it right for a king to receive him?" He asked his ministers, "Is it right for me to go? Should a king go outside the city to receive a beggar?"

An old minister said, "Forgive me, but if you had eyes, you would think of Buddha as an emperor and of yourself as a beggar."

The king said, "What are you saying? How am I a beggar?"

The old minister said, "A man whose desires are infinite has an infinite beggar within, and a man who has no desires left is a master. A man who does not ask for anything – only he is an emperor. A man who asks for something, his wanting makes him a beggar."

I am reminded...

There was a Mohammedan mystic, Farid. The people of his village had a request of him: "The emperor Akbar respects you. Could you go to Akbar and ask him to open a school in the village?"

Farid said, "I have never asked anything from anyone. I am not a beggar, I do not ask anything from anyone. But as all of you are requesting it, I will go." On the way, Farid thought, "I will go early in the morning when Akbar will be coming out of the mosque after prayers. Then I will ask him."

Farid reached the mosque as the prayers were about to finish. He saw Akbar praying with raised hands: "O God, give me more wealth, give me more riches, expand the boundaries of my kingdom, give me more fame, give me more glory, let the boundaries keep on doubling day and night." This he was saying at the end of his prayers.

As soon as he got up, Akbar noticed Farid's back. Farid was descending the steps of the mosque. Akbar ran and asked him, "Why are you leaving? Why did you come?"

Farid said, "I came thinking you were an emperor and I am turning back seeing you are a beggar. I saw even you are begging. I saw your desires have no end. You are asking for even more."

The more possessions a man desires, the more he becomes a beggar. And in this world, godliness is not available to beggars; it is available to masters, it is available to emperors. Those who are not masters of themselves are not capable of seeing the inner reality of the universe, of being a master in this universe. Hence possessiveness is the biggest hurdle, and non-possessiveness is the biggest help, the greatest path, the greatest bridge.

If a man wants to attain himself, he will slowly have to let go of his possessiveness, until he reaches the place where he is absolutely alone and has nothing else left. What does it mean to possess nothing? It means to have no desires within. There are no desires left inside to achieve anything. The soul develops as desires lessen, while the soul shrinks as desires grow. Desiring and the soul are opposites. Desiring is the door to the world and a man who turns his back on desires, who returns to himself, attains the door to the soul.

I have told you two maxims: expanding love and diminishing possessiveness. Let love expand and possessiveness diminish. Remember this: the more your love expands, the more it will help in diminishing possessiveness. And the smaller the possessiveness, the more it will help love to expand. A person who has great possessiveness will have very little love. The more possessive a person is, in the same proportion the narrower and smaller his love becomes.

Unfortunate are those whose possessions are many and in whom love is missing. Blessed are those who become empty of possessiveness and in whom love is total. Both move together: when love moves forward, possessiveness moves backward. When possessiveness moves backward, love moves forward. They are interconnected maxims: the expansion of love and the diminishing of possessiveness.

These two maxims are about relating with the world outside. In the outer world, contact with consciousness will develop through love and contact with matter will diminish through a shrinking possessiveness. Through love, we will develop contact with the godliness available all around; through diminishing possessiveness, we will break off our connection with the matter that surrounds us.

These are the two maxims for the outside world: love and

non-possessiveness. In the inside world, a person who practices these maxims will gradually find the unclarity vanishing from his eyes. His tensions will come to an end. His inner duality will disappear. As his possessiveness becomes less, his inner conflict will diminish, antagonism will diminish, and the race to succeed will diminish. A great stillness will arise within him. As his love expands, a great peace will grow within him. Love brings peace and non-possessiveness.

Lastly, the third maxim: settling into the deepest core of your being. The first maxim is expansion of love. The second maxim is diminishing of possessiveness. The third maxim is settling into the deepest core of your being. When your inner peace becomes profound and stillness arises – peace comes from love, stillness arises from non-possessiveness – you can ask: "Who is at the deepest core of my being? What is the deepest core of my being? Where do I exist in my ultimate *isness*, that place where I cannot go any further?"

You can go beyond the body because you can see this is your body. The person who is seeing the body is separate from the body; the person who is experiencing the body is separate from the body. If your hand gets cut, you will experience your hand has been cut. So the hand is separate from the person who is experiencing that the hand has been cut.

There is a difference between you and what is yours. What is yours is not your "I." You can see your body, you can experience your body. You are beyond your body; the body cannot be your life.

Now enter in. Can the breath be your life? You can watch your breath: when the breath comes in you can watch it, and when it goes out you can watch it. If you wish, you can stop your breath for a short while. The breath comes and goes; you can experience it. The person who experiences the breath is beyond it, so breath too is not your life.

Are thoughts your life? Watch the mind; you can even watch the thoughts. You can watch when anger comes; you know when you feel attachment; you know when a stream of thoughts comes. The consciousness that is aware of these thoughts, that consciousness is beyond the thoughts.

In this way, you can gradually enter your deepest place, and it is very easy to do if you are peaceful and still inside. You can see the body as separate, the breathing as separate, and the thoughts as separate. Finally there remains nothing from which you are separate: a

place where only absolute consciousness remains, not consciousness toward anything in particular.

You are separate from all you are conscious of. If you can disconnect yourself from all of that, you will see your being as separate and distinct. Only consciousness remains, only "knowing" remains, and there is nothing as an object of knowing. Only awareness remains, but it is not about anything. In that utter singularity of awareness, in its loneliness, in its aloneness, in that utterly lonely moment, you settle into the deepest core of your being. That "settling in" unfolds all the mysteries of the world. In that settling, your eyes open and you can see: where matter was, godliness exists; where others were, there is an ocean of consciousness; and where the body was, there is the soul.

You experience the soul within yourself and godliness inside others, and in that experiencing, all the scriptures become true. In that experiencing, all the masters become true. In that experiencing, they all become witnesses, testifiers, that what has happened to Mahavira, to Buddha, to Krishna, to Christ has happened to you. What has happened in infinite millions of awakened consciousnesses has also happened inside you.

All the scriptures, all the masters, all the mystics become witnesses, testifiers to this awakening. Before that, they have no use; before that, they do not have any meaning. Before that, they are nothing but a web of words. Truth is not in words, and when experiencing happens within, words disappear and you reach the truth within them.

Having experienced the emergence of truth within yourself, you experience the truth of the whole universe. Having known the soul within yourself, you experience the light of the whole universe. Such a realization brings an end to your personal crisis. Such a realization shows that you were here before your birth and you will be here after death. Such a realization shows your consciousness has never been steeped in sadness – it cannot be, and there is no possibility to ever experience it being so. The experience of that consciousness is beyond suffering, settled in bliss, beyond darkness and luminous in light. It destroys all problems from their very roots.

Even if only a few people can attain that light, the whole world can experience a new type of luminosity. A new type of light can be born. Only in such a light will the future of humanity be secure. If this doesn't happen, it is impossible to save humanity.

Man through his own doing will commit suicide. Man through his hatred will commit suicide. Man through his possessiveness will commit suicide. Man through being disconnected from the deepest core of his being will commit suicide. Let people settle in love, let them settle in non-possessiveness, let them settle at the center of their lives. Only then can a new man be born, and along with him a new humanity. This is how a revolution in life is possible through religiousness.

These few things I have said to you. I am hopeful that some of this talk vibrates a string in your heart, perhaps causes a shooting pain in your heart, so a thirst can arise within you. Perhaps dissatisfaction has been intensified within you, a longing created for you to know yourself and the truth. If I have touched on the troubles that are born in everybody's life, I can know that my prayer has been successful, that the prayer I have addressed for so long to your heart has been successful. May the divine create a longing and thirst within you to come to know that which, without knowing, life is futile – that which by knowing transforms life into a benediction.

I bow down to the godliness that dwells in all of you. Please accept my blessings.

CHAPTER 6

the synthesis of religion and science

The entire journey of man's life is a search to know the unknown. It is a search for that which is not known, a journey to attain that which has not yet been attained. Something that is far away has to be brought closer. Something that is arduous has to be made easier. Something that is not available has to be made available. This journey can happen in two dimensions: one direction goes toward the outside world and the other goes toward the inside.

There was a mystic woman, Rabiya. One morning a friend of hers was standing outside her hut calling, "Rabiya, what are you doing inside? Come out. The sun is rising and a beautiful morning is being born. Such a beautiful morning I have never seen. What are you doing behind closed doors? Come outside."

Rabiya started laughing from inside the hut and said, "Hassan, I have seen many suns outside; I have seen many mornings outside. I have seen many beautiful mornings, I have seen many beautiful nights. They were amazing. But since I have come into myself, what I have seen outside is nothing in comparison with the beauty inside. So I am telling you Hassan, come inside too. What are you doing outside?"

We don't know whether Hassan understood or not, but there is a world that is seen by the eyes, and there is another world that is not seen by the eyes. There is a truth that is tangible, and there is also a truth that you can have a glimpse of in your dreams. There is a world outside us, and also a world inside us. Both these worlds have their own beauty, their own truths, their own realities. Perhaps ultimately both these worlds are aspects of the same thing, but normally when you look at them superficially, they seem to be two. It is because of these two dimensions that science and religion have been born.

The world that is outside, the search for the unknown that is on the outside, the journey to know that, has become science. The world that is inside, the unknown that is inside – to become familiar with it, to live it and know it – that journey has become religion. To be wealthy and to have inner peace, together, is dependent on whether science and religion can be supportive of each other, are not antagonistic to each other: companions to each other and in harmony with each other. But so far this has not happened.

Up to now, those who have searched in the world of matter have been against God, and those who have searched for God have condemned matter. Both types of people have prevented man from becoming complete, have stopped man from becoming whole. People are not just bodies and they are not just souls; they are not just matter and not just God. People are an amazing combination of both, a music composed of both. People's lives are a bridge between the two. This has been misunderstood and overlooked before now.

Those who have praised God have been wrong in praising God at the expense of matter. God could have been praised while keeping the dignity and splendor of matter. Those who have searched for matter and have been victorious over matter, have been victorious through indifference, antagonism, and denial toward God. Their search could have happened together with God and with prayers toward God; there is no contradiction in this.

This has not happened up to now. Science and religion have stood like two enemies against each other, and their enmity has proved very costly for humanity. The West has become a symbol for science, while the East has become a symbol for religion. Science has become the symbol of atheism, and religion has become the symbol of the spiritual. Both these standpoints are illusory and wrong. Both are incomplete and lopsided.

I remember a small story; I would like to tell it so you understand my point...

In ancient Rome, the emperor was sick. He was so sick that the doctors finally said that he could not survive. The emperor and his loved ones became very worried. They feared for his death each and every moment. Then news came to Rome that a mystic had come who could even resurrect the dead. Hope filled the emperor's eyes and he sent his ministers to bring the mystic.

The mystic came. He asked the emperor, "Who says you are going to die? You don't even have a serious disease. Get out of bed and sit in a chair. You will be cured. Just follow a small treatment."

The emperor, who had been in bed for months, got up and sat in a chair. He asked, "What treatment? Tell me quickly before I die. The doctors have said I could die any moment."

The mystic said, "Search in the city for a man who is both happy and prosperous. When you find him, put on his clothes and you will be saved. Your death is not so close by."

The ministers told the emperor, "This should be an easy thing to do. It is such a big city and the people are so happy, so prosperous; the fine palaces are touching the skies. Can't we all find this? We will bring these clothes immediately."

The mystic started laughing. He said, "If you bring those clothes, the emperor will be saved."

Nobody could understand the laughter of the mystic, but the ministers immediately ran into the city. They went to the house of the richest man and said, "The emperor is on his deathbed, and a mystic has said that he can be saved. The clothes of a happy and prosperous man are needed, so please give us your clothes."

Tears came to the man's eyes. He said, "It is not a matter of my clothes. I would even give my life if the emperor could be saved. But my clothes will not be of any help. I am prosperous, but not happy. In search of happiness, I have collected vast riches; but as yet I have not been able to find happiness. Now my hope is crumbling because I have all the wealth possible and yet no sign of happiness. My clothes will not be of much help. I am unhappy; I ask for forgiveness."

The ministers were very surprised, but then they remembered the mystic's laughter. It was better to go to others and ask them: they went to the other rich people of the city without success. Soon

evening was coming close. Everyone they had talked to had said, "We have wealth, but as for happiness, we are not acquainted with it. Our clothes will not be of any help."

The ministers became very anxious. What could they tell the emperor? He had been so happy when he heard he could be cured, and the ministers had thought that the cure was very cheap. But now it seemed to be very costly, very difficult.

Then an old servant who was with them started laughing and said, "I immediately understood why the mystic was laughing. And when you, the emperor's ministers, could not offer your own clothes, I was sure that this cure would be impossible. It is difficult to find the right clothes when even the emperor's ministers can't give their own clothes."

One minister said, "How could I give my clothes? I am wealthy, but I have no connection with happiness."

So the ministers thought the emperor would have to die; it would be difficult for him to survive. The mystic had fooled them. How could they show the emperor their faces in broad daylight? They decided it was better to go to him after dark and humbly tell him that the treatment could not be done.

As the sun was setting, they turned toward the palace. Just behind it was a river, and from the further bank came the sound of a flute. The music was very sweet; there was a profound peace in it, a note of blissfulness. The ministers thought that perhaps the man playing the flute had found happiness. They decided to ask him before they returned to the emperor. They would try one more time.

In darkness, the ministers crossed the river and came close to the man. As they came close, they thought this must be the man whose clothes would be useful. Even though they were filled with despair and sadness, something in his music made them feel ecstatic, made them feel like dancing. A minister spoke, "Friend, we are in great difficulty; please help us. The emperor is lying on his deathbed. We have come to ask if you have found happiness in your life."

The man said, "Bliss? I have attained bliss. Please tell me what I can do for you."

The ministers were filled with joy and said, "We need your clothes. To be cured, the emperor needs the clothes of a happy, blissful, and rich person."

The man started laughing. He said, "I would lay down my life to

save the emperor, but I have no clothes. I am sitting naked. In the darkness you cannot see it."

The emperor died that night. Wealthy people had been found, but they had not known happiness. And a happy man had been found, but he did not even have clothes. The ministers had found only incomplete men. They could not even find a single complete man: a man who had clothes and who also had happiness. They could not find such a man and so the emperor died.

We don't know how much of this story is true, but today the whole humanity is lying on its deathbed. Today the question arises whether we will ever be able to produce human beings who are prosperous and peaceful: people who have clothes and also a soul, people who have wealth both on the outside and on the inside, people who have the beauty of outer celebration and the happiness of inner peace.

The West has created clothes. Science can only create clothes; it cannot give a soul to man. Science can give wealth, can give wealth in abundance. And through this wealth it can make people rich. The West has gathered wealth; there are more and more clothes available, but there is no bliss within. People are anxious; they have everything except themselves. Inside everything is empty, while outside everything is full. Inside people are becoming emptier, and outside more and more things are piling up.

Today it has become difficult for a man even to begin searching for happiness while surrounded by the things he has collected. The West has made the journey of science; it has become prosperous while the East has become poorer and poorer: all the clothes are gone, all the bread is gone. The East has become hungry and poor, although it has attained a few glimpses of peace. It has played a flute inside, it has experienced some music inside. At the peak, a Buddha, a Mahavira has experienced deep blissfulness, but the majority of people are standing naked and bare. They have become hungry, impoverished slaves. A single-pointed journey of religion can only result in this, can only result in people in poverty.

By sacrificing the outer in favor of the inner, the people of the East have engaged in a lopsided journey, have become slaves. Others who had power on the outside became victorious over them. Those who had no outer power became the losers.

The sole emphasis on religion has turned the East poor and its

people into beggars. The sole emphasis on science has turned the West poor from within. The East died from a lopsided religion, and the West is dying from a lopsided science. Is a synthesis, a harmony not possible between these two?

The East is finished, the East has died. Now it can think of only one way: imitating the West. Now there is no way for the East to survive unless it becomes the follower of the West. But can't it see that by following the West it can only reach where the West has reached? This does not seem to be promising; such a destiny, such a future is not worth desiring, but no other alternative seems available. And now the West has reached a place where it wants to become a follower of the East. A really strange thing is happening: respect for the scientist of the West is rising in the East, while the respect for sannyasins of the East goes on increasing in the West.

Something like this once happened in a village...

In a village there were two very learned people. One was a theist, one an atheist. There had always been disagreement between the two, and the village was very disturbed by their constant arguing. Often villages become troubled by learned people, and this village had become anxious, fed up because the two learned men were not letting anyone live in peace. The theist was explaining theism, the atheist kept on explaining atheism. People were getting more and more confused. What was true? What was false? Finally, the people of the village decided there should be a formal debate between the two scholars. The whole village would gather and listen to the contest. The villagers said, "We will follow whoever is victorious. We want to end this problem once and for all."

The debate took place on a full-moon night. The whole village gathered. The theist gave great proof for theism, gave great logic. The atheist too gave countless proof, many convincing reasons. Logic can become anybody's proof, it can become anybody's companion. Logic is like a prostitute. It can be with anybody; it does not belong to anyone.

The two learned men gave many convincing arguments, and by dawn an amazing thing had happened. The theist had become very impressed by the atheist, and the atheist had become impressed by the theist. So the problem of the village remained the same. The theist became the atheist, the atheist became the theist. The village

had the same difficulty: again the same bickering, again the learned men started trying to convince each other.

Such is the state of the world today. The East will become the West, the West will become the East, and the stupidity will remain the same. Man will be troubled in the same way. Here in the East, Einstein is becoming more influential; in the West, Vivekananda is becoming influential. But the stupidity will remain the same. There will be no change because Einstein represents an incomplete culture and Vivekananda also represents an incomplete culture.

People become fed up with one extreme and are eager to go to the other extreme. A poor man is fed up with his poverty and works hard to become rich. People who are very rich get fed up with their riches and want to become mystics. Both Mahavira and Buddha were from royal families before becoming mystics. Monks want to become rich, the rich want to become poor. The rich get fed up with their riches, the poor get fed up with their poverty. The theist gets fed up with his theism, the atheist gets fed up with his atheism.

The East has become fed up with the East, the West is getting fed up with the West. The religious people have become fed up with religion, the scientists are getting fed up with science and would like to exchange places with the other extreme. The mind of man is like the pendulum of a clock. It goes from one extreme to another; then again it goes to the other extreme. It never stops in the middle.

This is not a good situation. If a so-called religious leader from the East goes to the West and starts gathering young people, it is not a step in the right direction. This is the same stupidity as the young people of the East studying science. There is no special quality about the young people of the West gathering around so-called religious leaders from the East. If Indian boys are crowding around the movie theaters and Western boys start gathering around temples, don't be greatly surprised. These things are the same – there is no difference between them. People's minds are fed up with their own extreme and they would like to move to the other extreme. But until now, no one's mind has been fed up with extremism. So we keep going from one extreme to the other.

We need to develop a more unified society, a more harmonious society, a civilization that is not extremist – that is capable of standing balanced, in synthesis and in the middle. We need a society that can

give religion its place and also give science its place. Science has its value; science is not meaningless. The world has its own meaning, the world is not illusory. We need a society that can also accept that in spite of the world being real, there is also a truth beyond the world. Godliness is not meaningless just because the world is real. Godliness is even truer because of it. When the world is real, godliness attains an even deeper truth.

The antagonism between godliness and the world has to end. The greatest misfortune, the greatest disaster that has happened, is that we have created a great gap between the ultimate truth and the world. A man who wants to move toward godliness thinks he has to drop the world and run away. He says the world is meaningless, the world is a dream, the world is illusory; he drops it and runs away. But by escaping and running away, he is showing that the world is not an illusion, the world is not a dream. There is no need to run away from a dream. There is no need to run away from that which is meaningless. Is there a need to run away from something that doesn't exist?

If a man says that he doesn't believe in ghosts, that they don't exist, and yet keeps on running to escape from ghosts, what will we think of him? We will either say he is mad, or that he doesn't believe what he is saying. If a man says that the world is illusory and then says he has renounced the world, how can he renounce that which is not?

No, the world *is*. Whether you indulge in it or you renounce it, whether you are engaged in it or you run away from it – it is. You can't erase its existence.

A sannyasin who says the world is meaningless and renounces it makes this mistake. He thinks he is the beloved of God, that he must devote himself to God. And a man who is a materialist commits the opposite mistake. He says the world has a meaning, the world is significant. And when the world has a meaning, God cannot be. Because, anyone who *believes* in God says that the world is meaningless: he believes that the meaningless of the world proves the existence of God.

So, it is not surprising if someone who sees meaning in the world denies the existence of God. The two arguments are similar. Those who have believed the world to be full of attachments have made an effort to disprove the existence of the divine: those who have seen the world as meaningful, as truthful, as substantial, have felt that there is

no God. The man who thinks the world has meaning, and the man who sees the world as meaningless and God as meaningful, each think only one of the two things can be true.

But this idea that only one of the two ways of seeing can be true is wrong. Both can be true, and both things can be false. There is no reason that only one of the two can be right.

There are many truths in life. Objects have their own truth, money has its own truth. Love has its own truth, godliness has its own truth. We can go on moving ahead in search of higher and higher truths, but one truth does not refute another one. Dreams have their own truths and awakening has its own truth. Sleep has its own truth and consciousness has its own truth. There is no antagonism between these truths – that if one is the other cannot be, if one exists the other cannot exist.

The day someone touches the deepest layers of the truth of science and the truth of religion, that day he will be laughing, that day he will be surprised. That day he will realize that what he had thought to be two different things are two ways of seeing the same truth. They are two visions; they are not two truths. A thing can be seen in many different ways.

One night, Buddha was finishing his evening discourse. At the end of his talks, he used to tell the monks to go to their last task of the night: the night meditation. Then the monks would leave, they would do the night meditation and then go to sleep. So Buddha would say only this much: do the last task of the night. It was not necessary to tell them to meditate. He would not say go now and do the night meditation; he would only say do the last task of the night.

That night a thief had come to the discourse, and a prostitute had also come. As soon as Buddha said to go and begin the last task of the night, the thief thought that as it was night, now it was time to go to work. The prostitute also thought that as it was late in the night, now it was time to start her business, she must go. And the monks went to meditate.

It was only one sentence; only one thing was said, but three meanings came out of it. There were three types of people listening. There were three visions. It was seen from three sides and three different meanings were taken.

What we understand depends on the point of view with which we see life. Those who see it with a materialistic eye see life as matter. Those who see it with a vision of consciousness see it as consciousness. How we see it depends on us.

A poet sees a flower and he says it is very beautiful; images of beauty start moving around in his mind. He may remember the face of his beloved. He may start seeing the stars of the night sky in the flower. He may start seeing the waves of a lake in the petals. Or through its smell, he may become aware of faraway fragrances. A song may burst forth. The flower is there, but the poet moves away into a world of dreams.

A scientist sees a flower and he cannot see beauty there, nor can he see the moon and stars. He sees chemicals. If someone tells him that the flower is very beautiful, he will ask, "Where is the beauty? When I go to my laboratory and dissect it, no beauty can be found. Yes, I find chemicals, I find minerals, and other things. But beauty? We have investigated and not found it so far."

The beauty of a flower cannot be found in a laboratory. But is the poet wrong? A poet finds only beauty in the flower. He does not find minerals, chemicals. So is the scientist wrong? A flower is an immense existence: there are a thousand ways to see it.

Each and every thing is so infinite, even the smallest thing is so endless, that infinite ways are available to look at it. One viewpoint does not negate another viewpoint. One viewpoint only says that this is how it has been perceived. When the poet says he can see beauty in a flower, he is not saying that there is beauty in the flower. He is saying that he has seen the flower as a poet sees it. When the scientist says that he has found minerals and chemicals in the flowers, he is not saying that there are chemicals in the flowers. He is saying that he has seen a flower as a scientist sees it. These are our different ways of seeing.

Science has one way of seeing things, and religion has another way of seeing things. Both enrich our way of seeing life. There is no reason to choose between the two. Man's power increases through the way science sees life, and peace is enhanced through the way religion sees life.

People need power and they need peace too. Power alone is dangerous, and in the hands of a restless man it is even more dangerous. If a restless man is weak it is not harmful, but if a restless

man is energetic then it is dangerous. If power reaches the hands of the restless, it increases the problems.

Nadirshah, the great Iranian warrior, was approaching India with his army. He stopped in a great city and an astrologer came to meet him. Nadir said to the astrologer, "I sleep a lot and I still feel sleepy during the day. I sleep from twelve to fourteen hours every night. People say that to sleep so much is not good. You're a very intelligent man. What do you think?"

The astrologer said, "It is good for a bad man to sleep more. For a good man, it is good to keep awake. I suggest you sleep more and if you can sleep for twenty-four hours a day, it would be very good. The longer a person like you is awake, the more the troubles increase in the world. Nothing is benefitted by your being awake – neither the country nor its people."

The astrologer said that the more a bad man sleeps, the better, and the more a good man keeps awake, the better. If power is in hands that are silent, there is no problem. And there is nothing wrong with being weak. But in the hands of a restless man, power is suicidal and also destructive to others.

Science gives power but does not give peace. It is proving to be destructive. We have seen two world wars and the third one is in the making. The third will be very destructive.

Before Einstein died, someone asked him to say something about the Third World War. Einstein said, "It is very difficult to say anything about the third. But I can say something about the fourth one."

The questioner was very surprised. He asked, "If you can't say anything about the third one, what can you say about the fourth one?"

Einstein said, "One thing can be said with certainty about the Fourth World War: it will never take place; all mankind is going to be destroyed in the third. Nothing can be said about the third, about what will happen."

The preparations that are going on for the third are very shocking. We are creating the means to destroy all life, not only humanity. And not only life – it is possible that the earth itself will be devastated and destroyed. If I give you a small glimpse, then you

can get an idea how much power has been gathered in restless hands. Right now on this earth, there are fifty thousand hydrogen bombs. But just with the number fifty thousand, can we begin to understand what that power means?

One hydrogen bomb can destroy all life in a forty thousand square mile area, all life. Not only the people, but also animals, plants, small bacteria and amoebas, very small organisms – one bomb can destroy everything. One hydrogen bomb covers forty thousand square miles. Fifty thousand hydrogen bombs are so many that not only one, but seven earths can be destroyed. Understand it this way: if we want to kill each and every man, then we can kill each one seven times. Actually a single man dies in a single blow, he is so weak. Until now it has not been heard of that even a single man had to be killed more than once. If he dies, it is in a single blow; if he has not died, it is a different matter. If he dies in a single attempt, the need to kill him again does not arise.

But we are very clever people; we have arranged so many things. If someone escapes the first time, he can be killed the second time, the third time. Everything has been arranged for seven times. After seven attempts, we cannot imagine any man can survive. All this has been calculated and they have arranged everything. And now preparations are being made about when we should start destroying everything.

What does one hydrogen bomb do? Ordinarily, if a man dies, it is not so disastrous, it is not so surprising. But in a nuclear war, you cannot imagine the agony a person will pass through.

If we boil water to one hundred degrees, it becomes vapor and evaporates. If we put someone in that boiling water, what will happen to him? But a temperature of one hundred degrees heat is not much; at fifteen hundred degrees even iron melts. If we put someone in that iron, in that melted iron, what will happen to him? Can we imagine what he will experience? Will he have time to remember his God? Think a little about this. What God will he remember then? But a temperature of fifteen hundred degrees is not such great heat: at twenty-five hundred degrees even iron boils and becomes vapor and evaporates. If you put someone in that, then what will happen to him? But twenty-five hundred degrees is also not the limit of heat.

The heat created by one hydrogen bomb is one hundred million

degrees. We are making arrangements for putting people in this one hundred-million-degree furnace. This heat is similar to that of the sun. Up to now, you were bowing down to the sun god. He was very far away. Now we have prepared for him to come into your house, you can meet him, you can meet the sun god – the scientists have arranged for this.

This hell that we are preparing to make of this earth, why is it and for what? It is because power has reached restless hands. If that power had reached peaceful hands, today the earth would be a paradise, the paradise the saints and sages have dreamed about. You don't need to go somewhere in the sky, to heaven. Man has come across such a vast energy, he has come across such a great power, that for the first time he can make this whole earth a paradise. Today on this earth, no one needs to be poor; there is no reason other than the mischief of the politicians. Today on this earth, there is no need for anyone to be poor, sick, to die young, to be ugly, to be sad, to be in suffering. The only reason is the power in the hands of restless men.

Today, the earth can become an extraordinary place; we have so much energy, so much power in our hands. Today for the first time, the moon and stars are within our reach. Today for the first time, the vast energy hidden inside matter is in our hands. We can't even imagine what is possible, but we are not able to do anything because the power is in the hands of restless men. They say we must make preparations to kill and preparations to die.

Restlessness always gives birth to an obsession with death. Restlessness always gets engaged in an effort to kill others or oneself. Restlessness is suicidal. Whenever a restless man gets power, the first thing he wants to do is to kill others. If he doesn't find someone to kill, or if no one is ready to die, he will kill himself. He will find some way or other to kill. Restlessness is a journey oriented toward death.

Science has given power, but it's not able to give peace. There is no question about it doing that, nor should we expect it to, or ask it to. It is as if we ask mathematics to give us poetry. How can mathematics give poetry? Mathematics can give mathematics; mathematics has its own way. But mathematics cannot give us poetry. And if we ask poetry to please make a factory for us, how can poetry make a factory? Poetry can give a song, can give love, can give a glimpse of

bliss, can give a dance. But how can it give us a factory? These are crazy ideas. It's just like telling the ears to see and the eyes to hear. There is no question of expecting peace from science.

Religion can give peace. The science of peace is religion and the science of power is science. The effort and inner discipline of religion is about how we can be more silent, how we can desire less – about how much bliss we can attain. But religion can only give peace, not power.

When there is only peace, you are weak, you are feeble. Peace creates a type of impotence, the way India has become impotent. There is no other reason than this. The reason for India's suffering, poverty, and weakness is the doing of religious people who have denied science and developed religion. If a peaceful man becomes weak, it is as dangerous as a restless man becoming strong. These are one and the same thing.

If a peaceful man becomes weak, it is dangerous because he loses the possibility to transform the world. The good man, the righteous man, loses all guts to change the world. He has only one function: he sits in the temple and prays to God – but that is only until a stronger man comes along and breaks his statue of God. Only until then does he pray.

When someone is weak, understand well that he won't remain silent for long. A person in anguish cannot remain silent, cannot remain quiet forever. Then restlessness is born, and a circle begins. When restlessness is born, the search of science begins. Then science will bring power and that power will come into hands of the anxious men. This circle has been troubling all of humanity up to now. It is a vicious circle in which people are entangled. And as soon as people have power, they want to become peaceful.

At the time the wave of peace and religion began, India was very prosperous. The days of Buddha and Mahavira were golden days: India was a golden bird with peace and prosperity existing together. There was great interest in religion. But if a powerful man tries to become silent and peaceful, slowly, slowly he will become weak. And a weak man is restless, so as soon as he becomes restless he starts searching for power.

The East was prosperous; then it searched for peace and became poor. The West was poor; then it searched for power and became prosperous. Up to now, power and peace have not been able to exist

together. Peace and power have each proved unsuccessful alone. Science created Hiroshima and Nagasaki – and now the Third World War will happen. In India, religion has created the oppressed, the poor, the beggars; slavery was the result, and the greatest of all countries became a slave in the hands of very small countries. The Indians went on kissing the feet of their masters: the feet that were crushing them while they kept on chanting, "Ram, Ram," "Om, om."

Both experiments, science and religion, have failed. Man's entire potentiality and his whole future lie in a third experiment: that the antagonism between religion and science should finish. There is no reason for this antagonism, no place for it and no cause for it. Science and religion should become part of one society. When will this happen and how will it happen?

It won't happen as long as we believe in the antagonism between the world and godliness. There is actually a deep relationship between matter and godliness: they are two sides of the same coin, they move in the same direction, they are made of the same stuff; people should accept that. Religion should stop calling the world meaningless, science should stop calling God meaningless. The significance of both should be united and should be one. If the search for peace and power happens simultaneously, a new man and a new society can be born.

My understanding is that there is no antagonism between the two, and there is no reason for antagonism. Antagonism just reflects our stupidity. Now either we can save our stupidity, or we can save ourselves. Both cannot be saved together. The East, the people of the East, should drop their idea of becoming world teachers. This is insane talk. Incomplete civilizations cannot create world teachers. The people of the West should also drop the idea of becoming world teachers. Again, incomplete civilizations cannot create world teachers.

Now a single civilization that is neither of the East nor of the West will be born. Now a single civilization that is neither of science nor of religion will be born. Now a single civilization of the entire humanity will be born. It will be for the whole humanity, integrated, and it will be for the complete man. For the first time there is an opportunity for humanity to be born. This opportunity can only be successful when a synthesis happens between science and religion.

Science is one extreme, religion is the other extreme. If science and religion unite, bringing a synthesis, a midpoint, that will be

the golden mean. That will be the middle path, the middle way, a synthesis.

A small story and I will finish my talk...

A prince came to Buddha and was initiated, became a sannyasin. Princes often become sannyasins; they go from one extreme to another extreme. The prince, a young man, had been known as a great hedonist. It is said that when he walked on the roads, carpets had to be laid under his feet; he would never walk on bare ground. When he walked in the palace, he would walk on flowers. When he climbed the stairs, naked women would stand by his side so he could use their shoulders for support.

Then he was initiated and became a sannyasin. Buddha's monks were very surprised: it was such a great transformation. How could a man who was at the peak of hedonism immediately jump to the peak of spirituality?

They asked Buddha and he spoke about how man's mind lives on extremes. So it often happens that those who are at the peak of worldly pleasures dream of becoming spiritual, while those who are spiritual dream of becoming hedonists. This often happens.

We would be very surprised if we could see the dreams of these people. In the mind of the man we thought to be so hedonistic, there is a desire to be a sannyasin. And in the mind of the man we thought to be a great renunciate are hedonistic dreams. Dreams are substitutes. What we do outside is one extreme, the other extreme is what we don't do, and that is what we dream about.

So Buddha said, "This is natural. I was thinking that if not today, then tomorrow this man would become a sannyasin. Now you will see him going to the other extreme." And after six months the monks saw that he did go to the other extreme. Other monks would wear clothes; the prince dropped his clothes. Other monks would walk on the roads, pathways, on highways where there were no thorns. The prince would purposely walk on the side of the road where there were thorns, he would walk where there were no proper roads. His feet became bloody, covered with wounds and blisters. His body started withering away in the sun. The other monks would sit in the shade of the trees; he would sit in the scorching sun. In winter the monks would look for a warm place; he would lie outside in the cold. Within six months his beautiful body had become a skeleton. After six

months it was difficult to recognize that he was the same prince who had come to Buddha. He became a completely different man: very ugly and sick looking.

Buddha went to him after six months and said, "Shrona!" – his name was Shrona – "I have come to ask you one thing. I have heard that when you were a prince, you were an expert in playing the veena. I have come to ask you this: if the strings of a veena are very loose, can music be created or not?"

Shrona said, "If the strings of the veena are loose, how can music be created? If the strings are loose, then no vibration is possible; they cannot be plucked, no resonance can be created. If the strings are loose, how can music be created?"

So Buddha asked, "If the strings are too tight, can music be created?"

Shrona said, "Strings that are too tight will break. No music can be born in them."

So Buddha asked, "Then when is music created?"

Shrona said, "Music is born when the strings are neither too tight nor too loose. When it can be said they are neither too loose, nor too tight, that is the middle point. From that place, music can be created."

Buddha said, "I have come to tell you that the same rule that applies to the veena applies to life. In life too, music is born when the strings are neither too loose, nor too tight."

On one side are the loose strings of science, the strings that have left man's soul completely loose. On the other side are the very tight strings of religion, the strings have tightened the soul of human beings so much. In the struggle between the two, man has died; in between these two, the veena of the human being has broken; in between these two, man's music has been lost.

The strings of man's life have to be tuned where they are pulled neither toward the material nor toward spirituality – where they are stretched neither obsessively toward indulgence, nor toward spirituality. The strings should be at the middle point, where it can be said, "This man is neither a hedonist nor a spiritualist" – where it can be said, "This man is neither a materialist nor a theist." When a man is absolutely at the middle point, the perfect music of life is available. In the experience of such perfect music, he will come to know that matter is God, and God is matter.

CHAPTER 7

affirmative science, affirmative religion

I was thinking about what I should say to you. The way man's life is, the situation of man today – the form society has taken, the distortion that has happened, the way civilization has disintegrated and broken down – remembering that, I felt I should talk about it. I look at you and I see some people from among the many in this country. I have had the chance to look into millions of eyes – or shall I call it the misfortune or sorrow? I have not yet been able to see an eye that is silent, I have not been able to see an eye in which life's depths and truths are revealed. I have not seen an individual whose life is filled with music and joy.

There can be no greater misfortune, no greater calamity, than this – that in our life there is no music, no peace, no bliss. We live only waiting for death, only waiting to die; we live only to die. Ultimately, all our efforts and all our attempts are only death-oriented, and we remain unacquainted with life. There can be no greater calamity than this.

There is no one responsible for this situation other than we ourselves. Behind this misfortune is our own hand. We are like people cutting off the branch on which we are sitting, like people tearing

down the palace they are living in, tearing it down to the ground. The only hope is that perhaps in one of us the realization will dawn that we have to create our own life through resolution and spiritual discipline. Life is not available ready-made.

We learn all kinds of things, but we don't learn to live life. There are lessons available for everything, but there are no lessons about life. All of us learn so much, but we are deprived of that which is really worth learning. That is what we don't learn. We live in so many compartments, in so many fragments, that we don't even know what a non-fragmented life is, and how to live it.

Somebody was asking me last night, everyday somebody asks me things... Somebody is trying to learn music, somebody is trying to earn a lot of money, somebody is trying to become famous, be rich, and somebody is trying to learn a skill – but I have not found anyone who wants to learn about how to live life fully. And if a person does not live life fully, how can he realize what life is? We aspire to everything else, but we forget the main lesson that has to be learned; we don't remember that.

Guru Nanak was a guest in a rich man's palace. The man told Nanak, "I am rich and I wish to donate some money so it can be used for religion. I hope that you can make some use of it, so please allow me to give it to you."

Nanak said, "I can take the money, but I can only give you a small piece of advice in return. I have met many rich people, but I have only been able to give them this one piece of advice, the same as I give to you. But remember, up to now no one has been able to fulfill that advice. I wonder, can you fulfill it?"

The man said, "I will put all my effort into it. What kind of advice could there be that if I put my total effort into it, it still cannot be fulfilled? And what is it that cannot be attained? I have immense wealth; I am ready to put everything at stake."

Nanak said, "Try, experiment. It is possible that you may succeed." He gave a small sewing needle to the man and said, "Keep this carefully and when both of us die, return it to me."

The man looked into Nanak's eyes carefully. If he had told me, I too would have looked; if he had told you, you too would have looked. The man must have thought that perhaps either Nanak was mad or he was joking. How would it be possible to return the needle after he was

dead? Even if he put all his wealth at stake, how was it possible?

But there was a crowd there, there were many people, and the man did not think it appropriate to argue with Nanak. Later he thought about it, he contemplated; he asked his friends, whom he thought to be wise men. He went to them and asked, "Is there a way to do it? I am prepared to put all my wealth at stake. Will I be able to take this small needle beyond death?"

His friends asked, "Are you mad? Up to now, nothing has ever gone beyond death. That valley is impassable and cannot be crossed. No matter how much wealth you have, no matter how much power you have, and no matter how many riches you have, none of this can cross to the other shore. Give the needle back; this debt cannot be paid after death."

The next morning, while it was still dark, the man went to Nanak and said, "Please take your needle back. It may happen that we die and this debt remains between us; I may not be able to return the needle after death."

Nanak said, "What happened to your wealth? And what happened to your power? What happened to your pride and ego? Such a small task: carrying a needle. There is nothing smaller than a needle, and you are not able to take it beyond death?"

The man said, "Forgive me. This needle has made me very poor. This needle has made me very poor. For the first time I realize that I have no power, I have no wealth, I have no possibilities. I can't even take a needle beyond death."

Nanak asked, "Do you have anything else you can take beyond?"

The man said, "This needle has shown me that I have nothing."

So Nanak told him, "Then what you have been earning cannot be called wealth. That which cannot come with you after death, how can it be wealth? Something which cannot help you in times of trouble, how can it be wealth? How can something which cannot help you in times of trouble be wealth?"

"And what is the biggest problem in our lives? There is no greater problem than death. All other problems can be solved, all others can be stopped. Only death cannot be stopped. We can struggle with everything, but we can't struggle with death. Hence, do not call the other things a problem. The only problem is death and the only wealth is that which proves to be useful in death. What you are earning will not be useful."

Those who strive for riches in this world are foolish. But it is possible to earn something that can be valuable in death, and there is something that can go beyond death. There is a power that the flames of death cannot burn. Religion is about that power, about that wealth. And that wealth is attained by those who seek life. Those who seek riches, those who seek fame, cannot attain it.

A man who seeks life can go beyond death. Immortality is attained because of someone's search for life. He attains deathlessness as the last transformation in life. But someone who doesn't search for life can only attain death. What else can happen for someone who does not search for life?

If you correctly understand the meaning of not seeking life, it is actually seeking death. And someone who doesn't seek religion is only seeking death. This remembrance should settle very clearly in your vision; you should be able to see this very clearly: someone who is not seeking religion is seeking death. And whether he seeks or not, eventually nothing but death will come into his hands.

There is only one question before life – and it is of death. There is no other question. There is only one burning question in front of life, and that question concerns death. Those questions that we think of as problems and that we make such great efforts to solve are not the real questions. They are just problems; we always find the solutions for them.

But there is one question for which there is no solution. Someone who gathers courage to find a solution for this question, he alone is a human being in the right sense. Someone who makes an effort to find a solution to the ultimate problem, he alone attains the meaning of being a man. Only he makes a declaration of being a human being. Nothing else is a right effort.

Those who are surrounded by death, does anything they do have any value? Those who are surrounded by death, what is the value of the things they have collected? Those who are surrounded by death, do the thoughts they have collected have any value? Those who are surrounded by death, what is the value of their fame, their respect? Death will make all their efforts unsuccessful, and they will find that nothing was in their hands. It is like when someone dreams at night and has his ambitions fulfilled in his dreams, many desires are fulfilled. When he wakes up in the morning, there is nothing in his hands.

Similarly, one day the awareness of death shatters all the

dreams of a man and wakes him up. Then he understands that the things he had thought to be in his control, they are not in his control. And the things he had thought belonged to him, they are not his. The companionship he had with people, the property he had – nothing is in his hands. Again he stands naked and poor.

The poverty that death exposes, an intelligent man himself exposes before death. The untruths that death exposes, an intelligent man exposes before death. And the dreams which death shatters, an intelligent person shatters before death comes.

There is no meaning to spiritual practice and religion other than shattering the dreams which death will shatter, shattering them with our own hands. That wealth which death will take away, we should realize on our own that we don't really have it. In this way, someone can awaken before death. Whatever death will take away, he can know before death comes. Only that person is a seeker. Only he is interested in religion. Only he is eager to search for life.

As we are, we feel that we are alive, but we are only under the illusion that we are living. If I can shatter this illusion in you, there is no greater help I can give you than that your illusion shatters. If this delusion goes away from your mind – the delusion that the life we think of as life is really life – then it will be a great contribution that can help you. Mahavira or Buddha or Krishna did nothing else but shatter people's illusions. They shattered the illusion that what we were thinking of as life is really life. They shattered the illusion that what we were thinking of as worthwhile is worth caring about. And they shattered the illusion that what we were thinking of as truth is real. It is nothing more than a dream, has no more power than a dream.

Think about it sometimes; in a moment of awareness and thought, look back and see. The days that have passed by – yesterday, today – do they appear to be more than a dream? Are you sure those days existed? Today, sit down and see, look back, have a bird's eye view, turn back and look: the days that have gone by, is there a difference at all between those days and the things that you have experienced in dreams? When you look back, what is the difference between the past and dreams? That which you have known in reality and that which you have seen in dreams, what is the distinguishing line between them?

Isn't the memory of the past like an incident in a dream?

Doesn't the whole past become a dream? Doesn't what we have lived become just a dream? And if the past has turned into a dream, what we are thinking of as present, how long can it hold true? This too will change into a dream. And that which we are thinking of as future, how long will it remain true? That also will change into a dream. Everything becomes the past – the present and the future also; hence everything becomes a dream.

At the time of death, if someone looks back, what can he see? Will he see something real, will some truth be visible? Life will seem like a story. He will not know whether he lived his life or not. Do we think it will become clear at the time of death? What we thought as life, did we live it or not? Will it make a difference? Perhaps it is possible that all of it was seen in a dream.

Just before he died, Tolstoy wrote in his diary: "When I look back, I feel that either my memory has gone bad or my mind has become weak. But I doubt the life I have lived, whether I really lived it or had just seen it in a dream.

The Chinese mystic Chuang Tzu wrote, "One night I dreamed I had become a butterfly. When I woke up in the morning I was afraid: maybe the butterfly was dreaming that it had become a human being, it had become a man."

He continued, "I dreamed that dream thirty years ago, but the doubt has remained in my mind that perhaps the butterfly was dreaming that it had become a man. If a man can dream that he has become a butterfly, why can't a butterfly dream that it has become a man?"

Chuang Tzu's concern seems very odd, but in reality it is very serious. If we look at it carefully, is there a fundamental difference between what we see in our dreams and what we see when we are awake? When we are dreaming, what we see in dreams seems absolutely real. No one knows in his dream that what he is seeing is a dream. Have you ever known? Millions of people have had millions of dreams, but no one has realized in his dream that what he is seeing is not real.

In a dream, the dream is true. Only on waking up do you know that it was not true. So right now, what we are seeing so sleepily, we think is true. But a few people have awakened and have said this is

also a dream. Mahavira and Buddha are two of those awakened ones who have said this too is a dream.

And when death comes, this realization is experienced by each and every man. He feels that all he has known has become just a story, has become a fallacy. He doesn't know whether it happened or not. And whether it happened or not makes no difference. If in the end whatever we have lived becomes meaningless, that cannot be called life. What really is, will always remain "is," cannot become "past." And what is not, one day becomes no more. That which is a dream, only that can one day seem like a dream; what is true always remains the truth.

When I dream at night, no matter how much it may appear to be true to me, it is a dream. When in the morning I wake up and see, then I know it was a dream. So it is not that it became a dream on my waking up; it was a dream even when I was sleeping and thinking it was true. What feels like a dream one day was always a dream; that which never appears to be a dream, only that is truth. That which appears to be a dream was always a dream, no matter when it happened. That which never appears to be a dream, that which always appears to be truth, only that is truth.

The life that we are living becomes a dream after living it. This cannot be called life: that is a dream. That is a dream. And someone who wants to live a real life will have to let go of his dreams. Only then can life can be experienced. Someone who wants to awaken will have to leave his dreams; only then can a real life be lived. Someone who wants to awaken will have to disrupt his sleep and stop his dreaming. He may be seeing a very happy dream or he may be seeing a very sad dream. He may be seeing a very respectable dream or he may be seeing a very shameful dream. But dreams are all equal. There is no difference between poor and rich in dreams; a dream is a dream, whether it is a dream of poverty or a dream of riches. All dreams are equal – of virtuousness and non-virtuousness, of poverty and of riches, of respect and of degradation.

No one can awaken to truth without dropping his dreams. Nobody can attain ultimate life without disrupting his sleep. So what can be done to disrupt this sleep? How can this sleep be disturbed? How can these dreams be shattered? How can we wake up from a dream?

A man who wants to know godliness, the soul, or truth has to fulfill only one thing, only one condition. Only one condition, only a

single thing has to be fulfilled. And it is a very strange and also very cheap thing: he has to drop his dreams if he is eager to attain truth. And is losing his dreams a real loss? What was not has to be dropped, so that we can experience that which is. Truth can be attained at the price of dreams. If we are not ready to accept this condition, then what other condition could we wish for?

People think that Mahavira renounced his property, left his family, dropped his wealth, and abandoned his kingdom. I don't think this is so. He only renounced his dreams. Someone who thinks that Mahavira dropped his property, left his wealth and fame is not able to understand. In reality, wealth cannot be dropped; only the dreams can be dropped and shattered. What was dropped was a dream; what was attained was wealth. And yet it looks like Mahavira dropped his wealth, left his kingdom. But I say to you, what he attained was the real kingdom, and what he dropped was the dream. It looks as if what he renounced was his power. But I would like to tell you what he attained was power, and what was dropped was not power. Up to now in this world, no one has ever dropped anything besides dreams. The truth cannot be dropped; only dreams can be dropped. Nobody can renounce anything besides sleep. There is nothing else to renounce. You have to let go of dreams in order to prepare the ground for truth to descend.

So it is not a costly affair; in fact, it is a bargain. People with intelligence can see this, but those who are foolish refuse to take advantage of the bargain. In this sense, the wise ones are those who can agree to this: they drop nothing and they attain everything. And the fools are those who hold on to their dreams and lose their truth. If one has to call something renunciation, what these fools are doing is renunciation: they have dropped truth and have caught hold of dreams.

What Mahavira and Buddha are doing is not renunciation. How can it be renunciation? They drop dreams and attain truth. If dropping dreams and attaining truth is renunciation, the people who leave dirt behind and find gold should be called renouncers. We may be renouncers, but Mahavira and Buddha are not. We are renouncers because we are ignorant. A man who is knowledgeable does not renounce; he attains. Only an ignorant person renounces and remains poor. Ignorance is the only true renunciation, while wisdom is the attainment. But we see it as renunciation.

It is as if many people are asleep and one person wakes up. The dreamers will think he has renounced sleep. If many people are under an illusion, then if the illusion of one man breaks, people come to think that he has renounced.

I was reading a story...

A magician once came to a town and cast a spell over the town's well. The spell was that anyone who drank water from the well would go mad. There were only two wells in the town: one was in the king's palace and the other was in the center of the town. The people had to drink the water from that well. By evening, the entire town had gone mad. How is it possible to live without water? Everyone had to drink it.

Since the king's palace had its own well, the king, his queen, and his ministers escaped the madness that was affecting the people. But by evening, news had spread in the town that the king had gone mad. By evening, news had spread in the town that the king had gone mad. The people said the king was talking nonsense and behaving in a very peculiar manner. The entire town gathered in front of the palace and demanded the king step down from the throne. They wanted to appoint a proper person to sit on the throne.

The king became very afraid. He stood on the wall overlooking the angry crowd and said to his ministers, "Now what shall we do? This is a great problem. The entire town has gone mad; but if in this mad village we are the only ones who are not mad, it is natural that we will appear to be mad. So what shall we do now?"

His chief minister said, "There is only one way: we must drink the water of the poisoned well."

During the night, while the town slept, the king and his ministers went to the town's well and drank the water. The next day there was a great celebration in the town: the king's mind was all right again.

In this world there is an immense amount of ignorance and the darkness is dense. Those people who leave the darkness and attain light seem to be the renouncers. In this crowd of mad people, those who drop the futile and attain the useful seem to be the renouncers, but the truth is that the others are the renouncers. But those who attain the right meaning of life, we call renouncers. This renunciation does not drop anything; in reality this renunciation attains something. It is as if I am holding mud in my fist and someone offers me

diamonds and jewels. Naturally, I drop the mud to empty my hands so that I can carry the diamonds and jewels. But the people standing below would see that I have opened my fists and I have renounced the mud which was in my fist.

Just as this would be their misunderstanding, similarly it is our misunderstanding when we think that Mahavira is renouncing. We cannot see what Mahavira is attaining; we are blind toward it. We have eyes to see only that which he has left behind.

Because we can see only the dreams, we cannot see that Mahavira is only dropping his dreams. We cannot see the truth that Mahavira is attaining; we don't have the eyes to see the truth. Hence Mahavira seems to be a renouncer, Buddha seems to be a renouncer, a sannyasin seems to be a renouncer. But in reality, a sannyasin does not renounce anything. Leaving behind his dreams, he attains everything.

So I tell you it is cheap, it is a very good bargain. I am not telling you to renounce something; I am telling you to attain something. It is the language of renunciation itself that is wrong. The language of renunciation itself is wrong. Those who have used the language of renunciation have harmed religion because not many people have the courage to drop everything. But I say to you, anyone can have the courage to attain. Forget about gathering the courage to renounce. I say to you, don't understand religion as renunciation; it is not. Religion is attainment; religion is a positive achievement. There is something to be attained; there is nothing to be lost.

Those who have given religion the negative face of dropping, of renouncing, have harmed religion. The harm has not been done by the atheists – not by those who say that there is no God, who say there is no such thing as the soul. The harm has not been done by those who say ultimate liberation, heaven and hell are all nonsense. The harm has not been done by those who have achieved great miracles in science and who have created great power through science. The harm to religion has been done neither by science, nor by atheism.

Religion has been harmed by the people who have presented religion in the language of negation, in the language of renunciation, in the language of dropping. It seems to be all about leaving everything. We are led to believe everything has to be renounced. Only renouncing and more renouncing seems to be there, and we have no idea of what can be attained through it. Everything seems to revolve around renouncing. And because of all this

emphasis on renunciation, we remain poor. We stop the search.

I would like to talk to you about religion from another angle. Religion has nothing to do with renouncing. Even the weakest people can be ready to attain, while even the strongest people find it difficult to renounce. And in this world, we are all weak people. When the language of renouncing is there, everything goes wrong. Religion becomes very heavy and weighty on us.

I am only telling you to drop your dreams. Even the weakest of the weak can be ready to drop dreaming. There is no one so weak on this earth that he cannot let go of his dreams. There is no one so weak on this earth that he cannot let go of his dreams. If someone were so weak, there would be no hope for him, but no one is really so weak. There is a way for everyone. There is really no one so weak, hence there is hope for everyone. Nobody is so devoid of longing that he cannot be eager to attain. Nobody is so devoid of longing that he cannot be eager to attain. People are eager to achieve wealth, people are eager to achieve fame – wouldn't those same people be eager to attain godliness and the soul?

They would certainly be eager. Godliness is much greater than wealth, and the soul is much greater than fame. Would someone eager to attain fame not be eager to attain godliness? I can't imagine he wouldn't be. Rather, I would say that whenever someone wants to attain anything, basically his longing is to attain godliness.

If man wants to achieve fame, ask him how much fame will make him satisfied. Ask him how much fame will make him satisfied. Ask him to give a limit: how much fame will fulfill him. Do you think he will be ready to give a limit? And even if he tells you his goal, you can always ask him if he will really be fulfilled by that much. He will then have to increase his limit.

Do you think anyone has ever been fulfilled by fame, no matter how much? Why has it not happened? Perhaps you have never thought about it, but can anyone ever be fulfilled, no matter how much wealth they have? People cannot be fulfilled by wealth, no matter how much, whatever the amount. And how much power and affluence does it take for someone to be fulfilled? No matter how much power and wealth he has, he cannot be fulfilled. Why?

The longing inside us is to attain infinite wealth; it is not satisfied with only a little wealth. The longing inside us is to attain infinite kingdoms. It can never be satisfied; it cannot be satisfied by achieving

small kingdoms. The longing inside us is essentially to attain godliness, and it cannot be fulfilled before that happens. So I would like to tell you that behind your small desires is the greater desire for the infinite. Behind all your tiny desires, that great longing, that last ambition exists.

Two things should be remembered. One is that in religion you don't have to renounce; in religion, you have to attain. Think in terms of attaining. And the other thing I would like to tell you is that behind each and every ambition, there is the hidden desire for godliness, the soul, the truth. If you dig and uncover your desires, you will experience the desire for godliness within you. And if you understand the true meaning of religion, you will find that nothing is to be renounced. Everything has to be attained, everything has to be achieved.

Some fourteen or fifteen hundred years ago it happened...

An Indian sage went to China. He was a guest in a monastery where there were many learned monks. The abbot welcomed him and told him that the monks there didn't drink alcohol, didn't eat meat, didn't steal, didn't cheat, and didn't desire anything. They didn't do this, they didn't do that – he went on and on.

In the middle of all this, the Indian sage stood up and said, "Forgive me. Can I ask something? I have understood what all these monks do not do. Can I ask what they do, do? I have understood what they have renounced. Can I ask what have they have attained?"

Do you think a life can be based only on renunciation? Renouncing is negative; renouncing is nothingness. No life can be based on renunciation. Renunciation is death; the meaning of death is where everything is left behind. Death can be based on renunciation, but life cannot. Life can be based only on attainment, only on gain. Life is based on attainment of the vastest of the vast.

A true sannyasin is not one who has renounced the world. A true sannyasin is one who has attained *brahman* – the ultimate, the absolute – one who has attained godliness. For this attainment, renouncing the world is of no relevance. It is just as if we bring a lamp into a room and darkness disappears. Someone might say we have renounced darkness, but we have not. It is only that light has been brought in. We have attained light, not dropped darkness. Darkness cannot be dropped. Even if you make an effort to do it, it cannot be

dropped. Have you ever seen anyone drop darkness? Have you ever seen anyone renounce darkness? Have you ever seen anyone say farewell to darkness from his house? You cannot say farewell to darkness, neither can it be renounced, dropped or destroyed. No one has ever seen anyone destroying darkness.

Yes, light can enter, light can be welcomed. You can attain light and then darkness will not be found. The darkness never existed; *darkness* was only a name for the absence of light. Your clinging to the world is because you have not attained the ultimate. The clinging we have for the world, the attachment we have, the insistence we have, the desire that we have to cling to it – the dreams that we are clinging to – all that is the absence of awakening. Otherwise, no one would ever be ready to hold on to his dreams.

Right now in this room, if darkness suddenly happens and we try to remove it, what will happen? Will we be able to remove it? We might exhaust ourselves trying, but darkness will still remain. Any effort to remove darkness will lead to disappointment. And if we think that darkness is very strong and we must be very weak, that only shows our stupidity.

Darkness is not strong at all. But the way to get rid of it is not by renouncing it. The way to disperse darkness is to become available to light.

Attainment is first, attainment is primary, and renunciation follows it. Renunciation follows it like a shadow. Attainment is primary; renunciation is like a shadow behind it. But we see only the shadows, and hence we see only the renunciation.

I would like to tell you this: religion is not renunciation; religion is attainment. If religion is no longer negative and becomes positive, it can become a science, positive instead of being negative.

So I am not saying to drop stealing, I am not saying to stop cheating, I am not saying to drop lies, to become nonviolent. I am saying to attain the soul. I am saying to make a positive resolution to attain the soul. Do not think of renouncing; think of attaining. And you will find that as the speed of attaining quickens, renunciation happens by itself. Move in the direction of light and make a positive determination that light has to be attained. Don't think of darkness. There is no need to think about darkness.

I can see that as soon as someone starts thinking of religion, immediately he also starts thinking of renunciation – what he should

drop. Everywhere people ask me, "What shall we give up? What shall we renounce?"

I tell them, "If you had something, I would ask you to renounce. If you had something, I would tell you to renounce. But besides dreams, you don't have anything. If you had wealth, you could renounce that. But there is no trace of wealth: besides poverty, you have nothing. The poor are dreaming of renunciation; those who do not have anything are thinking of becoming renunciates. This is so strange. I don't tell you to renounce anything. Right now you don't have anything. I tell you to attain."

For attainment, for attaining, a very different kind of effort is needed. Renouncing is not like attaining. Remember this: to renounce, there is a very different kind of effort, and this is not only true about renouncing. If religion has a negative grip on you, all the efforts are of one type, while if religion is positive, all efforts are of a different type. This makes a lot of difference. In one we have the idea of dropping; we are trying to renounce something. In the other we don't think of renouncing; we are more concerned about attaining.

I want to give you this thought, this idea, this awareness: think of religion in terms of attainment – think about what you have to attain, what you want to attain. And when you ask religion, "What shall I do?" ask, "What shall I attain?" Do not ask, "What I shall renounce?" Ask, "What shall I gain? What shall I find?"

When you ask about what you can find, a range of directions, a number of dimensions, and many new pathways open up. But if you ask religion about what you should renounce, religion will present itself as just morality. If you ask about what you should find, religion will present itself as meditation. To someone who asks, "What shall I renounce?" religion presents itself as morality: "Give up stealing, give up cheating. Don't do this, don't do that" – it will present itself to him like this. To a person who asks religion, "What shall I do? What shall I find?" religion will present itself as meditation.

There are two faces of religion: one of morality and one of meditation. When religion is meditation, it is alive. It becomes morality when it is dead. A religion that dies becomes moral, and a religion that is alive is meditative. It does not practice nonviolence; nonviolence is born out of it. It does not search for non-possessiveness; non-possessiveness is born out of it. This search is something else. It seeks spirituality, superconsciousness, meditation.

The vision becomes absolutely different. Negative religion leads only to morality.

Being a moral man is not a bad thing, but one does not attain truth just by being moral. Being moral is not a bad thing, but one does not become religious just by being moral. Someone may not steal, someone may not cheat, someone may not tell lies. But this is not enough to know truth, to experience the soul. An atheist can also be moral, but he may not be religious. An atheist can be absolutely a moralist. There is no harm in being moral, but morality is not a revolution; morality does not connect you with a new world of truth. Meditation does.

It is surprising: no matter how moral a person becomes, meditation does not come on its own. But if someone becomes a meditator, morality comes on its own. It is impossible for a meditator to be immoral – absolutely impossible. But it is very natural that a moralist not be a meditator. Meditation has no relation with morality, and by practicing morality, meditation does not come. But by practicing meditation, morality comes by itself.

Approach religion as meditation, approach religion from the view of meditation. Ask for attainment. The first thing to be asked of religion is: "What is to be attained? What has to be found?" And the first thing to be understood before you get involved in attaining is that life has to be attained. Those who have not attained life itself, what else can they attain? Those who have not attained life itself, what else can they attain: the first thing is to attain life. And I tell you that right now, what you know as life is not life.

There was a man who had been going to a mystic for many years. One day he told the mystic, "I have been coming to you for a long time. I have watched you very closely and I have seen you in depth. For many years, in many ways, I have tried to notice a fault, a mistake – to see if there was any hidden sin inside you. From my side I have tried in many ways, but I could see no flaw of any kind. So now I want to ask you about this. From the outside we cannot see anything; but is there also no flaw inside you? From the outside no imperfection is to be seen, but have the seeds of imperfection completely been destroyed inside too? Outside only light seems to be there, but is there no darkness underneath the lamp?" The man continued, "I want to ask you this because I can only see you

from outside, but only you can see from within."

The mystic said, "Before I can answer, one very important thing has to be said, or else I may forget. Yesterday, suddenly my eyes fell on your hands. I saw that your life had finished – that in exactly seven days the sun will set and your life will be gone. Perhaps I may forget, and so I am saying it now. Yesterday I forgot to tell you. You have asked a question and I have to answer it now, so perhaps I may forget again. This is why I am saying it. Now let me answer your question."

The man had been sitting, but now he stood up. The mystic said, "Please sit down. You were asking something?"

The man said, "I can't remember that I was asking you anything. Please allow me to leave. If there is time I will come again."

The mystic said, "Now there will be no more time. If you want to ask, ask now. Now I know that you will never come again."

The man said, "No, if I find time I will come again."

The mystic said, "I can see your hands and legs shaking, I am afraid that you may not be able to reach your home." And as the man was going down the stairs, he fell and had to be carried home. He became bedridden.

After seven days, as the sun was about to set, there was great sadness in the man's house. Weeping could be heard everywhere; death was close by, death was near. Then the mystic entered the house. The man was lying with closed eyes, almost dead. The mystic called out to him, saying his name. With great difficulty the man opened his eyes, sat up with folded hands, and bowed to the mystic. The mystic said, "I have come to ask you one thing. Have you committed any sins in the last seven days? In these seven days, did any sin arise in you?"

The man said, "Are you making fun of a dying man. Death was so close that the great distance between me and death for sins to arise was not there. Death was so close that there was no interval in between; there was no gap in between for sins to arise. No evil thought arose in those seven days. I have forgotten whether I am alive or dead. Again and again I felt that I had died, that the seven days were over. For seven days, I have only been waiting for death and have done nothing else."

The mystic said, "Death has not come yet; only the answer to your question has been given. When you asked whether there was

any flaw within, I only answered that your death had not come."

The man became frightened and said, "You have not only answered! My life has completely changed. I cannot be the same man again. I cannot be the same man again."

The awareness of death gives you a doorway to religion. If you think death will come within seven days, a change will happen. But even if death comes after seventy years, the distance is still not so much. There is not much difference between seventy years and seven days. The difference is in mathematics, not in life. In life, seven seconds, seven days, and seventy years are all the same. In mathematics the differences are great; they are not so in life.

What difference does it make whether death comes in seven days or seventy years? It should not make a difference. It makes no difference when death is. Just the fact of death should make a difference. And why does the existence of death make us afraid? The existence of death frightens us because we don't know life. Otherwise why should death scare us?

Death will not frighten a man who knows life. This is the test: someone who is not afraid of death has known life. There is no other way to know life. The man whom death does not frighten has known life. The man for whom death becomes meaningless has recognized life. The man for whom death disappears is connected to life, is alive. The man for whom death is not, he is a man who is alive; he has connected with life. In a positive science of religion, the first thing to be asked is: "What is life? How can we become connected with this life?"

What we are connected with right now is death, not life. All the things we are connected to will be taken away by death, and the only things that death will take away are the things that are already dead. This body we think is ours, death will take it away. This body is dead; hence death will take it away. Only that which is dead, death can take away. That which is eternal in us, the consciousness in us, that which is alive in us – death cannot take away. That alone will remain.

So a person has to search within himself, find out what is dead and what is alive. He has to create within himself a discrimination, a distance, in order to see what is dead inside himself and what is alive. All that is dead, all that is not alive, has to be discarded. A person has to

catch hold of that point that is life. This is meditation; this is the positive science of religion – having an observer inside, an awareness and discrimination, a realization of what is dead inside.

Doing this – doing this incessantly – is spiritual discipline. It becomes a part of your life to know, to reflect, and to become aware of those things that are dead inside. This becomes a very clear experience.

Can you not see this? Sometimes sit with closed eyes. Can you not see that you are not your body? In dreams, at night in sleep, are you aware of your body? At night when you are asleep, are you aware that the body is yours?

There is no awareness of the body in dreams, in sleep. But you are aware of your own consciousness. When you are awake, you are aware that the body is there. But when you are asleep, you are there but the body is not. You are aware of yourself, but the awareness of the body is not there. You may not be aware of your own face, you may not even be aware of your own name. In the sleep state, you forget you are inside the shell of your body. In the deep-sleep state, you absolutely forget it. When there are no dreams, you completely forget your body.

Close your eyes for few moments. Sit for a few moments and look; search inside yourself: "Am I the body?" Just look and search: "Am I the body?" Close your eyes and let your consciousness look inside and see: "Am I the body?" From the feet to the head, let your attention move around and search, very clearly. You will experience that you cannot be the body, you are not the body.

The consciousness that is aware of the body, the consciousness that sees the body, that consciousness cannot be the body. We become separate from what can be seen just by seeing it. Anything we can become aware of, in that very awakening, we become separate from. I can see you, and that is enough to say that I am not you. I can see the wall, and that is enough to say that I am not the wall. How can the one inside me who is looking, the consciousness that is awake and seeing the wall, be the wall? If I wake up and see the body, I will find that the body is like a shell. I will see very clearly that the body is like a cover and my consciousness is deep within.

To wake up from the body is the first stage of entering life. To be asleep in the body is like living in a dream. To wake up from the body is the first step in entering the truth: it is to be awake to the

body, to be filled with awareness of the body. In that moment when you search within yourself and the consciousness is floating around, again and again, touching the walls of the body and coming back, you will very clearly experience that the body is a shell and you are separate. Inside yourself, you will experience a new point that is not the body.

The first step is the awareness that I am not the body. Then a deeper step will have to be taken and you will have to ask: "Am I the thoughts? Am I the mind?" In dreams the body is forgotten, but the mind keeps on working. But dreams stop when a person goes into deeper sleep, where even the mind is still, where even the mind is not there. But we are there. When we sleep the body is forgotten. When we go into a deeper sleep, even the mind is forgotten. But we are still there, our being is there, our being is vibrating.

First there is the door to recognize that we are not the body. Then with the same observation with which we recognize the body, through observation of thoughts, we come across a subtler shell. The body is a gross shell. The body is a very gross shell that surrounds us from the outside. Then there is the subtle shell of our mind, consisting of our desires and our thoughts, which surrounds us from the inside. When someone awakens to the body he will have to do a second experiment of awakening to the mind. He will have to look at his thoughts, his mind, and will have to ask: "Am I the mind?" He will have to look inside the mind. And in a moment of totality, when someone awakens and sees inside the mind, he will be able to clearly see that the body is a shell outside himself, and the mind too is a shell outside himself.

There is one door to awaken to the body, and there is a second door to the mind. A person who goes beyond both doors enters consciousness, and by entering consciousness he enters life. Only consciousness does not die; everything else dies. Only consciousness is eternal; everything else is dead. Experiencing consciousness is just like someone lighting a lamp in a dark house; the experience is similar. In this whole life of darkness, a lamp of consciousness is lit.

For whoever becomes one with that consciousness, his whole life changes. Then renunciation of all the things that we wanted to renounce and were not able to happens by itself. Before, we did things in spite of knowing that they were bad and which we thought of as perversions; they surrounded us and we were caught in them.

Now we find that all the flaws and all sins we had wanted to drop have dropped on their own – the way dead leaves drop from a tree. In the same way, all outside faults disappear and drop from someone in whom the inner lamp of consciousness is lit. Just as darkness disappears when a lamp is lit, the darkness of life also disappears.

Meditation is the positive method for eradicating the darkness in life. The straightforward and easy meaning of meditation is: dropping the identification with that which is dead. Connect with that which is alive: meditation means to search for that connection – moving far away from death and closer to consciousness; separating from death and settling into consciousness. This is meditation, this is prayer, this is religion. And this brings a man into life, into aliveness. Infinite doors open up for a person who moves into life, who knows life – doors leading to his blissfulness, his peace, his music.

When for the first time a man comes to know his life, the whole world is filled with so much bliss. For the first time he knows how much peace is there, how much music is there, and how much beauty. Then he will feel gratitude and thankfulness. Then to live, even to breathe is bliss. Then there is no sadness in this world. Then he has known there is no death, knows that there is no sorrow in this world. A man who knows there is no death, knows all. He knows the deathless, that which does not die.

Religion is concerned with this positive science. Religion is not concerned with dropping, leaving, renouncing; religion is concerned with attaining. When a man attains, things will drop for him on their own. If a person has not yet attained and in his insanity renounces something, he will be in a greater difficulty. His boat consisted of his dreams and now that too has gone, while the real boat has not yet arrived. His being is still in midstream.

So I am not telling you to renounce; I am telling you to attain. And if you can catch hold of this approach of attaining, religion will be alive for you again. Religion died because of a negative attitude; religion can be resurrected by a positive vision.

I have told you these things with the hope that some of it may have an impact on you. Something from this talk may be useful for you. People like me have a strange way of gardening: I don't know where to throw the seeds, on whom they have dropped or not dropped; nothing is known. I don't know whether my seeds will sprout or not, whether they will flower or not. This is a strange type

of gardening. But even if one hundred thousand seeds are thrown and if only one seed flowers, then too it is worth the effort.

I hope that your hearts will be the space for the seed that can flower. May existence fill your lives with fruit. May existence bring light and luminosity into your lives. This is my wish and prayer for you. You have listened to my talk so lovingly, for which I am grateful.

CHAPTER 8

remove the dust from your mirror of consciousness

My beloved friends.

We live in times of immense darkness, pain and misery. On the veena of his heart, inside man there is no music, no song, no bliss. When I look inside you, I feel that a veena which could have produced celestial music is lying in a dark, ruined house and no music is being born of it. When I see you, I feel that a lamp which could have lit the darkness is standing unlit in a corner. When I see you, I feel that seeds that could have become flowers and filled the whole world with fragrance are being wasted by not finding the right soil.

Inside us is such potential, such immense potential, that we can become gods. And yet not even the animals would like to stand where we are standing. There is such a potential inside us that we can become gods, and not even animals would like to stand where we are standing. We are in a state of great misery, a state of pain and disaster. I would like to talk to you about this. I would like to tell you something about the way to go beyond this. And it is my hope you will be able to do this.

But I don't want to speak to you within the established definitions

of religion. Those you know very well. And I also don't want to speak to you in the language of philosophers. You are very well acquainted with that. You are very well acquainted with sects, with scriptures, and with their words. But those words have not created an upheaval in your life, have not created a thirst in your life, have not created a flame that has brought a revolution in your life so that a new being can be born inside you. It will be good if I talk about religion, but not speak in the words of religion. Those limited words have slowly died, the life has gone out of them, and empty words surround your mind. Their meaning, their alive connectedness, is far away from you.

So I will talk about religion, but not speak in the language of religion. I will talk about religion, but not in the language of scriptures. I will be talking only about religion, but in such a way that you may not even realize that I am saying something about religion.

Yesterday, as I was leaving, someone asked me why I had not said anything about the Jaina religion – as if only by talking about the Jaina religion would we be able to understand something about religion. And somebody else said I had talked about Buddha, but had not said enough about Mahavira.

Are names so significant? What is true about Buddha, is it not also true about Mahavira? What is true about Mahavira, is it not also true about Christ? But names have become very important, while the meaning behind them is of little significance to us.

So I am not going to say anything about Mahavira, about Buddha, about Christ. There have been so many teachings about these names that the people standing behind the names are no longer religious. A man clinging to Christ cannot be religious, a man clinging to Mahavira also cannot be religious.

A religious man will realize, will see, that there is no difference between Mahavira, Christ, Buddha, Rama or Krishna. He will be able to see that the names are different, but the truth behind the names is one. He will be able to see that the people are different, but what they have said and what they have given us is not different. The light has come from different lamps. The lamps may be different, but the light cannot be different. Different lamps have dispelled the darkness. The lamps may be different, but the light cannot be different. There is beauty in the stars and there is beauty in the flowers and there is also beauty in some eyes. The eyes and the stars and the flowers are separate from each other, but their beauty is not different. The eyes

and the stars and the flowers are separate, but their beauty is not different. Their life energy is one; only their bodies are separate.

The bodies of the religions differ, but the soul of the religions is one. I will say something about this soul to you. I will not talk to you about the bodies which have caught hold of us in such a very tight grip. We can't be available to religion while under their influence.

A person who grabs hold of the word *Jaina* may become a Jaina, but he will not be religious in a deeper sense. The more truly religious he becomes, the more the word *Jaina* will start disappearing. To call Mahavira a Jaina is to insult him. To call Buddha a Buddhist is to insult him. To call Christ a Christian is to insult him. Such indivisible beings cannot be broken down into fragments. Such indivisible beings cannot be broken down into fragments. Such great beings cannot be contained in fragments. They don't belong to categories; they have no limitations and belong to no sects. The people who are enclosed within their sects, those who have that limitation, should know that they can only wither away within those limits. They will not be able to experience the limitless. And they should come to the realization that they will be destroyed by their sects and will not be able to experience truth.

So I will talk about the truth which is boundless. And I would like to talk about the beauty which is not bound by mediums, which is not contained in any medium. And I would like to talk about the light which is not dependent on lamps – a light which is certainly present in the lamps, but is free from the lamps and distinct from the lamps.

Is it not possible that the light and the discussion of that light, the beauty and the discussion of that beauty, may strike a chord within you? Is it not possible that it can create a resonance within the strings of your heart? And is it not possible that your sleeping veena will begin to play, and in your sleeping heart a stir will be created – in your life a new direction, a new development, a new movement will be created? That momentum, moving in that direction – moving from the worldly to the otherworldly, moving from the body to the soul, moving from the world to godliness – that movement, that orientation, turning your face in that direction, is what I call religiousness. I will say a few things to you today regarding this.

As I said before, there is great darkness and there has never been such darkness. Man has become like the animals. Perhaps he was never so much like an animal before. During the last World War,

the morning after an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima where over a hundred thousand people were killed, a journalist asked President Truman how he had slept the previous night. Truman said he had never had such a deep sleep in his life. He said he spent the night carefree.

A man should be a little humane, should be a little bit considerate. If by my order one hundred thousand people were killed, would I be able to sleep that night? How would I ever be able to sleep again? After such a fateful night, even if I had infinite births, would I ever be able to sleep? But Truman said, "I slept very deeply last night, I slept without any tensions and anxiety."

Would we say that Truman is a human being? Would we say that he speaks the language of a human being? Would we say that from within, from inside him, a consciousness is speaking? There is no consciousness speaking from within. Perhaps only the lowliest animal inside would be able to say this.

And this really happened. But I am not saying this only about Truman; this has happened with all of us. Something has happened with all of us that causes us to be happy while throwing thorns in other people's way. Something like this has happened to all of us, making us enjoy pulling away the flowers from other people's lives. Our happiness has become like this. And a man who enjoys throwing thorns in other people's way does not remain a human being. And remember too, no flowers can blossom in the life of such a man because whatever we give comes back to us. This world returns to us only that which we throw at it.

All we throw comes back to us. If a man throws hatred, hatred comes back. If a man throws love, love comes back. This entire world becomes our payback. A person's face is like a mirror reflecting all the people in the world. Whatever you see as your face, see it as a reflection of the people all around you.

If we become abnormal, distortions start penetrating us from all around. And if we allow ourselves to become filled with hate, then hatred starts penetrating us from all around. If we have thrown thorns, then we reap thorns, and by that our life is destroyed.

There has never before been so much darkness, so much hatred, and so much violence in people's lives. It is there today! But this does not mean that we should be discouraged, this does not mean that we should be discouraged. There is only one reason for

this situation: those who are blind are in darkness because of their own doing and through their own will. And if they wish, they can be luminous. Those who are standing in darkness, only they themselves are responsible for their condition. We are standing in darkness by our own choice. Whenever we decide to, we can make a resolution; when a desire is created in us, when a longing is created, we will be able to enter the light.

But remember one thing: only someone with eyes can know about darkness. Only someone with eyes can know about darkness. A blind man cannot know about darkness. Perhaps you may have thought that those who have no eyes know about the darkness they live in. You are wrong. Change your idea: a blind man does not know about darkness. He cannot, because eyes are needed. You need eyes to see darkness; eyes see not only light, they see darkness as well.

A man who has no eyes cannot see light, and he cannot see darkness either. When we see darkness, we may be troubled by what we see, but being able to see darkness is an indication of having eyes. For the darkness to exist, to be aware of the darkness, is an indication of having the ability to see. Eyes that can see darkness are capable of seeing light.

So darkness is not a reason for despair; darkness contains a ray of hope within itself. But how can that ray of hope be seen? The eyes that were lost by continuously looking at darkness, the eyes that are attached to darkness, the eyes that have become absorbed in darkness – how can those eyes turn toward light? I would like to talk to you about this.

We are the way nature has created us. If we stop at that boundary, we will never be able to experience godliness. The way nature has created us is only a potentiality. We will have to do something to turn that potentiality into reality. When nature and a man's own endeavors meet, then something transcendental is born within the man. If a man is satisfied with only what nature has provided, then the transcendental cannot be born within him. But when nature and a man's own striving meet, when that own striving starts acting on his nature, then something transcendental is born.

Remember this: a man who is satisfied with nature is dead. A man who is satisfied with nature has not known life; he will end at the level of the animals. But a man who is active with nature, who is

engaged and explores his capabilities and power vis-à-vis nature, one day will find that by the union of nature and being active, nature and his own efforts, something transcendental is born.

The transcendental is born by practicing diligence over nature, and a man is not truly a man until he becomes something more. He enters a new world of bliss, he is able to create profound music, he is able to know profound truth. And it is knowing that truth which liberates someone brings him into an amazing world of freedom and bliss.

Nature is already within us, and some action should also be there. But generally we exhaust our activity in attaining very trivial things, in disciplining ourselves to achieve absolutely trivial things. We fail to accomplish the vast and the supreme. Yes, we may be accomplishing something or other, our doing may be busy somewhere or other: someone is running after wealth, someone is attaining fame, someone position, someone respect and someone something else. But all these accomplishments are just like making castles in the sand, or like making your signature on the sand on the banks of a river: by the evening a storm will come and erase everything. The storm erases all signatures. We are using our doing on the sand. Death will come and will erase everything, and all we have done will become undone.

Our actions which death will destroy is trivial. And vast is that doing which death is not able to destroy. The action which death will wipe away is trivial. And vast is that doing which death is not able to wipe away. A real man is one who has utilized his being a man, who has utilized his inner energies, who has made such signatures that death cannot wipe away, that death cannot take away – a man who has created such structures that death cannot take away. This is what man has to focus his activity on.

I have talked about two types of endeavors. One is a trivial busy-ness, which is for earning a livelihood or for fame or status or money. There is another type of doing that is not for a livelihood, which is for life – which is not for fame, which is not for money, but which is for truth, for your ultimate self, for your own self nature.

First, your endeavors need to be focused at the point of “I am,” which is your isness. All your energies, all your will, all your aspirations, all your desires, all your longings need to be focused at the point which is your isness.

If you can open the doors of that mystery, if you are able to know who you are – if you are able to be acquainted with what is

your being, if you can know the flame encaged within your body, if you can experience the ultimate life in this shell of clay – then you have taken a step toward that ultimate endeavor. Then you have taken a step toward the truth, then you have used your energies and not wasted them.

Endless music is possible in man if he can engage his efforts over nature. If we look inside ourselves, we will see that we die almost the way we were born. We run around, we make a lot of effort, we labor, but all our efforts are meaningless. We are working on a level that is mortal. When a person works on the mortal plane, all his efforts are futile. Work proves meaningful only to a man who works on the immortal.

We all work, but we can choose the wrong focus. Someone can choose a path that is mortal, where the results are momentary, the efforts are mortal. It is not surprising that a man who works on the mortal level finds his effort to be meaningless. Work on your immortality; only that is meaningful.

So you need to look with mindfulness, with awareness at yourself. Find that which is mortal within, find that which is immortal. Alertness, discrimination, a distance, a capacity to differentiate – these qualities transform a common worldly man into a seeker. A man who recognizes the mortal within himself, and who recognizes that which does not die within himself, focuses his efforts on what does not die, becoming a seeker. A man remains worldly if he focuses his efforts on what dies, on what is mortal.

There is no geographical difference between the ordinary world and the world of the sannyasin. There is no difference between living in a house and living in the forest. Sannyas is not a matter of renouncing something and running away. There is no question of reaching somewhere. The question is of recognizing the mortal and recognizing the immortal within you. Sannyas and the world are not doings; sannyas and the world are knowings.

The difference between sannyas and the world is not a difference of doing. The difference between sannyas and the world is a difference in knowing: a certain realization, a certain awareness of the fact that inside me there is something mortal and I am not to identify myself with that mortal part. I refuse to devote my efforts toward what is mortal within; I devote my efforts toward what is immortal. In being devoted to the immortal, even the effort becomes

immortal. And joined with the immortal, human endeavor transforms into liberation.

How can this awareness be instilled in us, how can this inner realization be possible, and how can we experience this non-fragmented consciousness? People say that there are two ways, but I can only see one way. All the sects of the world and all the intellectuals of the world talk about two ways: the way of knowing, and the way of love or devotion. As far as I know there is only one way; my understanding is that knowing is incomplete if there is no love in it, and love is incomplete if there is no knowing in it. If knowing is alone, it is incomplete, dry, desert-like and juiceless. And if love is alone, it is blind, without eyes, and without light. A blind love is incomplete and a juiceless knowing is incomplete. When knowing and love unify, immortal music starts playing within. As far as I can see, knowing and love have to be disciplined together, only then does the experience of immortality happen in a man. So I would like to tell you something about disciplining the two.

First, knowing is essential. Before you can attain the eternal, the soul, godliness – knowing is essential. What is the meaning of knowing? Knowing does not mean that we know many things. In spite of knowing many things, a man can still be ignorant. Knowing *about* many things is not what I am talking about. There is a difference between memory and knowing. Knowing many things is memory. And to know the eternal truth within is knowing. Whatever education we receive is the education of memory, not of knowing. Teaching about knowing stopped long ago. Now all education is about memory; it is all the training of memory. We have been trained our whole life to memorize what we have been taught, to remember what we have been taught. We remember things and so become capable of repeating them, and we live in the illusion that we know them.

If I ask you something about God, you will certainly say something. If I ask you about the soul, you will certainly say something. If I ask you about ultimate liberation, you will certainly say something. But is not your knowing; it is your memory. You have heard, you have read, someone has told you – but you have not known.

Memory is one thing and knowing is a totally different thing. A man who wants to attain the immortal has to first attain knowing, while a man who only wants to attain lifeless things, matter, for him memory is enough. For science, memory is enough. For religion,

knowing is necessary. Science lives and runs on memory. Religion needs knowing.

This is the reason today's scientists can know everything about all the scientists who have lived in the past three hundred years. This is easy. Hence science has a tradition: Newton existed, so Einstein will follow. Einstein will begin working from where Newton stopped. Where Newton's work ends, Einstein's work begins. After Einstein another scientist will come. He will begin working from where Einstein left off.

But this does not happen in religion. You cannot begin from where Mahavira stopped. You will have to begin from where Mahavira started. Whenever any man on this earth wants to attain the truth of religion, he will have to begin from where everyone else began. He cannot start where they left off.

Religion does not have tradition; religion is an individual truth and science is a social truth. Only that which works from memory can be a social truth. Religion cannot be a social truth because it works from knowing.

So the first thing I want to say to you is that knowing is not memory. There is no meaning in remembering anything – any epics, any lessons, any scriptures, any Vedas, any Upanishads, the Gita, the Koran. They will only become your burden; they can never become your liberation. And you will be one of those people who carry boats on their heads and walk around the village, but who have never traveled on a boat.

Boats shouldn't be carried on the head; you have to travel in a boat. The scriptures do not have to be carried on the head, you have to make them your feet for walking. The scriptures do not have to be carried on the head, you have to make them your feet for walking. When they become your feet, you walk with them. And when you put them on your head and bow down to them, they don't help you to walk. Rather you have to carry them like a burden. When a religious scripture becomes a memory, it becomes futile. And what are the scriptures besides memory?

So I am not teaching you memory. I am saying you must seek knowing. And knowing is born in a very unique way. Memory is collected, while knowing is born. Memory is gathered, knowing manifests. Memory comes from outside, knowing comes from within.

The more someone unburdens his memory, the more knowing

will be available in the same proportion. The more his memory is disengaged, the more knowing will awaken in him. When someone digs a well, he does it to draw water out of the earth. But have you ever wondered how you can get water by digging, how water comes by digging? By digging, only the mud is taken away. Water is already present; when the mud is taken away, it becomes visible. Water does not come out by digging; only mud is taken out. And if there is no water there, you may dig a hundred miles down and no water will come.

So never tell anyone you dug a well and water came out. By digging, water does not come out; by digging, mud is removed. And if there is water, you'll be able to see it. You have to dig to know, you have to dig for knowing. Knowing is already present, only the layers of mud which are covering it have to be removed. Those layers of mud are our layers of memory.

In infinite lives we have collected millions of memories. Layers upon layers of memory have gathered, and under the pressure of memory, knowing has become impure. Because of the very deep layers of memory, because of the very deep layers of memory and conditionings, the radiance of knowing no longer shines from within. If all the layers of memory can be destroyed, knowing will arise – not be born, but be seen. Knowing is already present, knowing is our intrinsic nature; you don't have to bring it from anywhere. On the contrary, something has come between it and us, is an obstacle.

So in a way, the path to knowing is very negative, just like digging a well is negative. It is negative in the sense that you must throw away the dirt; you don't do anything with the water. When you dig a well, you don't do anything with water; you do something with the dirt covering it. You throw away the dirt and water comes. Similarly, the path to knowing is negative in a way.

To uncover knowing, you don't do anything with knowing directly. Only memories, conditioning, the entire burden of your mind are to be discarded. When the mind is unburdened, when the mind is absolutely unconditioned, when there are no conditionings and influences from the outside left, and the mind becomes silent, it is like someone has wiped the dust off the mirror. The dust is wiped off and the mirror is as it is. Even when the dust was there it was like that, and when the dust is not there, still it is like that. Perhaps it made no difference to the mirror. The dust was on the surface and was separate from the

surface. The mirror is as it was. But by the dust being removed, the mirror becomes clearer. And with the mirror clean, it is possible to have a reflection.

Knowing arises by wiping off the dust of memory. If someone wants knowing, he does not have to memorize scriptures. If he seeks the discipline of knowing, all scriptures which have gathered inside have to be erased. A man whose being wants wisdom must make a clean sweep of all the scriptures that have accumulated inside, so that all the layers of dust are discarded. Then knowing can arise.

Memory troubles us in two ways, it binds us in two ways. Generally, the past keeps buzzing in our memory. Right now you are sitting here, but there are very few who are really sitting here. Many are somewhere in the past, while others are somewhere in the future. Generally, we are never in the present; either the mind is in the past or in the future – in the memories of the past or in the imagination of the future. And the imaginations of the future are the offspring of the memories of the past. The imaginations of the future are the offspring of the memories of the past. So either we are in the memories of the past or we are in the future, which is the child of the memories of the past.

The past is dead and the future is not alive. The past has gone and the future has not come. So we are like ghosts, our minds are like ghosts. Either we are in the past or in the future – we are not in the present. Memory and imagination keep surrounding us and because of this burden, knowing cannot be born. Knowing is born only when memory and imagination are not there. Imagination is another form of memory: it is the imaginary form of memory. By dropping memory and the tension of imagination, knowing arises.

So it has to be understood: a man who wants to develop the discipline of knowing has to remember that he must become free of past memories. When memories of the past come to bother you, bow down to them and tell them not to disturb you anymore. When memories of the past are there, with alertness, detach yourself from them. With awareness, free yourself from them. And with alertness, see whether you are engaged with the unconsciousness of memories, whether you are losing yourself in their unconsciousness. Make a continuous effort in this direction, a constant determination in this direction; there should be a whole-hearted single-minded effort to not lose yourself in the memories of the past, to not let awareness be

buried under the memories of the past. What is gone is gone. What has died has died. Don't carry it with you. You will slowly find that the ashes of the memories of the past will disappear and you will be free of the past.

A man who is not free from the past can never attain knowing. You have to discipline yourself to drop the memories of the past. The place you have left, leave it behind. Let what has happened be finished. Don't let it return to your mind again, don't open the doors for it to return, don't welcome it.

We keep on collecting the dead, we keep on dragging them around. Our heads are filled with the dead and with corpses. Yesterday someone abused you, and it is still following you. The day before yesterday someone honored you, and that is still following you. A few days ago someone decorated you with garlands; the flowers have withered and dried out, but the mind is still wearing them. The past becomes a burden on us. The small moment of the present, the small spark of the present, gets covered by the ashes of the past and is lost.

You must get rid of the ashes of the past. Just as someone brushes ashes from the embers, you must wipe the past from the mind. That which has died has died. The meaning of the past is that which is no more. Let it *be* no more. Don't stop it from disappearing. In reality it has died. It dies in the world, but it remains in our minds. And in this way the mind disconnects with the harmony of the world. In the world, the past doesn't continue to be alive; the world is new every moment. But the mind, the mind is never new; the mind remains old.

There is only one reason for the fight that exists between the world and the mind, for the fact that the music of the mind fails to harmonize with the music of the world. The reason is that the world is new each moment and the mind remains old. So the mind is never able to find oneness with the music of the world. This vast truth that exists all around, these stars and the moon, and these flowers and the waves and the winds – the mind cannot become one with them. Only through the harmony that is created when the mind becomes one with all these, only then is a man related with godliness, with the ultimate truth.

A young man went to a master who had an ashram near a

mountain stream. The young man had traveled far and wide, had gone on many pilgrimages, but to no avail. Falling at the feet of the master, he said, "I am so tired, so fed up and troubled. I can't find the way. What should I do to enter godliness?"

The master asked, "Do you really want to attain? Do you really want to attain godliness? There is a door nearby, just behind the ashram. You can enter from there."

The young man was very surprised. He had been many places, but he had not met such a madman. He had met many saints, each one crazier than the last, but had never met one so crazy as to say there was a door from where one could enter godliness. He could not believe what he was hearing.

But the master was saying it with such great confidence. He was saying, "Come with me, there is a door just behind. Go in from there."

Even though he was filled with disbelief, the young man followed the master to a place in back of the ashram. There was no door there – only a mountain stream. The master said, "This is the door; enter from here."

The young man said, "You are mad! This is a mountain waterfall. Where is the door in it? And how am I to enter it?"

The master replied, "Sit down near the waterfall and when you feel that you have become one with it, understand that you are entering godliness. When there remains no gap between the waterfall and you, when you cannot discriminate whether you are the waterfall or separate from it, when you no longer have the perception that you are seeing the waterfall, then you are entering godliness."

The discipline of knowing is the dispersal of the past. With awareness, consciously let the past die completely. Keep on watching, become aware, so that the past does not try to catch hold of you and cling to you. Ask, "Is the past becoming a burden on me?"

One morning, a man went to a great sage, swore at him, and angrily spat on his face. The sage wiped off the spit with a cloth and asked, "Do you have anything more to say?"

The young man became puzzled. He asked, "Do you think I have said something?"

The followers of the sage were very angry and said to him, "This man spat and insulted you. Why are you asking him if he has anything

else to say to you? He spat on you and insulted you.”

The sage said, “He may have spat, but I don’t see it that way. Rather he has said something. He is in such anger that he could not express it in words. So he said it by spitting. Words were incapable of expressing it; he expressed it by spitting. What he could not say, he put into action, he indicated. So I have asked him if there is anything else he wanted to say.”

But the young man could not think of anything else to say and returned to his village. He repented during the night: he realized that he had made a mistake by insulting such a man, someone who had even understood his spitting as a conversation.

The next morning he came to ask for forgiveness. He said to the sage, “Please forgive me. Yesterday I behaved very badly with you.”

The sage said, “Forgive you for that? You didn’t make me angry at all. Your spit was not as harmful to me as what you’ve been thinking about me was harmful to you. I immediately wiped your spit off. You spat and I wiped it off. But you kept on thinking about it for twenty-four hours. This is sad. I wiped it off, and you could have wiped it off too. You could have immediately erased the idea that you had spat.”

The young man is not likely to have understood what the sage was saying. Although he may not have understood, it was something profound and essential. When we can wipe something away, erase what has happened, we become connected with what *is*. If we can erase what has passed, we become connected with the present. And truth is always in the present. Truth is never in the past, and truth is also never in the future. Truth is in the present.

Truth means that which is forever here and which will never be nonexistent. The past is nonexistent and the future has not yet arrived. Therefore, truth can neither be in the future nor in the past. Truth always is. It is in this sense that truth is eternal. Eternal means that which is never past and never future – that which is eternally present, timeless.

So someone who wants to enter the eternalness, the timelessness, of truth will have to let go of the mind’s imaginary enclosures of the past and the future. And if you drop the past, you will be surprised: the future also drops in the same proportion. The burden of the past becomes less and in the same proportion, the future drops by itself.

The past becomes null and empty, the future becomes empty, and the present becomes complete. When the mind is free of the ashes of the past and future, when the layers of dust are removed, springs of water are born. At that moment, knowing happens, or rather knowing descends. At that moment, you become aware of knowing. Without attaining that knowing, you cannot be a human being in the real sense. Without attaining that knowing, no man is truly alive.

So knowing has to be attained in a negative sense. The way to knowing is negative, negative in this sense that something has to be removed before knowing is born. Dust needs to be removed from the mirror and then the mirror is clean.

But knowing alone is incomplete, knowing alone is incomplete. You will also have to become disciplined in love, and that discipline is positive. The discipline of knowing is negative, and the discipline of love is positive.

The discipline of knowing is like removing dust from a mirror, and the discipline of love is like the sprouting of a seed. If we plant a seed in the soil and then remove the soil, it will not be able to become a plant. The soil must be there or the seed will not be able to express its energies as a sprout. The seed germinates in the form of a sprout, comes out of the soil on its way to becoming a flower. The seed will have to exert its energies; only then can it sprout. The mirror will not have to develop itself once the dust is brushed off. The moment the dust is brushed off, the mirror is clean. But the seed does not have to remove anything; the seed has to give birth to something from within.

Love is born like a seed, and knowing is born the way dust is brushed off from a mirror. The way of love is positive. You have to radiate love from the inside, you have to gather all the energies from within and give out the energy of love. How can this happen? Ordinarily we throw out hatred, we spread enmity, envy, lies, attachment – but we don’t spread love.

I remember...

Early one morning in a monastery, someone heard the master tell one of the monks to go to the entrance and ask for forgiveness from the shoes and the door. The visitor who heard this was astonished. Why should the monk ask for forgiveness to the door and the

shoes standing before it? What kind of crazy thing was this? The listener was even more surprised to see the monk do it and then return to his master.

The person listening asked the master, "What kind of madness is this? Does a person have to ask forgiveness even from the shoes and the door?"

The master said, "When the monk opened the door, he opened it angrily. When he pushed it, there was anger. When he took off his shoes, there was great anger. And if there can be anger at the shoes and the door, why couldn't there have been love?"

If a pen doesn't work properly, you throw it away in anger. If a door doesn't open properly, you open it with anger and swear at it. If you can throw anger and hatred toward material things, why can't you radiate love instead? The question is not whether the door will accept your love or not; the question is whether you spread love or not. The question is not whether the door understands hatred and anger. After all, what can the door understand? But if you throw hatred, you became small inside. And if you give out love, you become vast.

The more hatred you spread, the more contracted and small you become. The more love you spread, the vaster and more expanded you become. By spreading hatred, you only end up as the ego; by spreading love, the final form you will encounter will be *brahman* – the ultimate self.

Love makes you expand and hatred makes you shrink. Anger makes you small, non-anger makes you big. And whatever sins the religions have been telling you about are sins just because they narrow you, make you smaller, shrink you. All the things which have been praised as virtues are virtues because they make you expand, make you spacious and bigger. At the final moment, your ego disappears completely and becomes godliness. But all attachments, all hatred, make you shrink and become small, and in the end you will find yourself absolutely alone, just a single point.

To be alone in the ego is to be in hell. And to be alone in this way is the only hell. If only the ego remains in a man, he is in hell. But if the ego has been totally dispersed, he has attained the ultimate liberation. The ego is hell, and egolessness is the point when the "I" disappears. The discipline of love is positive because you have to spread it the way a seed manifests its sprout – in a consistent way

and with awareness all around itself. Love spreads toward the non-living and the living; the expression of love, the feeling of love – constantly remembering and with positivity, spreading all around.

We don't understand how we can spread love. We do not understand how we can spread love. Ordinarily we are not able to see it. But can you remember how you have thrown anger, thrown hatred? When you throw anger, what happens?

When you become angry, the fire of anger overwhelms you and you are lost. The flames of anger spread out from the center of the anger within you. It seems like the flames are spreading from within you, flowing out toward the person you wish to harm. In anger, you become absolutely aflame and throw hatred toward the other person. But love can also be spread like a flame: sitting, standing, and walking, love can be spread all around you.

Madame Blavatsky lived in India for a long time. She had toured the whole world. People were surprised: whenever she was traveling, whether in a car or a train, she would put her hand in her shoulder bag and throw something outside. People would ask her what she was throwing. She said she was throwing flower seeds. All her life she kept on throwing flower seeds all around her. People said, "You are absolutely mad. When you throw the seeds by the side of the road, by the train tracks, you will never know if the seeds will sprout, you can never know how many will flower."

Blavatsky said, "This is not the question. I want to spread flowers because it is helping me. The question is not whether these will become flowers or not; the question is that I have tried to spread flowers. The feeling of spreading flowers expands me and the feeling of spreading thorns contracts me. If flowers arise from it and someone sees the flowers open and the smiling flowers are happy, then my effort will be fruitful."

I am not telling you to spread flower seeds; but the fragrance of flowers can be spread. You can expand love and spread it all around you. There are many ways of spreading love.

Two days ago I was telling some people about an incident that occurred at the time of the Upanishads...

Three youths were just leaving an ashram after having completed

their education. It was their last day and the master said, "Now you can go."

One of youths said, "But you said there was one more exam to be taken."

The master said, "Don't worry about that. If God wishes, you will be given that examination. But your education at this ashram has ended. Now you can go."

The young men rolled up their mats, packed away their scriptures, and in the evening when it was twilight and the sun was setting, they were ready to leave. They touched the feet of their master and departed.

On their way, as the sun was about to set, they saw a pile of thorns on the narrow path on which they were walking. The first youth hesitated a moment and then jumped over the thorns and went on ahead. The second young man who was behind him also hesitated, but then he left the path and went out through an adjoining farm. The third youth hesitated; but then he put down his baggage, collected the thorns, and threw them in the bushes beside the road.

All three of the young men were startled to see the master come out from behind the bushes. To the youth who had thrown the thorns into the bushes, he said, "You can go. Your education is completed." But to the one who jumped over the thorns and to the one who had turned in another direction, he said, "Your education is not yet finished."

Someone who cannot pick up the thorns and remove them from another person's way may have knowledge, but he has not known love. One who is not able to pick up thorns and remove them from another person's way may have knowledge, but he has not found love. And someone who has not known love cannot be a man in the complete sense. Knowing alone cannot make a man. The youth who removed the thorns from the path passed the last examination. The other two failed the test.

By expanding love, I mean removing thorns from someone else's way. By expanding love, I mean spreading a few flowers on other people's paths. By expanding love, I mean there is friendliness, love, compassion in your feelings, in your mind, toward each and every particle of the world. Whether that feeling will be helpful to others is not significant; that feeling will liberate you. Love is the

only liberation, and only in love can you become totally liberated because then you are totally free of the ego. You have to expand love in a positive way, while knowing has to arise in a negative way.

When the union of knowing and love occurs, music is born. When knowing and love become connected, a synthesis with truth is attained. When knowing and love connect, then knowing resides in the person, and nonviolence and love manifest in his behavior. When knowing and love are complete, then bliss arises in a man. He can spread this fragrance of bliss far and wide.

Knowing takes someone to himself, and love takes him to the whole. Knowing opens him to his own truth, and love opens him to the truth of the whole. If a man expresses it in the language of knowing, he attains the soul. If a man expresses it in the language of love, he attains godliness. The language of love reaches out to godliness, the language of knowing reaches out to touch the soul. And when love and knowing are complete, then he knows that the soul and godliness are not separate. They are one: in the totality of knowing and love, a person knows the climax of truth, not fragmented truth.

If knowing is alone, it can only know the soul; but if knowing is with love, then it knows the whole. If knowing is alone, then it knows the self; if knowing and love are together, then it becomes all-knowing, it knows all. Knowing opens the door to oneself; love opens the door to all. I teach the totality of knowing and love. The paths of knowing and love are not separate; they are indivisible. The person who searches within for this indivisible discipline, only he attains to oneness.

I have told you a few things about knowing and love. I wish you the light of knowing and the fragrance of love in your life. I wish for a flame of knowing and the bliss of love in your life. I wish for you to become filled with knowing and for love to be flowing all around you.

You have listened to my talk with such love, with such peacefulness, I am grateful for that. If in the end you are not able to accept my knowing, please accept my love.

religion: the ultimate science

My beloved friends.

I would like to start my talk with a small story...

On a moonless night, a blind man was a guest at a friend's house. At midnight, as he was leaving the house, his friend said, "It will be good if you take a lamp with you. The night is very dark and you don't even have vision."

The blind man laughed and asked, "What is the meaning of a lamp in my hands? I am a blind man; night and day are the same for me. For me, the sun during the day and a moonless night are the same. To have a lamp in my hands has no meaning."

But the friend did not agree, and he said, "It will not make a difference to you, but seeing the lamp in your hand, other people will be able to avoid bumping into you in the dark. So take the lamp."

The logic seemed convincing, and so the blind man took the lamp in his hand and left. But he had hardly taken two hundred steps when someone bumped into him. He was very surprised and started laughing, and he said to himself, "I thought the logic was

wrong and it proved I was right." He asked the man who had bumped into him, "Brother, can't you see there is a lamp in my hand? Are you also blind?"

The man said, "I am not blind, but the lamp in your hands has gone out."

If a blind man has a lamp in his hands, it is difficult for him to know if it has gone out. But at least he knows when someone has bumped into him.

I feel humanity is even blinder than this. We are unconsciously colliding every day, and we don't know that the lamp in our hands has gone out. The entire history of mankind shows that we don't have eyes, that we are blind. We keep on falling into the same ditch we had fallen into yesterday, and even the day before yesterday, and even before that. Being blind seems to be a characteristic of mankind. But a few people have held a lamp in their hands: a Buddha, a Mahavira, a Krishna, a Christ held a lamp in the hope that even though we may be blind, the light would be visible and no one would collide with us. But every day we collide, and even then we are not aware that the lamp in our hands has perhaps gone out.

I am beginning with this story because I can see that the lamp in man's hand has long been extinguished, and we have been walking around our entire lives with that extinguished lamp. An extinguished lamp is even more dangerous than not having a lamp because the hands holding the lamp think the lamp is lit. Someone who does not have a lamp in his hand walks cautiously, thinking he has no lamp in his hand, the way is dark and he is blind. But we have extinguished lamps in our hands, and if we assume that these lamps are lit, the future of man is in great danger.

In man's hands, in the name of religion there is nothing but the extinguished lamps of sects. In the name of religion, there is nothing but outdated books in the man's hands. In the name of religion there is absolutely no godliness. Certainly there are priests, there are temples, there are prayers – but they are all extinguished, they are all ashes; there is no light in them.

I am saying this because if there were lights in the temples, if our prayers were alive and aflame, the hell-like state of the earth today would have been impossible. And the most surprising thing is that it is the so-called religions which have been at the forefront of creating this

hell-like state of the earth. They are responsible. The state of mankind that the Hindus, the Mohammedans, the Christians, the Jainas, and the Buddhists have created is frightening. We had hoped to attain luminosity through them, but the results have been the opposite.

The work that religions have done in setting man against man, even the irreligious and atheists have never done. You may think that it is those whom the religious people call the atheists, the irreligious, the materialists who would be responsible for having divided man. This would be understandable. But it is the people who claim to be day and night devoted to the ultimate truth, God, love and prayer, who have fragmented and divided mankind. They have spread so much mischief, committed so many murders, and been responsible for so much bloodshed that if we look at the history of what has happened in the name of religion – what is thought of as religion – then it will be difficult to imagine what is irreligiousness.

Before you can understand anything about religion, before I say anything, it is essential to say that I do not consider our so-called religions to be religion.

The so-called religions have killed religion. And if today there is no real religion, it is neither the politicians, nor the atheists, nor the scientists nor the materialists who have extinguished the lamp. It is the so-called religious people who have done it. And we are unable to see this because theirs are the hands which we thought were keeping the lamp safely lit. The ones who have taken away the luminosity, happiness, intelligence, the flame of life, the purpose – everything – from man's life are not so easy to see.

As soon as religion becomes organized, it proves to be fatal; as soon as religion becomes a sect, it becomes irreligious. In reality, no organization can be a religion because religion is not an organization. Religion is a spiritual discipline. An organization is of the crowd, of a group, and spiritual discipline is of oneself, of aloneness.

Religion is fundamentally something that happens in aloneness. It is what a man does in his aloneness with himself. Religion has no relation with the crowd, with a group, with the other. As soon as a religion becomes an organization, it becomes politics. Mohammedans, Hindus, Jainas, and Christians are all names of politicians. Religion has no relation with them, and as long as we continue to call them religions, it will be difficult to find real religion. As long as we have the idea that people who divide mankind are religious, we will

not be able to even begin looking for the real religion.

Religion can only be one. Truth can only be one. Untruths can be many, illnesses can be many, but health cannot be of many types. When we become sick, we become sick in different ways. And when we become healthy, we do not become healthy in different ways. Health is only one. In a similar way, untruths can be many, but truth cannot be many. Irreligiousness can be numerous; religion cannot be many. And as long as we have this idea that there are many religions, the birth of religion is impossible.

Do we think the chemistry of Hindus is different from that of Mohammedans? Do we think the laws of physics in the West are different from those of the physics of the East? Do we think the mathematics of the whites is different from the mathematics of the blacks? If the laws of matter are universal and one, if science is one, then how can the laws of the soul be different?

The laws of the soul are universal and one, but because of the so-called religions, man has not been able to develop that one religion. This is because for the development of one religion, for the growth of a universal religion, for the development of a scientific religion, there is every possibility individual religions will be destroyed. They will have to be bade farewell. And none of the so-called religions wants to go away.

They have all exploited man and none of them wants to withdraw its hands from this exploitation. In this way, all the religions collectively have made it easy for irreligiousness to spread. And that which distances one man from another cannot be a force to unite man with godliness.

I have heard...

One night a black man knocked at the doors of a church. The door opened and the priest came out. He had never thought that a black man would come knocking because his church was for the white people. And not only churches – temples too are different for different people. There cannot be a more ridiculous thing on this earth than this.

So the priest stood before the black man standing at the door. If it were the old days, he would have said, "Go away; the steps have become unholy by your presence." If it were the old days, perhaps the black man would have been beheaded, or his ears would have

been filled with molten lead. The times have changed, but man's heart has not changed.

The priest thought, "How dare he come here? The steps have become unholy." But today this cannot be said out loud. So he softly said, "My friend, why have you come?"

The black man said, "I want to see the Lord. Let me come in, open the doors. I have become thirsty to see the Lord. Open the doors and let me come in."

The priest held up both his hands, stood in the doorway, and said, "My friend, I will certainly let you come in, but until the mind is pure, until the mind is peaceful, and until the mind is completely free from sins, how can anyone see the Lord? Go and first free your mind from your sins and then come. Then you will find the door to the Lord open."

The black man turned around and went away. The priest did not think his conditions would be fulfilled, or that it would be possible for the black man to become free from his sins. The man would never come again to the church and the need to open the doors for him would never arise.

A year passed, and the man did not come. The priest became certain that his condition had worked. The man would not come. But early one morning he saw him coming. The priest became afraid; but no, he was mistaken. The black man was just passing in front of the church, but he did not even glance at it. Instead, he continued on down the road. The priest was watching him with some concern: he might turn around and come back. But there seemed to be something about the man that had changed. There was something peaceful in his eyes. There was a certain patience in the way he was walking. The man was radiating a different quality.

The priest ran after the man, stopped him, and said, "My friend, didn't you come to enter the church?"

The black man laughed. He said, "I wanted to come, and for a year I prayed to God that I would be worthy. My tears were flowing from morning to night, and continued even in my dreams. I tried to make my mind silent and tried to be free from my sins. Every day my steps moved forward, and I started feeling that one day I would be fortunate enough to offer myself at the church's door. Finally, yesterday I felt that the moment had come; yesterday my mind was so silent, so pure, was filled with so much prayer that I thought that

as soon as the sun rose, I would go to the doors of the church. But everything went wrong during the night. In the night while I was sleeping, God came to me and said, 'Why are you praying so much? And why are you doing such penances? For whom are you crying? For whom are you thirsty? What do you want?' I said, 'Nothing much. I would just like to enter the church.'

"God stood there looking sad. He said, 'Drop this idea. I myself have been trying to enter that church for the last ten years, but the priest would not allow me to enter. If the priest of that church does not allow even me to enter, how would he ever allow you? Forget this idea. If you have any other wish, you can ask me. But this wish of yours is not in my hands.'"

The temples and churches are in the hands of the priests, not in the hands of God. If this was true about only this one church, it would be all right. But this is true about all the temples, all the churches. And if this had been true only for a period of ten years, it would have been all right. But it has been true for all history. God has not been able to enter any temple for over ten thousand years, and in the future he also will not be able to do so.

If a temple is not a temple for all human beings, it cannot be a place for God to enter. Temples that believe in boundaries cannot be doors for the infinite, for the boundary-less. A temple that is a business cannot be a place for love and prayer. Where there is a priest, no possibility of godliness remains because in a love affair between two, there is no place for a third at all.

Between man and God, there is no place for an agency, for a priest. In the love between the two, there is no possibility of a third. Prayerfulness is the ultimate state of love; there is no need for anyone to come in between.

But the priest is standing in the middle, the organizations are standing in-between. The scriptures are standing in-between. The words and the doctrines are in the way, and they don't let man meet the whole. Without that meeting, there can never be luminosity in a man's hands, there can never be love in a man's being, and there can never be happiness in man's breath. In the name of religion, priests have only been playing with people, with people's lives.

Hence I would like to tell you that unless we liberate mankind from religions, we will not be capable of making people religious. The

Hindu must say good-bye to his religion, even the Mohammedans and the Christians must say good-bye to their religions, so that they can become religious. As long as there is a crowd of religions, there is no possibility of being religious. But is this possible?

It has not been possible until today. There have been so many strategies, so many holy scriptures restraining man. And such a web has been created that it is not easy to see that man must say good-bye to it all. So long as we are drawing comfort from our chains, it will be impossible to be liberated from them.

Those who are very clever in making people slaves, the factories which turn their souls into slaves, have learned great cunningness over thousands of years. The biggest cunningness they have learned is to depict people's chains as things that keep them safe. They have preached that the things which bind us are going to liberate us. I would like to talk to you about those things – about those chains which have been said to be the solution for liberation.

The first chain is trust. For thousands of years, man has been told to trust, to believe. It has been said that a man who does not trust will go astray. And it has also been said that no religion can ever happen in a man who does not believe. We have been taught that belief and religion are synonymous. This is one of the biggest untruths that has been told to people.

There is no relation between belief and religion. Religion is connected with understanding and there can be no greater enemy of understanding than belief. A man who believes is incapable of thinking, he is stepping on his own feet. A man who blindly agrees has prevented his feet from moving on the path of knowing.

And we all believe in something. The Hindu says to believe in this thing, the Mohammedan says to believe in that thing, the Jaina says to believe in another thing. They all fight among themselves for what you should believe in. But all of them, all the different sects of the world, are in agreement with one thing – belief. They do not fight among themselves regarding belief. This is their secret formula; this is their basic strategy to bind man's mind. A man who thinks for himself cannot be made a slave, nor can he be exploited, because thinking is fundamentally rebellious. Thinking is fundamentally a demand for freedom. In the deepest core of the thought process hides a call for freedom, for liberation.

So thinking and understanding can never be slaves to anyone.

But there are blindfolds on people's eyes: you should believe, you should not think. If you think, you will go astray. But what has happened is the more we have believed, the more we have gone astray; the less we have been thinking, the more we have gone astray. And the more we go astray, the more the religious pundits say, "Look! Your belief is not strong enough and so you are going astray." A vicious circle has been created. We believe and we go astray. We go astray and they shout, "Look, you are going astray. Your belief is not sufficient. Have more belief." We believe more and keep going more and more astray.

But it is the belief that makes you go astray because belief is a way of becoming blind. It is way not to see with your own eyes, but to see with others' eyes.

I have heard...

In a small village in Bengal there was a philosopher. One morning, he went to a shop to buy oil. While he was there, he saw how the oil was being made. The owner took care of the customers in the front of the shop while the mill behind him was being driven by an ox. The philosopher said to the shop owner, "I am greatly surprised. Your ox seems to be very religious."

The shop owner said, "You are mistaken. The ox is not religious. An ox is not like a person who can so quickly become religious. He is actually very clever, not foolish and idiotic like men. But I have blindfolded its eyes. Perhaps you haven't noticed this. His eyes are blindfolded so he is not able to see if someone is behind him or not. If he were able to see, he would not act like a man who in spite of the fact he can see, still believes in things that don't exist. The ox would immediately revolt. But fortunately for me, he is not able to see.

The philosopher said, "But if the ox is so intelligent, like you say, then it may someday try to find out whether someone is behind him or not."

The shop owner said, "Can you not see that I have put a bell around his neck? As soon as he stops, the bell also stops. Then I go up to him and shake the bell."

The philosopher said, "But my dear brother, couldn't the ox remain standing in one place and just move his head so that the bell keeps ringing?"

The shop owner said, "Please forgive me, but I must ask you to go elsewhere to buy your oil. If the ox hears you, I will be in trouble. Buy oil from someone else. It is dangerous for my ox even to come close to people like you."

There are many blindfolds on people's eyes too. And the priests don't allow anything to get too close that could make people start thinking. People are told they should not think for themselves, they should not contemplate. Rather, they should blindly surrender and accept everything. They are told that if they doubt, they will go to hell. If a man wants to attain heaven, ultimate liberation, bliss, then belief is the only way. And this belief has been responsible for the miserable condition of the entire humanity. It has done a great evil to mankind and there can be no forgiveness for it.

Today people are so blind, so foolish and rigid, and the reason behind it is belief. While only religious leaders were using this idea of belief, the problem was not so great. But when Stalin, Hitler and Mussolini began using belief, then great difficulties arose. When film stars began using it, then more problems came. And when politicians began using it, then the problems became immense. Very slowly, everyone found out that people are capable of believing blindly and that anybody can exploit them. People can be exploited in any manner. When everybody found this method, the difficulties began.

Today, on the basis of belief, people are being exploited in many ways – religious, political, financial, spiritual. All types of exploitation are being done. Because of belief, the world has greatly deteriorated. The power and revolution of thinking must be awakened within each man. Religion must be freed from belief. The foundations of religion have to be based on thinking, on real thinking.

The day religion comes to be based on proper thinking, that very day many religions will cease to exist. This is because the essential effort of thinking is universal; thinking can never remain isolated. Science was able to become universal because it freed itself from belief and put its foundations in thinking. Religion will also become a science. It will become the ultimate science because nothing can be greater and more ultimately scientific than religion.

But so long as religion is in the clutches of belief, this will not happen. There was a time when the various traditions of science were tied to belief: it was alchemy, not chemistry; it was astrology,

not astronomy. And as long as religion is tied to beliefs, it will only be theology. The day thinking becomes connected to religion, that very day religion as a science will be born. If religion is to be brought into this world, then it is essential to give it a scientific basis. So the first maxim is: freedom from belief and an introduction into thinking.

There is one more thing I would like to say before I end my talk. The second essential thing is: in the world of religion only followers have been created; individuals have not been created. A follower is not an individual. In reality, the more of a follower he becomes, the more his individuality is lost, the more deprived he is, and the more he becomes part of a crowd. A follower is in a crowd; a man who attains individuality attains the glory of man.

Up to now, religion has taught belief, and simultaneously it has taught following as a byproduct. You should follow someone, you should become someone's disciple, you should become like someone else – be like a Rama, like a Buddha, like a Gandhi.

You cannot conceive how poisonous this education is. As soon as a man tries to become like someone else, there are two results. One is that he can never really become like someone else. It is very unnatural, impossible, that a man can become like someone else. And the other is that after he puts all his energy into becoming like someone else, the potential he was born with, that which he was born to become, will never happen.

If I go into a garden and tell the jasmine to become a rose, if I tell the rose to become a lotus, the flowers will not listen to me. Flowers are not foolish like men: they would never get together to listen to anybody say such things. But suppose it is possible that flowers in the company of humans could become spoiled. Staying in the company of humans, even the animals get spoiled. Suppose that living in a garden created by humans may have spoiled the flowers so they have started listening to advice from people – and they may even listen to me! Listening to all that advice will cause an earthquake in the garden and chaos will ensue. Flowers will not blossom in that garden again. A rose can never become a jasmine and a jasmine can never become a rose. But if a rose tries to become a jasmine, then a rose bush will never again bear roses. All the energy will be spent in becoming a jasmine, and the potentiality for it to produce a rose will be finished.

A proper religion will teach man to be himself. And this teaching

to be oneself is what I call the teaching of the soul. Up to now, the education of the soul has been wrong because it was teaching people to be followers, and a person who becomes a follower never attains a soul.

The meaning of "soul" is: you should search and attain that which is hidden within you. A man who tries to mold himself to be like someone else becomes a pseudo man. He leaves the search aside, the search for what is hidden inside him, and he becomes an actor.

CHAPTER 10

the birth of the new man

My beloved friends.

The twentieth century is the century for the birth of the new man. I would like to talk to you about this. But before we try to understand something about the new man, it will be good to understand the old man. The old man had a few significant characteristics and the first was he did not live by thinking; he lived through beliefs. To live through belief is to live blindly. There may be convenience in living blindly, and one can understand that belief has its own satisfaction and consolation, its own peace and happiness. But if a man lives a life of thinking, and through thinking arrives at peace and contentment, through thinking comes to comfort and bliss, then the happiness a man may feel through belief is no match for the bliss that is achieved through thinking.

One morning, someone asked Socrates, "Would you rather be a contented pig or a discontented Socrates?"

Socrates said, "Instead of being a contented pig, I would prefer to be a discontented pig. If in the life of a pig there is no dissatisfaction,

then satisfaction would not be possible. Where there is no dissatisfaction, there is no possibility for satisfaction to come. And if dissatisfaction were not possible, there would only be the peace of a cemetery."

This statement by Socrates was the first indication of the dawning of the twentieth century. His choice was made twenty-five centuries ago, and the twentieth century did not arrive in a day. It has taken thousands of years for it to come. It has come gradually. Even now, it has not reached the entire earth. My understanding of the twentieth century is not related to time. Within this twentieth century on this earth, there are people living in many centuries.

Right now, there are so many people sitting here listening to me. You may all believe you are living in the same century. There seems to be no reason to disbelieve this; we all seem to be contemporaries. But this is an illusion of the calendar. Among us there can be someone from the twentieth century and someone else can be from the first century. Someone else can even be from the twenty-first century.

Socrates was the first man of the twentieth century: he said that he would accept thoughtful discontent, but not blind belief. Even if that belief was filled with contentment, it would have no meaning. In reality, the entire development of life is the development of thinking. A man who clings to beliefs stops the momentum of growth and cannot evolve. Like an old man sitting still in a chair, he remains immobile, stuck at the center of his belief.

It is as if a river chooses to become a pond. A pond is calm; a river is not calm, it is very restless. In reality, the pond has abandoned the entire search. It has become content to stay where it is, believing this to be its fate. But the search of a river is always ongoing. There is always the effort to know the unknown; there is always the desire, the ambition to reach where it has not yet been. There is an intense longing to attain what has not yet been attained. Hence the river is discontented and searches for the new every day.

Certainly, problems can happen on strange paths – the river does not have the contentedness of the pond. But it has the bliss of being connected to unknown oceans. The pond cannot have such bliss. The pond will never go anywhere, never attain anything; it will remain where it is. You cannot say it will be alive; or perhaps you can say it will live less and die more. The pond does not have a life

because life has momentum. The pond has only a gradual death. It just dries up and rots. The river is a force: it is life.

The old man I am talking about was like a pond, enclosed in a pool of beliefs. The new man is discontent like a river: thoughtful, logical, eager to search for the new, full of desires and longings. I would like to use the pond and the river as symbols: the indications, the signs of the emergence of the new man. The old man was like a pond, the new man is like a river. But the problem is that the water in the pond will have great difficulty in reaching the river. The pond's habit is always to live in a closed atmosphere, without flowing. And the moment of union, when the pond becomes part of the river, when the pond is transformed into a river – when belief is transformed into doubt – is a moment of great pain, a moment of labor pain. The twentieth century is a time of labor pain in which we are breaking all the old boundaries and looking for new ways.

The first thing to be understood is that belief was the fundamental trait of the old man, and belief is not a trait of the new man. There is such a great distance between believing and thinking; it is greater than the distance between the earth and the sky.

Belief means: no thinking. With belief, there is no way thinking can happen. And if a believer starts thinking to some extent, he becomes a disbeliever to the same extent. Thought means that doubt is present. If there is doubt, there is thinking. If there is no doubt, how can thinking be there? In reality, if a man is totally trusting, then his mind disappears. Or perhaps it could be said that then his mind cannot be born. It is born through thinking.

Hence the second thing I would like to say to you is that because the old man was living on beliefs, he had little to do with thinking, with the mind, with the head. Rather, he had much to do with his feelings and emotions. Naturally emotions have their own juice, naturally feelings have their own pleasures. But the level, the plane of feelings that come through thinking is different.

If you have ever climbed a mountain, then you know that you come upon the same view so many times. The view is the same, but there is a difference in height. If you climb a mountain, you have to climb in circles and after an hour, after four miles of walking, you find that you are at the same side of the mountain you had started at. But you are on a different level. The plane has changed; the place is the same, the scene is the same, but the plane is different.

The emotions you feel before you start thinking are at the level of an animal, not at the level of man. An animal lives in feelings without thinking. But after thought has arisen, for the first time feelings at the level of human beings come. Without thought, a man is filled with emotions that have no value. But in a man who can think, the emotions are of a human being, at a human level. In both cases there are emotions, but they are at different levels.

The old man lived close to his emotions, close to his feelings. In that way, he was close to the animals. If the old man was not dishonest, it does not follow that he was honest. The old man was not dishonest, but he was something prior to dishonesty. We can call honest only those who have the capacity to be dishonest. Honesty in a man who cannot be dishonest has no great meaning. The honesty of the old man has no meaning because he does not have the possibility of being dishonest.

If an aboriginal is honest, his honesty is not of much value. He is incapable of being dishonest. Dishonesty needs intelligence. So, as intelligence in the world has increased, naturally so has dishonesty. But dishonesty is not the end result of intelligence. In reality, dishonesty is an opportunity for honesty to surface at the human level for the very first time. And as intelligence rises a little more, dishonesty only reflects that intelligence is incomplete. When intelligence increases even further, then again we attain a further level of honesty – an honesty that is an attainment.

This will not be the honesty of an aboriginal, of a villager, who is incapable of being dishonest. It is the honesty of a new man who is capable of being dishonest and yet chooses to be honest. Remember, the entire growth of man consists in the opening up of opposing possibilities. If a village man is naïve, then I don't value that simple-mindedness at all. His destiny was to be naïve. He could only be naïve. He did not have a way to get out of his innocence. Even if he wanted to, he could not come out of it. His innocence was a compulsion. He cannot be glorified for it. Yes, maybe he can be praised for his innocence, but he cannot be honored for it.

So in this twentieth century, those who praise the life of the village are talking stupidly. Those who say we should go back to nature are talking unintelligently. They don't know that the simple life in a village is not something that gives dignity to man. It is the same simple-mindedness in which all the animals are living, the birds are living, the

plants are living. The twentieth century has opened up the doors of achievement for man, and to be honest will be our choice.

Remember, the moment we choose for the first time, that very moment we become human beings for the very first time. Choice is the primary characteristic of the human being. Animals cannot choose the way they are. The way they are is their being, their nature. The way the plants are is not their choice. No rose can make the choice to become a red flower. If a flower is red it is red, if a flower is white it is white. Nor can a rose choose to be beautiful. If it is beautiful it is all right, if it is not beautiful it is all right too. No tree can decide that its leaves should be a particular shape. Man is the first being who can choose. Twentieth century man will live by choice in each and everything.

As long as belief exists, choice is not possible. Choice begins when there is thinking; choice is the foundation of the first step toward man's dignity. Whatever you are, if it is not your choice, then you are living close to the animals. If it is your choice, then you have risen above the animals. Remember, in comparison to animal honesty, I would rather choose dishonesty. I would prefer the cunningness of my choice to any natural innocence. And there is a reason for it.

Choice is the beginning of the new man. If a man can choose dishonesty, he can choose honesty, if not today then maybe tomorrow. And the man who can choose cunningness, sooner or later can also choose innocence. But when innocence comes to a man who has chosen it, its level will be different. This is the way of the mountain climb, where we again come to the same spot where the aboriginal was. But between them and us there will be a huge distance, a huge difference of altitude. The place is the same but the level is different.

It is like the innocence of a small child: it is of no great value. The innocence of a small child is just natural. But if an old man becomes innocent like a small child, we can say he has become a saint. But we would not call small children saints. A small child is not a saint. What is the use of becoming a saint if a man is not also capable of becoming a devil? The innocence of small children is all right in its own place, but when a man with old eyes that have seen everything becomes innocent like a child, this is an achievement. This is not an easy thing; this is choice. The old man has lived with the possibility of being a devil his whole life and yet he is a saint. He

had great opportunities to be a devil, and he did not choose them – or if he chose them, he dropped them.

All saints must pass through a stage of rebelliousness. But a child has no past. The child has immense opportunities; he may set off on a wayward path. And we would like him to come to the place where a choice can happen. That is the moment of decision, that very moment a human being is born. In the moment of decision, his humanity crystallizes for the first time. The greater the decision, the greater the humanity that will be born.

Hence I am not in favor of whatever takes man backward. Rousseau, Tolstoy and Ruskin, Thoreau, Emerson and Gandhi – all those people who want to take man backward and think that the old days should return – are talking of the most dangerous thing that could happen to mankind. No, we do not need the old days as they were. A new man is needed.

Trying to bring the old days back is regression, is pushing man backward. You may think a village man is so simpleminded, but bring him to the city and you will find that he has become cunning. Bring the villager to the city and you will find that he has become more cunning than someone from the city. It is like someone newly converted to Mohammedanism running to the mosque more enthusiastically. It is the villager's first opportunity at cunningness, so his mind becomes cunning much faster. So, when a villager becomes cunning, he is more cunning than the man from the city. Cunningness is the usual mode for someone from the city. All around him he is surrounded by that atmosphere. The villager is not cunning just because the circumstances and the milieu are not supportive for that choice.

No, mankind should not regress, should not return to its roots; mankind has to move forward. The opportunity that the twentieth century has presented is definitive, the opportunity is decisive. For the first time we have the opportunity to decide. Hence the second thing I would like to say is that the distinctive characteristic of twentieth-century man is of choice. Whatever he will be, he will be by his choice. From now on, he is not here simply by nature. Nature has brought people here, to this point, and now their choice will be the way forward.

According to me, the twentieth century is for the first time giving birth to the real man. Certainly there are dangers: with choice, dangers begin. But as the danger increases, the thrill of life also increases.

As danger becomes less, so does the thrill of life. If there is no danger at all, then there is no difference between an alive man and a dead man. The graveyard is the safest place; no danger can enter there. There can be no sickness there, nor can there be any death: there is no way to die in the grave; everything is safe there.

I have heard...

An emperor made a palace so secure that there was only a single door to enter. It had no windows – only a single guarded door where no thief, no sickness, or enemy could enter. There were a thousand soldiers guarding the door.

One day the neighboring king came to see the palace. As soon as he saw it, he said, "I have never seen such a secure place. There is no danger left. I too will make such a palace."

As he was taking his leave at the door, he again thanked the emperor and praised the palace, saying it was wonderful the emperor had created such a safe palace, a place where there was no danger. But a beggar sitting by the side of the door started laughing.

The emperor asked, "Why are you laughing? What is the matter?"

The beggar said, "I'm laughing because I have watched your palace being built, have seen it completed, and have heard people praising it. But I can see a fault in the palace."

The emperor asked, "What fault?"

The beggar said, "It has only one door, but that also is a danger. You should go inside the palace and then order the door to be walled over. Only then will you be totally out of danger. Even one door has some danger. It is true having many doors is very dangerous, but even one door has some danger. You will not be completely out of danger. Your enemies may not be able to enter the door, but death will be able to enter it at any time."

The king said, "You are a madman. If I seal off this door and sit inside, then there will be no need for death to enter. I will be as if dead!"

The beggar said, "You are already almost dead because in life, you are alive only as much as there are doors open to danger. As those doors become fewer, life becomes shorter. If all the doors that open to danger close, then life is finished."

The twentieth century has presented us with a great challenge.

Up to now, mankind has not been met with many challenges; it has been living in security, away from any danger. Man has made all sorts of security arrangements: mental, spiritual – all types of security. Life was like a clean landscape, where there were no dangers. The roads were well paved and ready-made. In the twentieth century, man has for the first time taken up the challenge of living in uncertainty.

Today, heaven is not a certainty. Today, doing virtuous deeds is not a sure way to get there. Before, doing virtuous deeds was a sure path, the result was certain: you would go to heaven. There was no doubt of it. On the other hand, once you committed a sin, you would go to hell. This was clear, this was decided; life was very clear-cut. Like a chess board, all the sections were evenly marked. The ways were known. There was an answer to everything in life.

The twentieth century has dropped all the answers. Now there are no ready-made answers in life, nothing like that. Twentieth century man, for the first time, is standing with all his doors open to all the dangers. He has overturned the chess board and declared this life is not to be lived in enclosed squares.

A life within squares is not life. It is like the tracks laid down for a train to run on. It is the life of a freight train. There are ready-made iron tracks and man was running on them. The old man was running on these ready-made tracks. He had decided where all the tracks should go and he would not leave the train. All the rail lines were fixed and all the answers were decided – life had all the answers. There was absolutely no doubt. Everything was clear-cut, neat, and clean.

If you were born five hundred or a thousand years ago and you had the misfortune of going to some saints and sages, you would get all the ready-made answers. Even today, if you go to these saints, you will still get the same answers. You can see all the maps of heaven and hell hanging in the temples. Maybe because they don't want to make people too afraid, some temples may have removed the maps; but some old temples still have them. People who had never seen a map of the earth had drawn maps of heaven and hell. Those who did not even know that the earth was round could create a detailed road map of heaven. Those who did not even know at what temperature fire makes you burn described the furnaces in hell. In reality, these people did not know anything; they were only living in the illusion that they knew everything.

An ignorant mind can save its ignorance in only one way: it fills itself with the idea of being wise. Before the twentieth century, people were totally ignorant regarding the mysteries of life, but they were completely full of the idea that they knew everything. And this idea of knowing everything was a shield against realizing their ignorance. Ignorance is very dangerous because if we don't know everything, we become indecisive in life; it becomes difficult to decide anything.

Today, it is in no way certain that if you build a rest house for religious pilgrims, God will be ready and waiting at the doors of heaven to take you in because of your good deed. Nothing is certain. Even after creating a house in the name of God, you cannot be sure whether you will be going to heaven or hell. It is not even known whether there is a heaven or a hell. You cannot be certain if you are doing a good deed or committing a sin by building the rest house.

But for the first time, people have gathered courage to accept their ignorance. This is a great event. So much courage is needed, and people have never had such immense courage. The twentieth century is all about courage, and the twentieth century man is a man of courage. Naturally, along with courage, dangers arise and they come from all directions. When no answer is predefined, it is difficult for life to run like a clockwork. When no answers are clear, a man has to search for his own answers and he will begin to make mistakes. When there are no fixed structures in life, each man begins to make his own structures. And so the structure of the society begins to crumble.

Individuality before the twentieth century was actually not individuality at all. Before the twentieth century, a man was part of the society. Now for the first time, an individual can be born and the society is on its deathbed. The society is on its deathbed and the individual is born.

If you think about how life used to be in the village, you will realize that individuals could not be born there. The village life is praised so much, and our poets talk about it so much. But these poets all live in the city; none of them ever goes to the village. All the saints who praise the villages so much stay in the capital. They have nothing to do with the villages. But when we talk about the villages, we don't think about whether an individual could live there. It is just not possible. There was no way for an individual to be born in the village.

The society in a village was so big and powerful that it was not possible to move even an inch. If any man in the village showed his individuality, that would be the end of his daily bread. Nobody would invite him into his house, he would not be allowed to enter the temple, and he would not be allowed to get water from the village well. The entire village would laugh at him, the entire village would oppose him, and the entire village would keep an eye on each and every thing he did. "What is he eating? What is he drinking? Where is he sitting? When does he get up?" The eyes of the entire village would be focused on that one man. He could not move unobserved, not even an inch. For the first time, the twentieth century is giving an individual individuality, privacy. Before, there was no privacy.

If in a small village you go out with a woman who is not your wife, you will come to know that there is no privacy. The whole village will chase after you, "Who is this woman? You need the permission of the village to be out in the streets with this woman." You need a village license before you can be seen in the streets with this woman!

If it is even dependent on society who a man can love, no individuality is possible. Nobody has the right to ask somebody, "Who is that are you with?" This is the height of impoliteness, incivility, and lack of culture. But the old world accepts this as how life is. The old world gives no opportunity to become an individual. Hence there were no individuals in the old world and there was no possibility of any revolution. When the individual comes, revolution follows; without the individual, no revolution can come about.

It is very difficult to have a revolution in a village. The village lives in its fixed ways and if anyone deviates even a little bit from them, the whole village becomes his enemy. Hence a country like India, which has been a country of villages for thousands of years, is an anti-revolutionary country. No revolution can happen there. A country like India, where everybody's eyes are on everyone else, and everybody is acting like a policeman, cannot be a country where individuals are born. It is a difficult place for individuality to be born; it is almost an impossibility.

In the twentieth century, for the first time the structure of society has been relaxed and this has made everyone's souls stronger. But we have become very restless because when the structures loosen up, anarchy can enter. When the structures loosen up, a lack of discipline comes in. The structure loosens and discipline is disrupted.

In fact, the days of discipline are over. In future, the discipline of the old days will not be possible. But as long as we insist on maintaining the old discipline, a new discipline for the future cannot be born. The old discipline came from the society, and the new discipline will come from the individual. It will be an inner discipline which will come from within the individual. When an individual is born, the society cannot impose discipline from outside. When an individual is born, a new discipline will have to be found – a discipline which will be decided about by the individual.

In fact, we will have to change the entire definition of discipline. The new discipline will be self-discipline. Now discipline cannot be society's discipline. The entire old discipline was given by someone else. The new discipline will not be accepted *from* anyone. An individual has already been born and you are trying to impose a structure which was from before his time, before the individual. Such a structure cannot last. Hence if you find your children rebelling, it is not their fault. By giving birth to them, you have given your children individuality, while the discipline you are trying to impose is that of the society.

These two things cannot go together. When an individual is born, thinking is born; the individual will have to decide his own discipline. Naturally, to old eyes it will look like anarchy, but this anarchy is only the way that old eyes see things. It is not anarchy. In fact, it is the chaos in which the new man can be born, a moment when the old structure of the society has gone and the new structure has not yet arrived.

Think about it: if a young person wears the clothing of their choice and walks down the road, is this anarchy? Are you going to be the ones to decide what sort of clothes are to be worn? When you decide even about the clothes, will you allow the young person to decide if he can have a soul?

All the trouble starts with the old eyes. It becomes a problem because society thinks it should decide which clothes can be worn. Nobody even has the choice to decide that. The society decides what you will wear, what you will eat, how you should sit, and even how you should stand up.

No, none of this can work now. A new man is about to be born. The first news of his coming has arrived and the labor pains are starting. He will rebel, and this rebellion will be difficult if hurdles

are created. If the new man is accepted, it will be easier.

And I don't know why it is so difficult to accept: if people wear the clothes they like, what is disturbing about it? You will be wearing the clothes you like; they will be wearing the clothes they like. Is there any need for you to be disturbed by it? But the father is agitated because his son is wearing strange clothes. The father is disturbed because he wears a Gandhi cap and his son doesn't. The father is disturbed because he wears loose clothes and his son wears tight clothes.

But what is this disturbance about? Why must a son wear his father's clothes? Mothers are worried what sort of clothes their daughters are wearing. These things have no meaning. There is no sense in thinking this is anarchy and lack of discipline.

In the old days, the parents chose marriage partners for their children because the old system wanted to give people the least possible choice. As soon as the opportunity of choice is there, an individual is born; hence child marriage was accepted worldwide. The meaning of child marriage is that we don't allow love to happen. The meaning of child marriage is that before love can enter your life, you will be already married. Child marriage means sex is more valuable than love. Before love can arise, we give you the possibility of having sex.

The old man was living in an atmosphere of sexuality, although he says that it is the new man that is sexual. This is wrong: the old man was very sexual. In fact, for the first time, the new man has spoken up above sex; hence the problem has started. Love is one of the very special qualities a man can have, but sex is not a special quality. Sex is in the animals, in the birds, in the plants, in everything. The old man had arranged a place for sex, but no arrangement was made for love.

In fact, the old man gets his wife the same way he gets his mother, the way he gets his sister, the way he gets his brother, the way he gets his father. All these are given factors. I cannot change my mother; it is not my choice. I cannot change my father; he is not my choice, there is no way out. I cannot change my sister; it is not my choice. These are the given factors. There is only one choice in life – that of a wife. But the old man snatched that choice away because an individual would be born from it. There should be no opportunity for choice. A mother cannot be chosen, so there is no fear. A father cannot be chosen and there is no fear in that. Only a wife or a husband can be chosen, so that must be decided by

the society, by the parents. That choice must be taken away.

When there is no choice about love, the possibility of the soul being born is very remote. The possibility of a man finding his individuality is very remote. The old society was certainly free from the dangers of love. There was no danger in marriage because it was an institution. There was no danger in marriage because it was an arrangement made by the parents, who were experienced and understood things.

There is always a problem with love because it is an experiment done by inexperienced, non-understanding people. There is never any danger in marriage, but there is always a danger in love. There is no danger in marriage because there is no way to love. There is danger in love because if love grows properly, marriage will not be needed and so marriage can come to an end. There is no danger in marriage because it is a dead institution. There is danger in love because it is living, it is an alive feeling.

Before now, there was no problem; the old concept of morality was accepted everywhere. The twentieth century has for the first time shaken up the morality of the world. Morality was continuing in a very organized way: the world was very organized. The wives were in the houses and the prostitutes were on the street. We had arranged for both to be there. It was an arrangement for the wives and for the husbands. This was a life-long arrangement. Once a marriage had happened, there was no way to change it; there was no possibility of choice again. It was a settled relationship.

But there was a problem with this. One possible danger was that the two people who were united after just consulting their birth charts, the two who had no love connection, who had no heart connection, whose parents carefully arranged their union after thinking about money, fame, name – the problem was that it was possible for there to be tension between them. It was possible that affection between them might not happen. Hence the institute of marriage had to create a secondary institution of prostitution.

As long as marriage remains, prostitution will not disappear from the world. Marriage and prostitution are two sides of the same institution. In fact, if a man wants to have only one wife his whole life, and a woman wants to keep her husband her whole life, then it is essential to have some holidays in between.

The prostitute is not dangerous because there is only a monetary

relationship with her. There is no love relationship with her. And the wife would prefer her husband went to a prostitute rather than another woman because with another woman love may happen. There is no chance for love with a prostitute; it is a business. Hence wives could tolerate their husbands watching prostitutes dance, going to them; they had no problem with it. There was no danger in it. There was no reason for danger. The relationship with a prostitute is of money. It is sexual. Love is a danger to the wife; sexuality is not a danger.

The man of the old world thought that he was free from sexuality, that he was very moral. I cannot agree with this because the possibility of being moral arises from the possibility of being immoral. Hence the possibility of being moral was never there before. Twentieth century man can for the first time be moral because there is a choice; he has the opportunity to be immoral, or if he wishes, be moral.

The choiceless, characterless, thoughtless web of belief and faith that society had built has been shattered everywhere. But people are involved in trying to rebuild it. They are wasting time trying to rejoin that same web, the same old web. But the old network cannot be put back in place, and there is no possibility of it ever coming back. Hence the more time people waste trying to repair it, the longer they are extending the labor pains of the birth of the new man.

If we can become clear that the web is gone, has already passed, then all we have to do is bury its corpse and then immediately turn to thinking about what the choices for the new man are. What choices of morality and immorality will the new man have?

Certainly, the old ideas will not work. The entire old morality was based on fear. The entire morality was based on apprehension. We were making man afraid. We were telling him that if he did bad deeds he would spend eternity in the fires, in hell, amid worms and insects.

Those who invented hell must have been very dangerous people. Their imaginations show that they must have been pathological, their minds must have been sick. They imagined people being boiled in cauldrons. Those people kept on being cooked, and it went on forever. The people who invented hell were very weird people: they were sadists, they must have been very keen to make others suffer. Imagine a man is being boiled in a cauldron, he is experiencing all the misery of being in boiling water, but he is never

consumed. If he was totally finished in one go, then you would not be able to torture him again; but he has to be tortured continuously. The pain will be endless. There will be worms and insects in hell, they will crawl into your body in one place and come out from somewhere else. They will make holes everywhere and keep moving through, but the person will never die; he will remain alive. He must be kept alive, otherwise, how can his suffering from worms and insects be continued? People will feel thirsty in hell; there will be water there, but they will not be able to drink it. Just as they are about to drink they will faint. As soon as they gain consciousness they will feel thirsty again, but as they approach the water they will faint.

These sadists were strange people. It is difficult to find more violent men than these. But they were considered saints and sages. What were the limits to their violence? Look at what they arranged for those who did not listen to what they were saying. They arranged all sorts of things for them, with different hells designed in different countries. The reason is that in each country the definition of misery is different. If we make a hell in India, then we will have to have fire in hell. If there were fire in the Tibetan hell, there would be many people eager to go there because Tibet suffers from cold; so in the Tibetan hell there are piles of snow, there is endless snow. There can't be fire in the Tibetan hell.

It is very strange that we have to create different hells for different countries. The Tibetan hell is different because a Tibetan man can only be frightened by cold. A man from India can be frightened by heat. It is all about fear. And in heaven things were arranged to tempt man; this is another form of fear.

Enticement, in a more profound sense, is fear. If you agree to do something through this fear, you will be rewarded; but if you don't agree to do it, you will be punished. So many things were arranged in heaven: everything the religious leaders condemn and say is bad for you is available in heaven. Here they say looking at another man's woman is bad. In fact, even just looking at any woman is bad. And in heaven, celestial nymphs, one should call them heavenly prostitutes, are available. And the strange thing is that here on earth, women age; but the celestial prostitutes of heaven never get older than sixteen, it stops there. All the religious saints have arranged everything to entice people to do good deeds. As a reward for the good deeds, they will get their desires fulfilled in heaven. Rivers of

wine flow in heaven. Here you are not allowed even a sip of wine, and there rivers of wine are flowing.

In Arabia, perverted sexuality was prevalent. Homosexuality was prevalent in the times of Mohammed; men had sexual relationships with other men. So in Mohammedanism, beautiful young boys, not celestial nymphs, were arranged. What kind of madness is this? Even arrangements for homosexuals have been made in heaven. It means whatever you want to have here has been arranged in heaven.

All this fear and temptation was based on the old morality. Today, all these fears and temptations are finished. But not everybody realizes this yet. Now nobody is eager to reach heaven and nobody is fearful of hell. But we go on repeating the old morality even though its foundations have crumbled. The land beneath the house has eroded, but we are still supporting the roof and it is heavy on us.

We will have to give birth to a new morality which is not based on fear. Man has gone beyond fear. Twentieth century man has become fearless. When a man becomes an adult, he should go beyond fear. It is easy to scare children: "Don't go in the kitchen; there are ghosts there." But when that child becomes older, becomes an adult, and you tell him there are ghosts, he will laugh at you. He is not afraid of ghosts. Humanity has become adult. With this century's arrival, for the first time humanity has become adult. A man does not stay in his childhood forever. Now the old fears don't work for him.

But we go on repeating the old fears. And when the fears don't work and a man behaves in a way we don't approve of, we cry out that he has become immoral. In reality, it is our morality that has become absurd. Our moral system has become irrelevant. There is no connection with it any longer.

The new man, the man of the twentieth century, needs a new morality and that morality needs a new foundation. This new morality will be based on knowing, not on fear. This new morality will be based on the understanding that being moral is blissful, being moral is healthy, being moral is best for man. Morality does not come out of some future fear. It is not about some future heaven. Rather, it is for our life on this earth today. A man who is immoral is cutting off his feet with his own hands. It is not that he will go to hell in the future; it is not like that. A man who is immoral is creating hell for himself today.

The old ideas of immorality, karma, and its fruits, hell – all this can no longer work. Immorality itself is hell. If this becomes part of

man's wisdom, if people know that morality itself is heaven, if this becomes part of man's understanding, we will be able to lay the true foundations for morality. We cannot keep the old morality.

My understanding is that such foundations can be made. Today, scientists say that in a moment of anger, that very instant you are in hell; you do not have to wait for death to go to hell. In a moment of anger, poisons spread throughout the body. Now it is meaningless to tell anyone that if you get angry you will rot in hell. Now anger can be researched in the laboratory: it can be determined how much your life is shortened when the poisons of anger spread in you. It can be determined how much your intelligence declines when the poisons spread. Scientists can measure how weak your health becomes through the spread of these poisons and how much more likely you are to become sick. When you are in anger, you are committing suicide. It is fragmentary, in fragments, in small parts, so you don't realize it is suicide.

If a man were totally angry, then one percent of the poison that spreads in his blood would be enough to kill him. We will have to make this a part of common knowledge. The future morality will be a part of knowledge.

And we will have to also make love a part of knowledge...

In Oxford, there is a laboratory called Delawarr Laboratories. I would like to tell you about some very amazing experiments that were done there, experiments which will influence the future morality. The experiments astonished the scientific community. In these experiments, a Christian priest was asked to pray over water that was then given to plants. The experiment was to see if water that had been blessed could influence the growth of plants. At first the scientists were doubtful that prayers could influence the growth of plants.

But the experiments were repeated hundreds of times and each time the prayers proved effective. The seeds were from the same packet – half of them were put in one container and the other half in another container. The same soil, the same source of water, the same sunlight: everything else was the same. There was only the one small difference – whether the water was blessed by the priest or not. That was the only difference. And each time the prayers proved successful. The seeds watered with water which had been blessed sprouted early, and all the seeds sprouted. They flowered early, their

fruits came quickly. And the fragrance of their flowers was also different, the freshness of their fruits was different, and the magnificence of the plants was different.

The seeds given water on which prayers had not been performed were different. Not all the seeds sprouted, and those that did sprouted very slowly. Compared to the other plants, it seemed that they were not receiving an essential nourishment. The scientists found it difficult to believe that the essential factor was prayer, but their experiments proved that the essential ingredient can be prayer.

Today, no one prays because he fears the wrath of God, nor should anyone do that. A prayer spoken out of fear cannot be called a prayer. A prayer whose intrinsic quality is fear cannot be loving. In fact, where there is fear, there can be no love.

Tulsidas said that without fear there can be no love, but he was completely wrong. That is the mind of the old man. I say to you that where there is fear, there can never be love. Love exists only where there is no fear.

The old man prayed out of fear; he was on his knees with folded hands. The new man cannot be made afraid, and this is as it should be. This is the growth of man: his consciousness has risen. Now if he prays, it will come out of his knowing, his wisdom. The new morality will not be fear oriented; rather, it will be knowing oriented.

I would like to tell you about another incident that occurred with the priest in the laboratory. Some of the seeds he prayed over were examined to see if any change had happened in the seed. When there is a difference in the way seeds sprout, when there is a difference in their leaves, a difference in their flowers, then there should be a difference in the seeds themselves. Otherwise, how could there be a difference at all?

So a photograph was taken of the seeds on which prayers were performed and a photograph was also taken of the seeds on which prayers were not performed. And a miracle happened in a place like Oxford! The priest was wearing a cross around his neck while praying, and the symbol of the cross appeared inside the seed!

If we take man toward prayer... Without prayer, a man is incomplete; without prayer, there cannot be radiance in a man's life. The twentieth century now makes prayer, love, hatred, anger, immorality,

and morality all oriented toward knowing. And since these things will be oriented toward knowing, they cannot be oriented toward fear. In fact, in ignorance there was no other way than fear. Now in knowing, there is no room for fear.

But we go on repeating the old ideas, we go on repeating the old teachers, we go on repeating the old scriptures in front of children who belong to the twentieth century. Now there is a gap of thousands of years between them and these children. There is no relationship between them and these children. All these scriptures, all these holy books, all these teachers have become meaningless for them. These children have no close relationship with those teachers and scriptures: there is no inner communion anymore. And if you go on repeating only those ideas, then if the children become decadent and if the man of the twentieth century starts leaning more and more toward immorality, if the person the twentieth century becomes chaotic and licentious, whose responsibility will it be? The responsibility will be ours, we who go on repeating the old ideas which are now all irrelevant.

For the new man, knowledge about a new type of life is needed. For the new man, new symbols of godliness are needed. For the new man, new criteria of morality are needed. For the new man, a totally new arrangement for living is needed. All the old connections must be broken. Just as the wheels of the bullock cart cannot be used for railway trains, similarly the wheels of the old morality are not going to be useful for the new man. If we are able to remember this, there will be no difficulty for the twentieth century man: he has arrived at a very significant time, at the point for attaining something great.

Even if we don't understand this, we cannot go back. It is only that the birth pangs will be extended. But the danger in a difficult birth process is that the older generation keeps pulling backward and the new generation becomes stubborn and reactive. Trying to escape from the old man, young people start running in all directions and become neurotic. The danger can be seen today: there are the hippies, there are the Beatles, there are the beatniks, there are the yuppies – there are a thousand different names for them in Europe and America. Or in India, they may be our Naxalites, or they may be someone else. All these young people are living in great misery; everything that existed before has become irrelevant and nothing has taken its place. If these young people can make some new arrangements for living, if they can

get some help from the older generation, it will be very helpful. The new generation will arrange for new things to happen, but it can take a long time – a very long time. It can take so long that life can become very morbid and perverse, and to correct this situation will become a chronic problem.

One last thing and then I will end my talks. The old man accepted his misery and way of life. He was willing to be miserable, he was in agreement with it. If it led to his death, he accepted it; if it resulted in sickness, he accepted it; if he lived in poverty, he accepted it. Whatever happened, he agreed with it. But the new man is not ready to accept misery.

Science has given people all the comforts and conveniences that the old man did not have. Hence if we try to teach the new man a pessimistic outlook, it will be futile. The old man was forced to accept: there was misery and there was no way out. There was death and there was no way to avoid it. That's why it was easy to develop palmistry, astrology and all sorts of things. Through them, a man could find out that he was going to live seventy years. He had seventy years to live and that was that. There was no question of seventy-one years. Now this sort of thinking is finished, it no longer has any meaning. Now we have ways for a man to make his longevity as long as he wants it. Now it is not a problem if he wants to live a long life. We can help someone to live for a very long time.

In America, a man who recently died set aside ten million dollars in his will so that his corpse could be preserved in a frozen state. Science has almost reached a point where it will be possible to resurrect a dead body. Perhaps it can happen within twenty to twenty-five years. So almost a hundred dollars a day is being spent on the dead body of that man, so he can remain in the same state as when he died. He was hoping that in thirty to forty years, when science comes to the point that man can be resurrected, he will be resurrected. That point is coming closer.

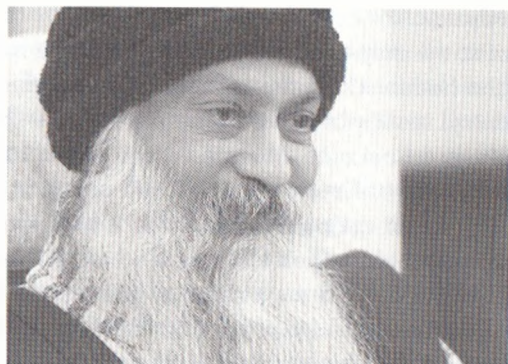
Now death cannot be the limit, so in that sense the astrologer is no longer meaningful. Now sickness is not so important: it is just a matter of our ignorance. Now even being born ugly is not our fate, only our ignorance. In the coming twenty to thirty years, there is no reason for anyone to be ugly in this world.

The future man will not live a life based on misery; hence he cannot be a renouncer. The future man will live a life based on happiness; he will be a hedonist. Remember, people were compelled to become ascetics. They were told to renounce here on earth, while arrangements for hedonism were made for them in heaven. Because the new man can arrange for his own heaven here and now, he cannot be an ascetic.

In this world, the only religion with a future is one that can naturally accept the hedonistic nature of life. This religion will not say that life is misery, it will not say that life is a sin, it will not say the purpose of life is to become liberated from the burden of being reborn into another life. The new religion will proclaim that life is a gift of existence; it will announce that life is a blessing. It will proclaim that those who are capable, those who are successful, those who live, live to the full, have the possibility of attaining infinite lives. Such a religion can become the religion for the future generations.

I have spoken about many things. I don't ask you to believe in them; it is dangerous to believe. You must beware of beliefs. Think about what I have said. Perhaps what I have said is not right; if you contemplate and find that my talks are not right, then too they will be beneficial for you. By knowing a few things as wrPong, a man starts moving toward the right. And if something seems to be right, it will not remain mine, it will become your own. That which we know as right, does not remain borrowed; it becomes your own. And only those truths which are your own are of use to you because borrowed truths can only be a burden. I don't want to become your burden. The old teachers have become a great burden. Now it is not necessary to keep anyone on our heads.

You have listened to my talk so lovingly and peacefully, and I am grateful for that. And to end I bow down to the godliness in all of you. Please accept my blessings.



About Osho

Osho's unique contribution to the understanding of who we are defies categorization. Mystic and scientist, a rebellious spirit whose sole interest is to alert humanity to the urgent need to discover a new way of living. To continue as before is to invite threats to our very survival on this unique and beautiful planet.

His essential point is that only by changing ourselves, one individual at a time, can the outcome of all our "selves" – our societies, our cultures, our beliefs, our world – also change. The doorway to that change is meditation.

Osho the scientist has experimented and scrutinized all the approaches of the past and examined their effects on the modern human being and responded to their shortcomings by creating a new starting point for the hyperactive 21st Century mind: OSHO Active Meditations.

Once the agitation of a modern lifetime has started to settle, "activity" can melt into "passivity," a key starting point of real meditation. To support this next step, Osho has transformed the ancient "art of listening" into a subtle contemporary methodology: the OSHO Talks. Here words become music, the listener discovers who is listening, and the awareness moves from what is being heard to the individual doing the listening. Magically, as silence arises, what needs to be heard is understood directly, free from the distraction of a mind that can only interrupt and interfere with this delicate process.

These thousands of talks cover everything from the individual quest for meaning to the most urgent social and political issues facing society today. Osho's books are not written but are transcribed from audio and video recordings of these extemporaneous talks to international audiences. As he puts it, "So remember: whatever I am saying is not just for you...I am talking also for the future generations."

Osho has been described by *The Sunday Times* in London as one of the "1000 Makers of the 20th Century" and by American author Tom Robbins as "the most dangerous man since Jesus Christ." *Sunday Mid-Day* (India) has selected Osho as one of ten

people – along with Gandhi, Nehru and Buddha – who have changed the destiny of India.

About his own work Osho has said that he is helping to create the conditions for the birth of a new kind of human being. He often characterizes this new human being as “Zorba the Buddha” – capable both of enjoying the earthy pleasures of a Zorba the Greek and the silent serenity of a Gautama the Buddha.

Running like a thread through all aspects of Osho’s talks and meditations is a vision that encompasses both the timeless wisdom of all ages past and the highest potential of today’s (and tomorrow’s) science and technology.

Osho is known for his revolutionary contribution to the science of inner transformation, with an approach to meditation that acknowledges the accelerated pace of contemporary life. His unique OSHO Active Meditations™ are designed to first release the accumulated stresses of body and mind, so that it is then easier to take an experience of stillness and thought-free relaxation into daily life.

Two autobiographical works by the author are available:

Autobiography of a Spiritually Incorrect Mystic,

St Martins Press, New York (book and eBook)

Glimpses of a Golden Childhood,

OSHO Media International, Pune, India (book and eBook)

OSHO International Meditation Resort

Each year the Meditation Resort welcomes thousands of people from more than 100 countries. The unique campus provides an opportunity for a direct personal experience of a new way of living – with more awareness, relaxation, celebration and creativity. A great variety of around-the-clock and around-the-year program options are available. Doing nothing and just relaxing is one of them!

All of the programs are based on Osho’s vision of “Zorba the Buddha” – a qualitatively new kind of human being who is able *both* to participate creatively in everyday life *and* to relax into silence and meditation.

Location

Located 100 miles southeast of Mumbai in the thriving modern city of Pune, India, the OSHO International Meditation Resort is a holiday destination with a difference. The Meditation Resort is spread over 28 acres of spectacular gardens in a beautiful tree-lined residential area.

OSHO Meditations

A full daily schedule of meditations for every type of person includes both traditional and revolutionary methods, and particularly the OSHO Active Meditations™. The daily meditation program takes place in what must be the world’s largest meditation hall, the OSHO Auditorium.

OSHO Multiversity

Individual sessions, courses and workshops cover everything from creative arts to holistic health, personal transformation, relationship and life transition, transforming meditation into a lifestyle for life and work, esoteric sciences, and the “Zen” approach to sports and recreation. The secret of the OSHO Multiversity’s success lies in the fact that all its programs are combined with meditation, supporting

the understanding that as human beings we are far more than the sum of our parts.

OSHO Basho Spa

The luxurious Basho Spa provides for leisurely open-air swimming surrounded by trees and tropical green. The uniquely styled, spacious Jacuzzi, the saunas, gym, tennis courts...all these are enhanced by their stunningly beautiful setting.

Cuisine

A variety of different eating areas serve delicious Western, Asian and Indian vegetarian food – most of it organically grown especially for the Meditation Resort. Breads and cakes are baked in the resort's own bakery.

Night life

There are many evening events to choose from – dancing being at the top of the list! Other activities include full-moon meditations beneath the stars, variety shows, music performances and meditations for daily life.

Facilities

You can buy all of your basic necessities and toiletries in the Galleria. The Multimedia Gallery sells a large range of OSHO media products. There is also a bank, a travel agency and a Cyber Café on-campus. For those who enjoy shopping, Pune provides all the options, ranging from traditional and ethnic Indian products to all of the global brand-name stores.

Accommodation

You can choose to stay in the elegant rooms of the OSHO Guesthouse, or for longer stays on campus you can select one of the OSHO Living-In programs. Additionally there is a plentiful variety of nearby hotels and serviced apartments.

www.osho.com/meditationresort

www.osho.com/guesthouse

www.osho.com/livingin

More OSHO books

Over 7000 hours of talks by Osho have been transcribed into books. If you go to www.osho.com you can sort the titles by subject so you can choose the books that interest you most.

The Perfect Way

This series of talks comes from Osho's first meditation camp in Rajasthan. He answers fundamental questions about what meditation is, how we can begin meditating, and how we can sustain it in our lives. Osho introduces us to this new world with precision, thoroughness, humor, and compassion. Here is someone who not only knows, but also knows how to convey what he knows. His genius in full flight, he points us as far as one can with words toward the inner world of the self, toward the zone of silence.

ISBN 978-81-7261-163-7

The Rebellious Spirit

"The rebel is one who lives according to his own light, moves according to his own intelligence. He creates his path by walking on it." Osho

We have all heard of rebels, those freelancers that don't give a care about anybody else but themselves... But what if we were all to spend a little more time doing exactly that? It might just be that we can begin to respond to what is happening in the world with a heart-felt need to change ourselves.

In *The Rebellious Spirit*, Osho speaks to the spirit that lies hidden underneath our social conditioning, fanning a flame strong enough to burn through layers of rubbish, so that we can see with the crystal-clear gaze of an enlightened being. This is a book that will entice you, tickle your being with laughter and give you the courage to be yourself in the world that is today.

ISBN 978-8172612801

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see osho.com/allaboutosho

The official and comprehensive website of
OSHO International is osho.com

For more OSHO unique content and formats see:

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Thank you for buying this OSHO book.

