



REALISED SAINTS

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Yogi Mahajan

DEDICATED TO
H.H. SHRI MATAJI NIRMALA DEVI
The Most beneficent and Compassionate

*Where the emerald green lake washes the feet of the
Almighty*

*Where the Goddess of beauty spreads a cloak of green forest
and flowers*

Where enthralled by Her splendor time stands in awe.

Where cool wind of the Spirit whispers sweet odes

Where iron opens its heart to love,

The Guru Tattwa of the Universe open

*On the shores of Bharat gather your children to anoint your
feet*

You have opened our hearts,

Pray bestow the iron tattawa to strengthen our love

Bless us with wisdom

But also give us humility to deepen in wisdom

You have showered upon us your choicest gifts

But also teach us to share and spread your sweet fragrance.

PREFACE

Realised Souls were ordinary people like you and me. They were humble seekers who accumulated much karma wading through the brunt and banes of mundane life. They were not particularly favoured by fate; mostly unlettered, they were weavers, potters, peasants, merchants, butchers. But something innate, deeply seated in an inner realm of their being steered their course beyond the parameters of karma to the immortal heights where angels dare.

Spiritual ascent is not a tale of material achievement or temporal conquests. Great Kings and valiant heroes have long faded in the pages of history but realized souls, no matter of what remote past, are venerated to this day. In fact their advents lend history its luster. Indeed, they are the most precious heritage of our civilization – the stepping stones in the grand evolutionary process.

It is said that god made man in his image, but human beings forgot Him and could not even reflect His shadow. Realized souls plunged in the darkness and found the path to the last horizon. Humanity will be eternally grateful to them. It is a debt that can only be fulfilled in turning their message to a living process.

The life of each saint narrates its own drama, adventure, ethos and joys, but the human quest is eternal and Truth is universal. All religions recognize One Absolute force behind the cause of creation. There is a consensus that this One Absolute force called God was initially un-manifest. However, if we are to believe that God is Absolute, then it follows that He is beyond any limitations and can do anything He chooses. He is beyond human dictates. Then, it is only reasonable to assume that we mortals should not draw any parameters of His functions, what He can do or what He cannot do. Therefore, God the un-manifest

could manifest if He so desired. Let us remember that we are only tiny specks of sand in His mighty kingdom and dare we offer suggestions that define His limits with our skewed intelligence. Where then is the quarrel between Islam and Hinduism? Both agree that there is One Absolute God. Hinduism stretches it further that the un-manifest manifested, that one had different embodiments. He is god, He can do anything, assume any form He likes. Surely, he is not going to watch helplessly from Heaven and allow His creation to be annihilated by demonic forces just because His messengers had announced that He does not manifest. Which father can bear to see the destruction of his children? Nay, He would come with his entire armory, his thunderbolt and discuss to free Mother Earth of Her woe. After all He is God; He did not create this stupendous planet to forget all about it. He established every force to sustain and protect it, to assure its harmonious functioning. He is God, nothing is impossible for Him. Therefore, let us not speculate up on him and create false notions.

The issue of human ascent is not the description of God but basically how to live in balance and harmony to achieve our ascent. The message is loud and clear in all faiths, "Love thy neighbor." The essence of all religions is the same – Love, compassion and truthfulness. Then how does it matter if he is called Ram or Rahim, if Hindus cremate the dead or the Muslims bury them. These are cultural differences, conditionings and have no bearings upon the essence of scent. The subject matter or our concern is the teaching which is for our benevolence and nothing else. But this focus is eclipsed by mischievous intent. For centuries we have played into the hands of politicians and fundamentalists, now let us shake off the myths and see the reality. If we have so far lived in darkness, doesn't matter, now the hour of sunshine is at hand let us bask in it. We have nothing to lose but our ignorance.

A realized soul transcends the bounds of religion. He does not belong to any faith, says Kabir,

“I have neither name nor caste
Thy name alone, O Hari, is suffice...”

When the seeker establishes his self-realization he is lost in the ocean of divine Love where there were no boundaries of religion. He spontaneously starts flowing his fellow beings. Perhaps, the only visible mark of a realized soul is compassion. While it is easy to love and worship God, it is rather difficult to love and forgive ones fellow beings. Love cannot be superimposed, it is spontaneous. After self-realisation the flowering blossoms, because one realizes that the other is only the extension of one's self, in the All Pervading Power of Divine Love one sees unity in diversity. The realized souls hears the chorus of all faiths in unison. He does not hear the din of fundamentalists, clergy or intellectuals.

The advent of Realised souls has always been crucial to the collective human ascent. Their message is timeless; Glory of God, Love, seeking the self and the practice of virtue. Their method of teaching was subtle as not to provoke the ego. How to penetrate the inner realm without causing ripples of reaction. When a realized soul masters this art, he becomes a guru. This book records some beautiful moments of such great masters.

In our modern times, a great miracle is upon us – the advent of a new messiah – Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. In the light of Her unique message of Sahaja Yoga, it is possible to experience the primeval Spirit narrated by all the Realised Souls. May her blessings be upon all the seekers of Truth.

Yogi Mahajan

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CHAPTER ONE

GNYANESHWAR

(1275-1297A.D.)

Some 20 Kilometres from Pune is a quaint little village of Alandi where by an Ashwattha tree is situated a Maruti Mandir. Pilgrims, ascetics and Saints often took rest here and the villagers warmly catered to their needs. A young woman by the name of Rukminibai deserted by her husband Vitthalpant had taken to an austere life. She would pass her days praying at the temple and serving the holy men. One evening as in a normal course she bowed down at the feet of an ascetic named Ramananda. The ascetic, seeing the red turmeric mark of a married lady on her forehead, bestowed upon her the auspicious benediction of a son.

Tears rolled down the cheeks of the grief stricken Rukminibai as she could not contain the sorrow of the impossibility of the situation. The compassionate Ramananda thereon enquired of Rukminibai the course of her grief and learnt that her husband Vitthalpant had deserted her to become an ascetic. It suddenly dawned upon Ramananda that a recently initiated disciple calling himself 'Chaitnyashram' was none other than the runaway Vitthalpant, husband of Rukminibai. On returning to Banaras, Ramanda severely reprimanded Vitthalpant for concealing his marital status and sent him home. He was guilty of both deserting an issueless wife and of renunciation without her consent.

Thereafter, Vitthalpant resumed his family life. However, as it was unheard of for an ascetic to resume family life, the Brahmins of Alandi socially boycotted the Vitthalpant family. Vitthalpant begot three sons and one daughter. When the boys come of age it was customary to initiate them in the Brahmin fold by a thread ceremony. The Alandi Brahmins refused to initiate them and the despondent Vitthalpant left for pilgrimage to Trimbakeshwar along with his family.

Once during their visit to the jungle, they sighted a tiger leaping towards them. They ran helter skelter for protection and in that confusion the eldest son Nivrattinath lost his way and found himself in a Mountain cave. The cave happened to be inhabited by the great Nath Yogi Gahininath. The great yogi initiated the tender lad of 7 into the tradition of the Nath Sect and then sent him back to his family to spread the work of world salvation.

The Nath Sampradaya is a lineage of nine masters (Navnath) who trace their origin to the Primordial master, known as the Adinath. They transmitted the knowledge of the kundalini from one master to a disciple secretly. They perceived that man was a victim of his mind, and unless he became the spirit he could not break through the bondage of the senses. Only the guidance of an enlightened master called Nath could pull them out of the illusion created by the mind. They revealed that God consciousness did not lie outside the human body but in the thousand-petalled lotus – the Sahasrara, in the limbic area of the brain. To ascend to this level, the lower six centres have to be awakened by the perennial energy known as the Kundalini, which resides within the Sacrum bone. When the Kundalini is awakened in the Sahaja way, it ascends through a subtle path called the Sushumna Nadi which runs along the spinal cord. When the Kundalini pierces the thousand petal lotus, it releases an Elixir that gives divine bliss and also leads to the experience of collective consciousness. Moreover, it rejuvenates the body and cures all ailments. In the seventh century one of the masters.

Nivrittinath passed on the knowledge to his brother saint Gyaneshwar , and the children become authorities in spiritual matters. However, the stigma of the irregularity of Vithalpant's marriage attached to his children kept haunting him and at the insistence of the Brahmins, he and his wife atoned by drowning themselves in the holy confluence of the Ganga and Jamuna at Prayag. But the Brahmins still refused to perform the thread-ceremony of the three sons, directing them to appeal to the Brahmins of Paithan.

Gnyaneshwar with his two brothers and sister proceeded to Paithan where he stunned the unwilling Brahmins by his spiritual powers. In a philosophical argument, Gnyandeo's claim of equality for all God's creatures was countered by an opponent, who, by pointing to a buffalo, challenged Gnyandeo to make it chant Vedas. It was no sooner said than done and the Brahmins had to consent.

On his way back from Paithan he felt impelled to translate the Bhagwad Gita in Marathi. He stayed on the bank of the River Prawara in Ahmednagar District and wrote the Gnyaneshwari – a commentary on the Bhagwad Gita in Marathi. He was barely fifteen years old, later he wrote another philosophical work, Amritanubhava. In his translation of the Gita he gives a very lucid account of the inner working of the Divine mechanism. He reveals that at the base of the spine rests the Divine energy force called Kundalini which abides in a sleeping condition in three and a half coils, appearing brilliant like a roll of fire flames. “The Goddess Kundalini is verily like the very Mother of the Universe, as also the grandeur of the Supreme Majesty of the Soul.... she is the very seat of the great naught.”*¹. When it gets awakened it rises through the central channel called Sushumna and pierces the Brahmarandhra (the fontanel bone area) in which abides the sentience without any substratum.

He described the ascent of the Kundalini through Chakras which are plexuses formed by nerves and ganglia along the spine.

These rise one above the other and are linked together. They are in order of ascent; Mooladhara, Swadishthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddhi, Agnya and finally the Sahasrara.

“The Kundalini retains its power until it is absorbed in the Supreme Brahma 'making itself steady in the Brahmarandhra and embraces the Supreme (Brahman)... just as the sea water becomes pure through the clouds, pours itself down into the river and ultimately rejoins the sea, in the same way the individual soul, with the help of the human form, enters into the supreme and becomes one with it...' “The life wind emerging out of the Kundalini creates a cooling sensation in the body, internally and also externally.”*2

Gnyaneshwar revealed this secret knowledge to only close disciples as the common man was not yet ready to receive it. Perhaps this knowledge was to be revealed by a Divine Incarnation in modern times, Her Holiness ShriMatajiNirmala Devi who gives en masse awakening of the Kundalini and whose unique Sahaja Yoga crystalises the knowledge of the Chakras and gives the first-hand experience of the cool vibrations described by Gnyaneshwar as the 'cooling life-wind'. Gnyaneshwar attributes the creation of the world to the Supreme Reality 'Siva', His manifestation as “Shakti, and the creation of the world by her in myriad of forms and shapes including the human being. The human being is bestowed with the faculty to experience his Divine union and enjoy abiding in it. Basically, Siva (The absolute static), Shakti (its active state) and the world created by them are not three different entities as they appear to be, but are one and the same. “Both Siva and his beloved Shakti lived as a happy couple, Shakti feeling embarrassed in moving about with her formless husband, covered him a multicolored robe of the universe...”

For the understanding of the common man, Gnyaneshwar explained, “The finite self is really Brahma, the universal self. He is therefore really free from the miseries of births and deaths.

But he suffers them through ignorance of the true nature of Brahma. He identifies himself with the body and imagines that he is born or he has to die when it is really the body which is born and dies.

This state of intuitive experience is called 'self-perception!' but this self-perception is not a state of mind wherein self is an object of the perceptive process. The self is the knower and who can know the knower? Self-perception means 'being self', not knowing or perceiving it as a distinct separate object.

But though Brahma itself becomes the visible world and being itself, itself its seer, enjoys it. Its unity is not in the least, disturbed by this, as the unity of the original face is not disturbed through its reflection in a mirror.

“Just as water plays with itself by assuming the form of waves, similarly the Absolute is playing with itself by becoming the world. There is no duality between the sun and his rays when he is surrounded by the rays. The unity of the moon is not disturbed, even when enveloped by the moonlight. The lotus remains one even when it blooms into a thousand petals. Similarly, there is no difference in Absolute, when it presents itself either as the seer or the world that it sees; for it is the Absolute alone that becomes both.”*1

It is the discipline of the sense-organs, not their destruction that he advises. His doctrine is of temperance and moderation. “There is no merit in renouncing the pleasures of this world with the false expectation of a better deal in the next.”

In Gnyaneshwari (V-20), he refers to a sanyasi in the following terms: “He is a true sanyasi who has completely forgotten 'I' and 'Mine'. What is to be given up is the 'ego-sense'. When that is given up there is no harm in continuing a family life. When fire is extinguished and coal burnt to ashes, there is not the least possibility of a piece of cotton getting burnt even though surrounded by flames. Similarly, a man may be

surrounded by a tempting environment but it ceases to have an effect on him once he is detached. Such a man may be married and own a house, have a big family, yet he can be internally a renouncer.”

“Karma binds, is but a half-truth; Done in the proper way, knowing fully well what it is that binds, karma itself becomes an instrument of freedom. For instance, poison kills is well-known, but it is equally true, that if used in preparing medicine, it saves life. Likewise food nourishes, but if taken in excess brings disease.”

An enlightened master himself, Gnyaneshwar was well aware of the difficulties in the way of common people to practice meditation. He recommended the path of devotion and spent his short life preaching it: “Merely by singing the Lord's praise, heals the miseries of the world and makes it resound with the purest bliss of the self.”

He does not differentiate between the path of Karma (Performance of one's duty), Bhakti (devotion) and Gyana (knowledge). These are only three stages on the same path, one leading to the other. The Warkari sect which he consolidated is based on this synthesis. Even idol worship performed with the consciousness of the symbolic nature of the idol finds its proper place in it.

Gnyeshwar recommended both the worship of Hari (the God of the Vaishnavas) and Hara (god of the Shaivas). While advising pilgrimage on penance, he says “you may select Hara or Hari whomever you love” (Dn. XVII-200). Himself a follower of the Nath sect whose originator was Adinath, i.e. Shiva, he selected Gita, the work of Vishnu, for spreading his gospel of infinite bliss. The 'Vithoba' of Pandharpur is supposed to hold Shiva on his head (as mark of respect). Gnyaneshwar preached the identity of the two gods in fact, oneness of God;

“A wick in contact with the flame of the lamp itself

becomes a flame, a source of light to other flames and no distinction between the lighting and the flames remains. I am by the grace of Guru – a finite that has become infinite.”

Gnyaneshwar maintained that the individual good cannot be determined without also determining the social good, for a man apart from society is an abstraction, man cannot be conceived apart from society. Man is born in a family and that family itself is a part of the society. He envisioned a state of collective consciousness.

Though himself a celibate he glorified family life and a dutiful chaste woman; “A dutiful chaste woman who does her duties to her family and enjoys and suffers in that, does true penance and gains the merit of an ascetic.” (Dn. XVIII-908)

Gnyaneshwar believed if both the white collared and the menial did their respective duty as service to God, they would succeed in establishing a qualitative equality. Both, in their own way, will be obeying god and equally receiving His grace. Hence both earn the same kind of merit. In a machine, a small screw is as important and useful as other bigger parts. Similarly, in a society even the smallest man has a function and therefore a place. Duty done in service of God removes the difference and brings equality.

In service of God one becomes a Jeewan-Mukta, i.e. attaining the state of perfect freedom even while the self resides in the body. While the individual self is enjoying this kind of freedom he is Akarta (non-doer) and therefore necessarily Abhokata (non-enjoyer). In this state, his bodily actions may result even in the destruction of the whole world and yet he is absolutely free from the sin resulting from the action.

In the year 1297 AD Gnyaneshwar entered into state of Mahasamadhi. He entered into a room specially constructed for this purpose, which was afterwards permanently sealed.



CHAPTER TWO

NAMDEO

(1270-1350)

Namdeo was born in a family of tailors settled in Pandharpur. A robber-turned saint, he became a devotee of the Lord of Pandharpur at a sudden turn of events. One day he saw a widow beating her child who was wanting the sweetmeat offerings to God. Namdeo enquired why she was beating the child. The widow replied that she was a poor widow and her husband had been killed by cruel dacoits thus depriving her of any support. It suddenly dawned on Namdeo that he was that dacoit and became overcome with remorse. Resolving to expiate his sins he tried to place his life at the feet of the deity by thrusting a sharp knife into his hand and pouring the blood on the deity. Suddenly, he heard a divine voice directing him to go to Pandharpur. He went there and as he stood gazing at the deity, he completely forgot himself. Completely absorbed in the Divine, he lost all body consciousness. It was the turning point of his life.

Namdeo next went to Aundhya Nagnath in search of his preceptor Visoba Kechar. When he entered the Shiva temple, to his surprise he found an old man lying with his feet on top of Shiva's Pindi. Namdeo was very angry and reprimanded the old man to remove his feet. The preceptor said that he was too old and weak to lift his feet. He requested Namdeo to lift his feet and place them where there was no Pindi. Namdeo lifted his feet but wherever he turned to place them he saw the Pindi. Realizing the

omnipresence of God, Namdeo prostrated before Visobha Kechar, who was none other than his preceptor.

Thus spoke the wise preceptor, “The ocean of samsara is vast. It is impossible to survive this ocean through your own efforts. You must have a strong boat and the best sailor to take you across. Devotional songs in praise of the Lord are the strongest boat and Lord Vithoba your safest sailor.”

“O Namdeo, try to see the God who cannot be identified with name and is formless, present even in the minutest objects and occupying the whole universe and yet beyond it. The joy of your own self, is within you. Imbibe in yourself wisdom and detachment that will lead you to the attainment of formless, attributeless, Brahman, the God Almighty. You say that you have seen God but that is not correct. So long as the attachments of 'I' and 'Mine' are not severed, the self will not be realized.” Namdeo meditated under the guidance of his preceptor and achieved God realization. He followed the practices of the seven fold chakras of the Nathayogis. These chakras are centres of energy which the force of the Kundalini opens in her ascent from her seat at the base of the spine towards the top of the head. These chakras are the mooladhar chakra, swadishtan chakra and Manipur. Above Manipur is the twelve-petalled anahata Chakra and yet upwards the sixteen-petalled Vishuddhi Chakra. Passing through the Agnya Chakra the Kundalini comes to the thousand-petalled Lotus Sahasrara, where Yogis receive full experience of Godhood. In this state divine identity is experienced in all the States of wakefulness, dream, sleep and the “Turiya.”

Namdeo combined this Yoga with Bhakti. He knew that ordinary people require a visible symbol for worship and hence stuck to his original worship of Vithal. Bhakti is the highest love of God; “Saguna or Nirguna” does not matter; it is the same to a devotee. The greatest impediment to concentration is the wavering mind. Without devotion, possession of all other

virtues does not lead the devotee anywhere. God is not attained by mere verbal knowledge, but by direct experience.

His poetry is simple, yet rich in spiritual knowledge and devotion. He composed over two thousand poems in Marathi language and 337 in Hindi. They covered a wide spectrum of subjects besides devotion and social inequalities, like the life stories of Shri Krishna, Shri Rama, the praise of Shri Shiva, ShriVithala, accounts of his pilgrimages, Yoga of meditation, etc. His works spread to Punjab and are to be found even in the Guru Granth Sahib. He explained the futility of mastering the yogic postures and performing miracles. For instance, a poisonous snake may discard its skin and take a new one, but still cannot go to heaven.

Says Namdeo: “We shall sing and dance in divine intoxication and thereby light the lamps of spiritual knowledge in the minds of men in this world.”

“You can know a saint by his indifference to worldly life, by his perennial love, his incessant remembrance of God's name, his humanity, his constant divine contemplation, his effacement of egoism, his disregard of money, the absence of sensuousness and anger, his peace and forgiveness, his equality, his indifference of pleasure and pain and his eagerness to show men the path of devotion. Saints have great humane virtues as they feel all are men of god. At the highest, the saints thought about other saints is that they are all god incarnate and God lives in them.”

“So long as gross desires, anger and attachments are in the mind, what is the use of living in the forest by renouncing worldly life?”

In one of his poems he says that the priests were unhappy with Shri Vithala because he lovingly fed a low caste like Namdeo and they told Shri Vithala to get purified by having the

bath in Holy River and distributing gifts and money to the priests.

In another poem, he puns on the hollowness of so called intellectuals “when I approached a Scholar of Vedas, though expert in ritualism, he could not satisfy my quest, because in him, the ego dominated. Then I went to a person, who was supposed to be the learned one in scriptures to know the self. He was found arguing with others like him and they did not agree with each other even on one point, due to the illusory spell of their egos. Those who were singing the praise and the glory of God were mainly interested in materialistic gains. O God! All these could not satisfy my quest. I am now tired of running around and hence surrendered to you.”

In yet another poem, he rebuked those who make money through discourses on God's glory - they should not even be looked at.

What is the use of becoming a religious preacher or a recluse, external appearances have nothing to do with spirituality. The source of joy is within. As long as there is no change in the mind, what can external changes do?

CHAPTER THREE

BABA FARID

(1175 A.D.)

“Do not give me scissors, give me a needle. I sew, I do not cut.” Thus Baba tried to sew mankind to the all pervading power of Divine Love. He was not a man of miracles but he could penetrate the secret recess of the heart with his overflowing compassion. Even visitors who sometimes took liberties melted in his Love. Once a young insolent lad tried to insult him, but Farid was so kind to him and gave him clothes and money. The lad was so overcome that he fell at his feet and begged forgiveness. Farid lovingly bestowed his customary blessing, “May God give you a heart full of Love.”

Baba Farid belonged to a noble family of Kabul and later migrated to North India. From childhood he was filled with Divine love by his mother, a saintly lady. He pursued his spiritual quest under the eminent Sufi saint Qutabudin Bakhtiyar Kaki of the Chishti tradition whom he later succeeded. His master used to give out amulets. One day as the crowd around the master swelled, Farid enquired if he could help in writing the amulets. His master responded, “power to get work done lies neither in your hands nor in mine. The amulets contain the name and word of God, do write and give to the people.”

Baba Farid led a spartan life and chose to live in a mud hut. Often his large family faced starvation even though he was at the height of fame and had disciples all over the country. He refused

the endowment of four villages offered by the sultan of Delhi stating that they best be bestowed upon those who desire them. He warned his disciples to keep away from the princess of Royal blood. He refused to accept guaranteed payment or immovable property like land, villages or buildings. All cash donations were distributed to the needy and poor. Once when the sultan sent him a tray of gold coins, he immediately ordered its distribution. As the sun set, his disciple kept back the last coin to give away the following morning. When Farid went to the mosque to lead the prayers, he broke down thrice. Something was amiss him, he interrogated his disciple if all the coins were distributed. When he learnt that a coin had been kept behind, he immediately gave it away and then resumed the prayers peacefully.

Baba Farid did not advocate any philosophy or intellectual doctrine but rather showed a way of life according to the sufi way (Tariqat)- the love of God, awakening of the soul (Haqiqat) and self-realization (Marifat). He emphasized the purity of mind and detachment. The love of God manifests in love to mankind, kindness, consideration and courtesy. Inner purity entails a mind free from ego, anger and greed.

Says Farid,

*“This patience is the main object; if Thou, O mortal adopt it,
Thou shalt become a great reiver and
not a separate branch thereof”*

The Sufi way adheres to the Islamic code of life (Shariat) which covers religious, moral, social and political norms a Mohamedan must follow:

The love of God contains the element of ecstasy (Ishq). Under sufi poets it gained an emotional fervor of ecstasy described as the union of lover with his beloved. As the consciousness of the Durewesh merges with God consciousness he goes into ecstasy.

Farid uses the symbol of a woman's yearning for her lover to depict his painful separation,

“I slept not with my beloved last night; my body is pining away

Go, ask the wife whom her husband has put away, how passeth the night”

In another verse he refers to the nightingale who has been burnt black by the separation from the beloved.

“Thou Koel sable-winged, what had darkened thee?

Sorrow of separation from the beloved hath singed my wings.

Without love even beauty withers away,

I dread not the departure of beauty if

My spouse's love departs not herewith.

Farid, how often hath beauty become dry and withered without love.”

“Those alone are true devotees whose heart is sincerely in love with God.

The one whose heart is belied by their tongue are false and inconstant.

The true devotees soaked in God's love are ever in ecstasy of realization.

Those indifferent to him are burden on earth.”

Love comes to be exalted to the level of worship and culminates in ecstasy. To share their ecstasy, Sufis took to collective singing and dancing. Music was employed as a medium to escalate the ecstatic state. Baba Farid's mystic songs were so charged with his spirit that they still resonate in the human soul. Many of them are to be found in the Holy book of the Sikhs, the Guru Granth Sahib.

Farid warned of the day of judgment. One had to assume responsibility for one's action, and not transgress one's maryadas.

*Warning those who cross the limits,
“O river, break not thy banks,
For, thou has to render account to thy God;
So flow within thy limits, as it's the Lord's will.”*

Their inner love led the Sufis to have complete trust in God (Tawakkul).

*“O cursed be the life,
If one has to depend on someone other than God.”*

Total surrender to the will of God constitutes the bedrock of the Sufi way.

*“God hath accomplished such things
As could never have been conceived.”*

In everything Farid saw the wonderous hand of God.

*“O Farid, the creator dwelleth in Creation and Creation in
the Creator,
Whom calleth thou bad, since there is none besides Him.”*

In a subtle way he tried to induct his disciples towards self realization. Silence and deep meditation was practiced by disciples daily. He did not want his disciples to waste time in idle talk. “One should work and not lose himself in the talk of people. Many utterances lull the heart and make it indifferent to the Divine message.”

Nor did he favour seclusion, “One should abstain from idle seclusion because it makes one's heart neglectful.”

*“Farid, why wanderest thou wild in places,
Trampling thorn under thy feet?
God abides in the heart; seek Him not in lonely wastes.”*

Some disciples wanted to leave studies in quest of spirituality. He advised them to carry on their studies along with spiritual pursuit as knowledge also was necessary for a seeker.

He could be very severe with a disciple. He explained to his close disciple Nizamudin that this was necessary for the perfection of the disciple, for “a pir is a dresser of brides.”

But anger was considered a sign of weakness. He revealed, one should not quarrel in a manner which leaves no room for reconciliation. He often quoted the Prophet, “That blessed is the man whose knowledge of his own faults prevents him from disclosing the faults of others.”

At the age of ninety three, Farid wanted to pass on his mantel to his dearest disciple- Nizamudin. Nizamudin thanked him for the honour but declined to shoulder the responsibility. Farid assured him that he would be able to perform the task well, saying, “Though I do not know if I will be honoured before Almighty or not, I promise not to enter the paradise before your disciples in my company.”

Seekers from all faiths, caste and creed clustered around Farid. He did not believe in converting any one, but sew all the hearts together.



CHAPTER FOUR

SHAIKH NIZAMUDDIN AULIYA

(1244-1325A.D.)

There was nothing to eat at home. His mother called out, “Nizamudin, today we are guests of God.”

Nizamudin put his head in her lap and smiled, “Why worry when we are guests of God”, and silenced his pangs of hunger and starvation.

In the evening of her life, she asked, “Nizam, at whose feet will you put your head next month?”

The heart torn Nizamudin enquired, “To whose care will you entrust me?”

Drawing her last breath, she held his right hand and entrusted it in God's care, “O God, I entrust him to Thy hands.”

And the hand of God never left him. The hand of God guided him to the mud hut of his mentor Baba Farid who was nearing his ninetieth year. Baba Farid embraced him with a couplet,

*“The Fire of your separation has burnt many hearts.
The storm of desire to meet you has ravaged many lives.”*

The disciple had found his true master or was it the master who had found a true disciple....Two rivers confluence into an ocean of compassion.

Under the tutelage of Baba Farid, Nizamudin attained his self realization. He believed that no prayer or spiritual pursuit

had greater value than comforting a distressed soul. One morning as he was strolling on his terrace he saw Hindus worshipping idols on the bank of the river Yamuna. He remarked to his disciples, “You, who sneer at the idolatry of the Hindus, learn also from them how worship is done.”

His concern was to arouse the spirit of worship and not worry about the symbols. He did not prescribe extensive prayers or rituals but stressed the invocation from heart. “When one prays, one should think of His mercy alone. One should not brood over one's past penitence nor past sins.”

His establishment was known for hospitality. He took personal care about courtesies extended to visitors, “First greet, then eat, then talk.” Food was served to visitors without discrimination. Bread was sent out as a token of blessings; it was difficult to find out who took food out of need and who as a token of blessings.

He never gave direct advice but taught by example. He learnt from his mother how to build the character with the power of love. According to the Chisti tradition, the greatest spiritual devotion which endeared man to God lay in, “river-like generosity, sun-like bounty and earth-like hospitality.”

The Sufis believe the ego to be the abode of strife and the spirit the source of peace. Strife multiplies if ego is retaliated by ego whereas if the spirit responds to the one acting under the ego then the compassion dissolves the strife. He advised his disciples to be good to their enemies,

“If one man vents his wrath on another and the other remains patient, merit accrues to him who is patient and not the former.”

Rather than suppression of anger, Nizamudin suggested the path of forgiveness to dissolve anger. When it was reported that a certain person spoke ill of him, Nizamudin advised his disciples to forgive and not harbor any ill will against that person. The one who repents his sin is to be considered equal to the one who has not committed any sin.

*“He who is not my friend, May God be his friend.
He who bears ill-will against me,
May his joys in life increase.”*

He steered his disciples towards compassion, forbearance and tolerance. His doors were always open to seekers of all faiths and he expanded the small Sufi order into a mass movement.

He avoided displaying any spiritual achievements, and regarded miracles as a screen obscuring reality. He led his disciples deep within to experience the joy of the spirit through introspection and meditation rather than discussion. He never allowed debates as he considered them only the noise of the ego. Also they were discouraged from seeking seclusion, “live in the city as others live and bear the blows and buffets of the people.” He did not curb their natural talents but harnessed them towards their ascent. For instance he elevated Amir Khusrau's talent for lyrical poetry into spiritual emotion.

He followed his master's advice and kept away from rulers and politics. He declined the request for an interview by the sultan of Delhi. The sultan held him in high esteem and offered some villages for his expenses but he politely declined. The Sultan then sent him one hundred gold coins which again he refused. After much insistence by the sultan he accepted one coin.

At eighty two he was persuaded to ascertain his last resting place. He said, “I am not worthy to sleep under any building. Bury me under the open sky.”

However, despite his will the sultan would not let his body rest in peace. He built a mausoleum with intricate marble slabs to clothe his body. But by clothing his body he could not touch his soul!

*“Nizamudin was an emperor without throne or crown.
But the sultan stood in need of the dust under his feet.”*

Shaikh Muinudin Chisti



CHAPTER FIVE

AMIR KHUSRAU

(1253-1325 CE)

Nizamudin Auliya assured Amir Khusrau, “If on the day of judgment God asked me, what you brought from the world for me? I would answer, the burning love which this Turk has for you.”

Khusrau responded.

“My heart is a child,
The preceptor of love is its teacher;
The black colour of my face is the lesson.
Humility is the corner where the lesson is given.”

His heart throbbed with love of God, the Holy Prophet, motherland, family, friends, fellow men and nature;

*“People think that they are alive because of their soul,
But I am alive because I have love within.”*

*“I will not call a heart a heart if it has no love.
I will call body having no burning of love, clay of which it is made.”*

“He who makes reason a shield against love tries to resist a mountain with a blade of grass.”

*“When the heart is blessed with love,
there is no room for wisdom;
in this special royal assembly
there is no room for strangers”*

His burning love blazed the Sufi world and sent the durweshes dancing in mad raptures. A heart that dances with the joy of God, does not hear the murmurings of reason or intellect. All the Mysteries of life spontaneously unfold in that ocean of love. What use is knowledge bereft of Divine love? It is so dry and joyless. The knot of the heart with God allowed the durweshes direct entry into the divine realm. In modern times Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi revealed how to tie the divine knot;

“All living work is done by God, we only do dead work. Therefore if the connection is established with the source of all living work, then its knowledge will spontaneously flow from the source. What is there to gain from knowledge of dead matter? All principles of science are simply manifestations of Divine law. But how can one comprehend Divine law without the connection with Divine. The Divine knot can only be tied with the strings of love that flows from the heart. Such a heart becomes a mirror in which God's reflection can be seen.”

Says Khusrau,

*“Man is the soul of the world;
He is the world himself.”*

In the call of love there is no doer. One becomes the instrument of god spontaneously.

*“I wish I could go to your lane
And surrender my existence;
For after this I bring hundreds of lives from their lanes”*

The ecstasy of his poetry brought not hundreds but thousands 'of lives from their lanes'. Khusrau's, music and poetry penetrated such realms which years of penance could not touch.

The flames of his burning love did not escape the keen ears of the Delhi court. He became the court favourite. The sultan asked him to arrange a meeting with his master Nizamudin. But

Nizamudin declined. However, the sultan would not take no for an answer and plotted to take Nizamudin by surprise. Despite his loyalties to the sultan, Khusrau leaked the plot to Nizamudin. Nizamudin promptly averted the meeting by going on a pilgrimage to Baba Farid's grave. The plot foiled, the sultan was most upset and questioned Khusrau's loyalties. Khusrau replied, "If your majesty gets angry I may lose my life, but if my spiritual mentor is displeased then I would lose my faith."

The sultan was pleased and had him weighed in gold. But all the gold in the world was not enough to weigh his love for his master Nizamudin. Once a wandering mendicant visited Nizamudin, but Nizamudin had nothing to give him, and so he gave him his only pair of slippers. On the way the mendicant met Khusrau who was returning home from the court loaded with the sultan's gift of gold. Khusrau caught the familiar fragrance of incense from the mendicant and enquired if he had something of his master. The medicant showed him Nizamudin's slippers. Khusrau immediately offered him all his gold in exchange for the slippers. With the slippers on his head he reached his master and narrated the anecdote. Nizamudin smiled from the corner of his eyes, "Khusrau, you have purchased them very cheap!"

Khusrau humbly bowed;

"If a young man hankers after money, he is sure to depart from the path of truth. If he runs after wealth, he is simply a beggar. Sovereignty of soul lies in remaining content with a loaf of bread earned with dignified labour.

Even death could not break the bond of love between the master and disciple. On his death-bed Nizamudin issued directions that Khusrau would not be able to survive him and that he should be buried near his grave,

*"He is the custodian of all my secrets.
I will not like to go to heaven without him."*

When Khusrau learnt of his master's death, he tore off his clothes and fell in a swoon. Thereafter he distributed all his possessions to the poor and passed away.

Amir Khusrau wrote extensively on many subject and events. In his immortalized classic Laila-Majnu he expressed the pangs of separation from God as yearning for the beloved.

*“My soul has reached my lip,
You should come now for I am still alive,
What will be the use if you come,
When I am no more.”*

*“O breeze, do not get idle
Go to the beloved and make me delight
By telling her to come to me.
Do not tell her anything,
Except in the garden the wanderer,
The water and the stream are full of joy.”*

He envisioned God everywhere - in nature, in flowers,

*“The narcissus was sleeping;
The rose cheeked ones came to have a stroll,
Cloud sprinkled water on narcissus to get awakened and
see them”*

*“When the Zephyr in new spring got the garden decorated,
every idol came to the garden and walked on the floor of the
roses.”*



CHAPTER SIX

KABIR

(1440-1518 A.D.)

In the far villages of Central India one can hear the humming of thousands of looms echoing the thoughts of Kabir between the knots of their weaves. These weavers are popularly known as Kabir Panthis or followers of Saint Kabir, who himself was a weaver. Perhaps God lives closer in the hearts of simple devotees who do not rationalize him but ensconce him in their hearts. When evening comes they thank him for his blessings, and rejoice in the abundance of their paltry earnings. But they pour out the richness of their soul in the most intricate brocades that evoke the awe of queens. The skill and art of generations pass through their deft fingers expressing the joy of their devotion. Kabir was one such joyful weaver who lived about four hundred years ago in the holy city of Varanasi.

Once, sage Narada prided himself to be the greatest devotee of Lord Vishnu. Lord Vishnu wanted to test him, and asked him to visit another great devotee who was tilling his field. Narada went the farmer and observed him very critically. The farmer woke up at the crack of dawn, took the name of Lord Vishnu and then toiled hard at the soil. He returned at dusk, thanked the Lord for his frugal meal, and bundled to sleep. Narada found nothing great in him, and conveyed his doubts to Lord Vishnu. Lord Vishnu directed Narada to carry a cup of oil filled to the brim around the city without spilling a drop. Narada walked around the city attending carefully to the cup of oil and returned without

spilling a drop of oil. Lord Vishnu enquired how often had he remembered him in the course of this exercise. Narada protested that it was impossible to remember anything as his total attention was on safeguarding the oil. Lord Vishnu chided, 'just one cup of oil could eclipse your thoughts from me but look at the farmer who toiled from dawn, and still remembers me twice a day.' Such was the devotion of the weaver Kabir.

Kabir did not believe in asceticism and led a normal life of a house holder. His first wife was rather troublesome; when she died he married Loi and begot two daughters. He lived happily from the paltry earnings of his loom.

Kabir's birth lies shrouded in ambiguity. According to legend he was found near a well by a Gosai weaver who adopted him and apprenticed him as a weaver without lettering him. Kabir's adopted father was a Gosai belonging to a cast named Jugi who were weavers converted to Islam. The Gosais were followers of a branch of yogis called Nathpanthis. From their teachings he learnt of the existence of a subtle instrument in the body which was the blue print drawn by the Divine Architect. That unless this instrument called the kundalini was connected to the Divine, all spiritual endeavors were futile. "The yogi attains the nine treasures "navnathi", his consciousness rises from below (the mooladhara chakra) to the apex of the body (sahasrara)." Kabir refers to the ascent of the perennial energy called kundalini to the sahasrara through the sushumnanadi which runs along the spine. In the path of its ascent the kundalini pierces six centers of energy called chakras and then establishes the connection with the all-pervading power of Divine love which is collectively conscious.

He described the connection with the all-pervading power of Divine love;

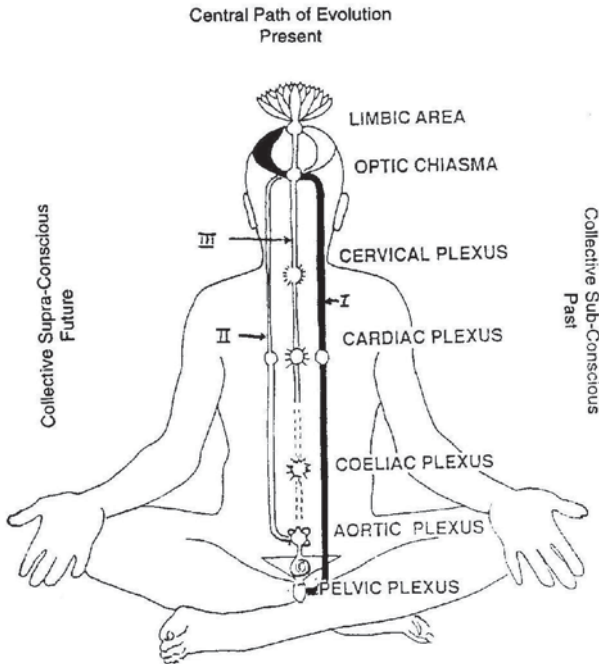
*"From the furnace of the sky(Sahasrara)
Drops ambrosia that has made my body strong.*

*When I have met the Giver of this wine,
I live in intoxication."*

"The Sushumna nadi submerged with Sahaja, then and then alone, the drinker can sip the wine."

The sushumna nadi forms the parasympathetic nervous system. The Ida on its left and the pingala on its right form the sympathetic nervous system. When this connection is established, it gives the non-verbal experience of the highest state of consciousness and joy, beyond the comprehension of the senses. Only the connection has to be established with the all-pervading divine love. It is like an organic growth. If there is proper nourishment then the seed simply sprouts. Likewise if the seeker lives in harmony with natural law, the Kundalini very easily shoots up and establishes the connection.

Diagram of the subtle system.



Says Kabir,

“O Servant of God, where do the Ida, Pingala and Sushumna nadis go when the thread of life breaks.”

“One who holds the thread is beyond time, but where does he live?

The thread is neither tied nor breaks,

Who is the master and who is the servant.

Only He knows his secret as he is the Eternal.”

“What is the warp and weft,

What are the threads from which the chadar (cloth) is woven?

Ida and Pingala are the warp and weft.

Sushumna are the threads from which the chadar is woven.

Eight are the Lotuses and ten are the spinning wheels.

Five are the elements and three the qualities of the chadar.

The Master required ten months to weave it and made it well woven by hitting it and beating it.”

Kabir obviously refers to the subtle instrument of the body which the Kundalini weaves through the three channels, the system of chakras and the elements.

After self realization he saw through the mumbo jumbo of God men. He rebuked the sadhus, monks, ascetics and all who made show off being God men; “If God could be found by going naked then the beasts of the forest could have found him long ago.” He decried ritualism, superstition, and fundamentalism, outwardly any one may pretend to be a saint, but, “What will you gain by turning the beads of the rosary if you have not turned within?”

Rejecting all outward deliberations Kabir turned to the path of Sahaja Yoga or Sahaja Samadhi. The intensity of his bhakti spontaneously opened the petals of his heart and submerged him in the ecstasy of divine love.

*“I have met him in my heart.
When a stream enters the Ganges,
It becomes the Ganges itself.
Kabir is lost in the Ganges.”*
*“I laugh each time I hear
The fish thirsts in water.
They seek Him Mathura and Benaras.
The musk deer's fragrance is in its navel,
But he madly hunts it everywhere”*

Kabir felt the need of a living Guru to deepen his Bhakti. He tried to approach the most renowned master, a vaishnavite Brahmin (Devotee of Lord Vishnu) named Ramanand who lived in Varanasi. There was no way that a Brahmin would accept a disciple from such a low caste. But Kabir was not deterred and devised a plan. Early in the morning, as Ramanand stepped down the Ganges embankment to bathe, Kabir lay flat on the steps. As Ramanand accidentally stepped on him, he cried out 'Ram Ram.' Kabir took this to be the initiation given by his Guru. Kabir took Rama as his mantra, meaning the Ultimate all-pervading Power of Divine Love. His pure desire for God was so ardent; nothing could hold him back!

*“I have neither a roof nor a hut nor a house or a village.
If God asks, 'who are you?'
I have neither name nor caste,
Thy Name alone, O Hari, is suffice.”*

Kabir found that mental seeking recoiled in the play of the mind. Then how to go beyond the mental process?

*“O friend, Kabir is lost in his search,
When the drop is lost in the ocean,
How can it be found?”*

His guru pointed to his heart; God is the all Pervading Power of Love, and hence can be found through his attribute of love. The seeker must possess this quality otherwise how will he

recognize Him. This is how the host of seekers, Gnyaneshwar, Eknath, Tukaram, Ramdas, Gora Kumbhar, Muktabai, etc found Him.

Kabir found bhakti to be the easiest path to God. But bhakti cannot be qualified. Lord Krishna states in the Geeta it should be 'Ananya Bhakti,' i.e. where there is no other, where there is total surrender and no other motive but the pure desire for God. As the love for the beloved, drenches the heart, likewise, the love for God comes from surrender. In that surrender there is no other, the soul merges with the universal soul, both become one. Surrender comes from fervor devotion and pure love for God. That love cannot be rationalized. It eludes all description- '

*“It is neither human nor Divine,
It is not the Holy one demanding service,
It is neither a yogi nor an angel,
It is neither a householder nor an ascetic,
It is neither a Hindu nor a Muslim,
None saw it being born or die.”*

Kabir 'wakes and weeps, and suffers pangs of separation from his beloved God. He entreats the Lord not to desert him. His love for the Lord is very intimate;

*“Listen to me O friend,
He knows Him who loves
If you feel not the pangs of love
It is vain to adorn your body.”*

Bhakti necessarily implies the presence of a personality to whom it is addressed. For the unenlightened seeker, it is impossible to establish this rapport with an impersonal God. The bhakti has to be to a divine personality, who is an incarnation, otherwise the seeker is deceived. No doubt through vibratory awareness of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi it is possible to discern the milk from the water;

*“They who separate the milk from water,
Says Kabir are my devotees.
They only will escape in whose heart is discernment.”*

Under Sufi influence, Kabir's poetry assumed a deep penetrating fervor, in which worship became love. The love thrills with joy, and the sufi crescendos into mad exultation of dancing. Perhaps such an ecstasy spells the dance of Shiva, in which his Shakti separates to celebrate her own creation. The desire to create is propelled by that inner joy. That ecstasy found expression in the exuberance of magnificent temples, mosques and cathedrals. The love of God dissolves into what the Sufis call 'marifat' (gnosis) - the mystical knowledge of God. It is a state of enlightened bhakti. In blind bhakti, one can be deceived but in enlightened bhakti, one becomes a part and parcel of the All Pervading Power of Divine Love, where there is no other, and the Divine music sweetly flows through the hollow instrument. Dyed in the color of divine love the Sufi easily abides in the phenomenal world without taking on any other color.

*“O friend, I do not know
If my heart lies with my beloved (God)
Or my beloved resides in me.”*

The wine of His love consumes all doubts and insecurities. The individuality merges into the consciousness of God's love. There is no thought of reward; only trust in God and Love of God. Kabir recommends that the novice should keep the company of saints to strengthen his bhakti and dispel doubts. Bhakti can be deepened by listening to saints (shravanam), devotional singing (bhajans), remembering the Lord's name, worshipping, adoring, saluting, serving, befriending and self-dedication to God.

“Even the sinner Ajmail, Gaja and Ganika crossed the ocean of the world by taking the name of the Lord.”

Manifest or unmanifest:, God is a living reality. For Kabir God was as personal as a bride or a groom;

*“A newlywed bride sings marriage songs,
My husband Raja Ram has come.”
“O how can I explain that secret word?
How can I say He is like this or that,
If I say He is within me, the outer world blushes,
If I say He is outside, it is falsehood.
For Him the inner and outer worlds,
The conscious and the unconscious, are indivisible.
He is neither revealed nor hidden,
There are no words that can describe him.”*

The ruler of Delhi, King Ibrahim Ibn Adham was greatly impressed by Kabir. He abdicated his throne to become his disciple. He made offerings of camels, gold and silver, but Kabir shunned them and asked him to follow the life of an ordinary householder following the normal manual chores before he could be initiated.

The King diligently carried out the instructions. Ten years passed. Finally Kabir's wife Loi took pity on him and begged Kabir to initiate him. Kabir relented, on the condition that she should test him under his instructions. The following morning Kabir directed her to throw a bucket of dirty water on the king as he passed under her window. The king indignantly shouted, “If you were in my kingdom you would have known.” Obviously he king had not yet overcome the ego of his kingship. After two years Kabir informed Loi that the time was ripe to test the king again. This time the king received the bucket of water with great humility exclaiming, “I am even dirtier than this water, you have indeed blessed me.” The next day Kabir initiated him.

Kabir devised clever methods of playing tricks with the ego. He realized that human beings were blinded by their ego, and therefore could not see the reality. The play of the ego

created an illusion or maya which led to the feeling of an individual identity separate from the all-pervading Power of Divine love. He described maya as, “a maiden who entices the world with its attraction and stands between the soul and universal soul. The vessel is in the water and the water is in the vessel. When the vessel is broken the water inside and outside becomes one. In the same way when the seeker breaks through the illusion or maya, he realizes his unity with the whole.”

*“Maya is like a female thief who steals (Human Beings)
And sells in the mart (world)
But She cannot cheat Kabir who has caught her red
handed.”*

Like the moth in his flight towards the lamp is pierced with maya or hallucination, similarly maya is a super-imposition of illusion and therefore ignorance. Ignorance by its nature is transitory and cannot withstand the light of truth. When the seeker establishes his self-realization through Sahaja Yoga then the Kundalini enlightens the brain and dispels the darkness. Hence Kabir realized the futility of fighting the ego; if the ego is attacked then it forms ripples of reaction causing another polarity. Instead he chose to make fun of it;

*“My swine is tied outside the house but yours is living
inside you.”*

*“They search heaven, but do not find that which will take
their pride away.”*

The vibrations that emit from a realized soul are of absolute purity as they are the paramchaitanya, what Christ called the cool wind of the Holy Ghost. These bear the sterling quality of a mirror that reflects whatever is impure or untruth. Thus against the light of vibrations, falsehood gets fully exposed. The theory of relativity or the grey zones of the mind cannot stand before the absolute truth. Without vibrations the Human brain cannot reflect the Absolute Truth, because it is under the control of the

ego and the super ego i.e. our conditionings and mental programming. The vibrations of the Kundalini dissolve the ego and the super ego, and lift the curtain of Maya. Thereafter, the human attention becomes free to reflect the reality.

Kabir did not distinguish between caste and creed, Hindu or Muslim. He never referred to himself as a Hindu or Muslim, but claimed a caste which has lower than all castes;

*“Yogis look upon Gorakh,
Hindus chant the name of Ram,
Muslims call out to Allah,
But the God of Kabir pervades in every being.”*

Kabir lashed out at the empty customs and funny rituals of both Hindus and Muslims saying;

*“When the Guru is the blind, what can the disciples do?
The blind urge on the blind, both fall into the well.”
“All cry out 'God God'
But of the God they have no knowledge.
Where will they rest at last?”
“What use is bathing if the mind is full of filth?
The fish lives ever in the water, yet never loses its smell.”*

He stood outside the temples and the mosques to expose the pandits and the mullahs.

“Renounce the Vedas and the books, O Pandit, all these are fictions of the mind.”

This infuriated the priesthood. The Kazi filed false reports against him. When Kabir was summoned by the Emperor he arrived late, apologizing that he was held by a curious sight of camels passing through a street narrower than a needle's eye;

“Countless camels can be contained in the space between Heaven and Earth.

All can be seen through the pupil of the eye which is smaller

than the eye of a needle."

He was pardoned.

But it did not quell the ire of the Brahmins, and they concocted tales of his illicit relations with a woman. His hand and feet were tied and he was thrown into the Ganges. But the next morning he appeared floating on the river. The Emperor then ordered that he be trampled under an elephant. A lion suddenly appeared out of the blue and intervened between the elephant and Kabir, and frightened the elephant away. When all attempts to kill Kabir failed, he was banished from Varanasi.

According to Hindu belief to die in Varanasi leads to salvation. In the evening of his life Kabir left Varanasi and set out for Maghar; "What difference is there between Varanasi and barren Maghar, if God be in the heart."

As his end drew near, he wished to be alone. A few hours later when his disciples returned, he was gone. A dispute arose between the Hindu and Muslim disciples for his body. The Muslims wanted to bury the body whereas the Hindus wanted to cremate it. When they removed the shroud from his body only a heap of flowers remained in place of his body. The flowers were equally shared between the quarreling groups, the Hindus cremated them and the Muslims buried them. It seems that even in death he tricked their ego.

*"Death after death the whole world died,
But none took future thought
Each held by his own wisdom,
But the whole world died a slave."*



CHAPTER SEVEN

EKNATH

(1533-1599 A.D.)

A young boy of 12, had such yearning for God, he prayed fervently in the Shiva temple at Paithan. One day, Eknath's prayer was answered, he heard a Divine Voice directing him to Guru Janardhan Pant. Gurus Janardhan Pant was the disciple of the great Primordial Guru Sri Datta. Eknath rushed to the abode of the guru in Fort Devagiri without even taking leave of his grandparents.

The great guru instantly recognized the ardent disciple and endeavoured to quench his spiritual quest. The guru was not only a seer but a great visionary; his teachings integrated both the spiritual and the temporal. He reared Eknath rigorously in Yoga disciplines, Bhakti and Vedas, but more importantly he was a loving father, mother and a friend.

Eknath kept the household accounts for his guru. One day he discovered an accounting error and stayed awake till wee hours minutely going over the accounts. The guru was pleased with his great concentration, and advised him to concentrate his mind likewise on the Lord.

In deference to his Guru's wishes, Eknath married Girijabai. Eknath held the life of house holder (Grihasthashram) to be ideal for spiritual ascent. He believed that compassion and not renunciation of the world was a pre-requisite for spiritual ascent, and regarded the wearing of his body as a life of kindness

for the benevolence of others;

“The body is like riding a horse, deprived of food he would grow weak and be unable to carry the horseman; on the other hand if over fed, he would become restive, frisky and throw off the master. The horse, therefore, should neither be strayed nor overfed. Everything should be in moderation.”

His guru encouraged him to write commentaries on Vedantic texts in Marathi. Eknath wrote over 3000 most melodious abhangas on themes like the playfulness of the Bal Krishna, lives of great saints, the Lord's great compassion for his devotees, etc. He revived Marathi literature; he synthesized compassion with humor – a style that gave birth to a new style of Marathi dance drama. He expressed his spiritual experiences and the path of virtue in Kirtans that came to form the most cherished musical heritage of Maharashtra. His couplets are well laced in wit without being sarcastic. . His language was simple and reached the common man. Prominent among his works are the Marathi translation of Gyaneshwari, Bhagwatam and Ramayana. However, his translation of the scriptures from Sanskrit to vernacular angered the Brahmins who feared his rising popularity.

The Chief Pandit of Varanasi summoned him to punish him severely. However, Eknath's humility and love changed the pandit's heart;

“O Swami, great and mighty, I reverently place my head at your feet. Do me, a helpless one, the kindness of permitting me to see you. if I have done any mistake, please forgive me. My poor intellect does not comprehend Sanskrit; I am without devotion, knowledge, unlettered. It is through service to you that I have gained even this little inspiration to commence the Bhagavata, please do examine it and there is any fault please do examine it and if there is any fault please throw it in the river. Please have kindness over me, lessen your anger.”

His humble address worked like magic that transformed the Pandit. As he removed the curtain, in the place of Eknath, he saw the vision of the Lord himself.

His teachings were not about utopia, but a lesson on how to deal with daily life. He realized that unless there was peace within there could not be peace outside. The inner conflict reflected in outer conflicts. He showed through devotion and discipline one could attain inner peace. He had absolute faith in the seeker's ability to sublime all weakness with the Grace of the Lord.

Eknath revealed sanyas was selfless action. Citing the examples of lord Krishna who advised Arjuna to do his duty as a warrior and not withdraw from the battlefield, he affirmed Selfless action (nishkama Karma) to be the true sanyas.

By his example Eknath showed that the enlightened soul is so filled with compassion that he does not shirk the world but works relentlessly for its emancipation; "if the mind is pure then why go on pilgrimage to sacred places, if the heart is pure then you can see the lord wherever you are. Samadhi is not the loss of consciousness or stiff motionless condition of the body; establishment in the brahmi state is when one enjoys constant divine experience."

Eknath's love cut across the boundaries of caste or creed. He served food to outcastes and even broke his fast in the house of an untouchable.

Even for those condemned to suffering and despair, the compassion of the Almighty was unlimited; 'even if the vilest of sinners would take to the path of sincere bhakti, his sin would be absolved.' His compassion extended even to thieves who came to rob him. But when they saw a miracle, they fell at his feet. However, he insisted they take something valuable from his house.

Like his heart, his house was open to all. Once late at night same strangers arrived. Observing their hunger, he woke his wife to prepare their meal. But there was no fire-wood in his house to cook the meal. Unhesitatingly, he pulled down the wooden beams from the roof for firewood. On another occasion, he poured the sacred water into the mouth of a thirsty donkey.

His perennial spring of love could not be contaminated by spite. A miscreant kept spitting on Eknath over a hundred times. Each time Eknath purified himself with a bath in the river. Finally the miscreant realized his folly and begged forgiveness. Eknath took the episode with a pinch of salt and thanked him for obliging him to bathe in the holy river so many times!

On another occasion a leper had a vision that Eknath would cure him. Eknath blessed some water and placed it in the leper's hand, and he was cured.

An ardent devotee of lord Vithal, Eknath believed in monoism I.e. God, the Absolute was the only reality, and the world was the manifestation of nescience or maya. He perceived maya as self-projection and therefore beyond description. He explained that the individual soul and the universal soul were essentially identical. 'The reflection of God in the soiled mirror of a vidya is jiva, whereas the same in a clear mirror of vidya or enlightenment is shiva; the difference is due to maya. For instance waves gain form and name but their content is the same as the oceans; the element gold is the same though made in different ornaments.'

'The ego prevents one from perceiving the divinity within every human being. When the individual realizes his oneness with the collective consciousness, the form disappears like the merging of the drop in the ocean, and we truly love others. With the attention on the divine, it becomes easy to face the ordeals of daily life. Empowered by the divine connection, a realized soul goes beyond vidhi and nishedha (laws, prescribing or

forbidding). For him there remains nothing to be done or attained. His sense of identity drops, like the concept of 'I' or 'thou'.'

He revealed Atma as sat, chit, ananda, implying that the three qualities were not separate but integrated where pure consciousness is the absolute truth, and manifests ripples of joy. 'The Atma is neither born nor dies; it is a detached witness, without any attributes or non-attributes. The all-pervading soul is the only reality. The concept of morality remains as long as one identifies himself with perishable body and the world. The concept drops upon the realization of oneness with God.'

Eknath did not differentiate between the path of knowledge (Gyanyoga) and the path of karma (karmayoga). He pointed out that the ego was born when one identified with being the doer. Hence he chose the path of bhakti where all work was done in the spirit of devotion to God, and there was no identification with the doer. However, he was mindful of his guru's caution that the bhakti should be void of hypocrisy; "By the grace of the Sadguru you have acquired the knowledge of the self, but remember that sagun (form) bhakti is indispensable. By discipline yogis overcome their senses but without bhakti they cannot experience the sagun God. Yogic practices may bestow great powers but without the bhakti and love there cannot be the bliss of the divine union."

The fervor of his songs transported into an ecstasy beyond the realm of the intellect. He showed that joy did not source from the intellect but from love. That wisdom did not source from the intellect but compassion. Compassion was born from the womb of bhakti. In the tree of compassion bhakti was the root, and wisdom was the fruit. His compassion was so powerful that during deep meditation a snake sprung to attack him, but suddenly its evil nature was overcome by compassion. It coiled around his body to keep the cold away, and when the sun was too

strong, it spread its hood to provide shade. A passerby was so struck by the spectacle that he shook Eknath from his smadhi to witness the miracle. Eknath burst into an abhang;

'Death came to sting me,
But he changed to compassion.
Now I will know him well.
For heart has met heart.
Though in the body,
My bodily consciousness disappeared.
So death himself lost his power.
Eka Janadan now dances on his feet
To the tune; 'no flavor to life or death'.



CHAPTER EIGHT

RAMDAS

(1608-1681 A.D.)

Gangadharpant did not see his brother Narayan at the evening meal. His enquiries of his whereabouts were of no avail. Early the next morning while visiting the temple of Maruti, he stumbled upon a body in the darkness and asked “who is on the floor?”

Narayan fell at his feet, “I am your blessed younger brother Narayan.”

Delighted at the spiritual initiation of Narayan, Gangadharpant embraced him.

Not long before, Narayan's wedding was fixed. At the marriage ceremony the priest recited the marriage vows. Before taking the last vow, Narayan suddenly fled the wedding alter. His relations pursued him, but in vain. He crossed the river leaving behind not only his bride, but also the protection of his mother and brother.

He practiced penance on the banks of river Panchvati for twelve years. He begged for food, then dipped the food in river Godavari water, offered one third to the water animals, another one third to the cows, and partook the rest after evoking the blessing of Shri Ram. He changed his name to Ramdas (servant of Shri Ram).

At the Age of 24, he experienced the collective

consciousness of Shri Ram. He described his experience as an intimate relationship between his soul and the supreme spirit in a book “Dasbodh”.

He was deeply moved by the tales of woe and destruction of Hindus at the hands of the Muslim rule, and evoked the blessing of the God to save his people;

“O God, I cannot bear these pangs to see
the sufferings of these helpless souls;
Kindly take care of them.
They often go wrong and commit mistakes
But have mercy on them
Think what is good for them
And bring about their welfare.”

He recalled how the wicked demons were destroyed in ancient times to protect the Aryan society.

“The nation is ruined, devastated,
All the people are reduced to misery,
They are killed, orphans cry for bread, Oh God,
How long will you try their patience?
I would rather die than see their sufferings.”

“Of what use was that Vedanta philosophy if the majority
Of the people could not live as human beings in the
society.”

He founded an order of moral and militant prowess to protect the Dharma and withstand the Muslims onslaughts. The Ramdasi Order touched the inner most chord of the people with the sweetness of their devotional songs. They were householders, youth, housewives and widows. He inspired them to stand up for their dharama and fight for their Motherland. He appealed to their common religious sentiments and established an order dedicated to Shri Rama. Shri Rama was held in high esteem; he was a dutiful son, an ideal king, a maryada Purshottam, he killed all the demons and restored the rule of

Dharma.

As direct hostility against the powerful Muslim ruler was not advisable, he pleaded to them for tolerance and peaceful co-existence. After all his attempts failed, he envisaged a long range plan for religious, social and political upheaval very tactfully. He countered the Muslim influence by establishing Ramdasi convents. Disciples were instructed not to remain idle, not to indulge in idle gossip, not to act thoughtlessly, not to be selfish or boastful, not to insist on alms from the unwilling, not to get entangled in local factions, not to lose their temper not to censure other religions, not to brag about miracles and not to break the laws of nature. Ramdas wanted the public to realize the worth of the convent as a useful public institution and a Ramadasi, a sincere public servant.

He did not want his disciples to become parasites on the society. Apart from daily worship they gave physical training to young boys, arranged wrestling's bouts and other tests of strength to prepare the youth to take on the Muslim tyrants. He rejuvenated the youth with the warlike spirit of of Shri Hanumama. Shri Hanumana was the icon of devotion and strength. Ramdas projected these two aspects in the idols of Shri Hanumana; first, Shri Hanumana bent in devotion to Shri Rama, and secondly, Shri Hanumana ever ready to strike down the wicked.

“Fire requires to be kindled and by an effort, it is kindled; that is the way to infuse the right spirit into the people's minds and rouse them into action. Make efforts; try again; put faith in God and march on”. An upcoming Maratha chief, Shivaji was greatly inspired by his words, and offered him the gift of his kingdom.

Ramdas smiled “well Shivaba, the kingdom is now mine; what are you going to do in future?”

Shivaji promptly answered. “I shall spend my time in your

service.”

Ramdas carried on the play and took him on his begging round. Shivaji joined the disciples in drawing water, washing the pots and cooking food.

Ramdas asked, “Well, Shivaba how do you feel now?”

Shivaji answered, “I am very happy Guru Maharaj, in your service.”

Ramdas reminded, “You are a Kashastriya (warrior) prince; how can you go out begging with me? Was Arjun allowed by lord Krishna to become a sanyasi. Now take back your kingdom, put on your royal robes and rule as a blessed servant of God.”

Ramdas adorned Shivaji with royal robes and bestowed upon him his saffron robe as his flag. He instructed him on right thinking, continuous caution, comprehensive awareness, genuine goodness, and strict observance of moral rules, readiness to help the weak and the distressed, full faith in Almighty God and to valiantly fight injustice. God helps those who help themselves, and his hand is to be seen in whatever shines and blooms in the right cause of human welfare. “Be calm and considerate. Whoever can manage his mundane matters successfully will also succeed in the field spirituality. Look upon your household as God's assignment to you and do your duty as devotion to Him.”

Once Ramdas suffered an excruciating pain; only the milk of tigress could cure it. Shivaji undertook to procure the milk. He searched the jungle and found a cave where three cubs were frisking about. As he advanced the mother sprung menacingly towards him. Bowing his head, he prayed to her for her milk to cure his Guru. Miraculously the wild animal calmed and stood motionless. Shivaji milked her gently, then thanked her, and returned full of gratitude for the guru's grace.

Ramdas was pleased and evoked the blessings of Mother Goddess Bhavani, “O Mother grant me only one boon - make king Shivaji victorious and prosperous”.

The destruction of Hindu Temples, unfair taxation on Hindus, their forcible conversion to Islam, and the rape of Hindu women wrenched Shivaji's heart. But how to face the mighty Muslim forces with his puny army? Ramdas advised him to pray to the Mother Goddess Bhavani. According to legend the Goddess appeared before him and blessed him with a sword.

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi revealed when the Goddess blessed Shivaji, she in fact bestowed self realization upon him. In the state of collective consciousness he attained the witness state that enabled him to perceive the divine's plan to protect Bharat Mata. “India is the microscopic form of the whole Mother Earth, so in the triangle of Maharashtra we have got 8 Ganeshas which are manifesting vibrations and were recognized by the great saints of Maharashtra and protected by Shri Adi Shakti.”

Empowered by the shakti of the Mother Goddess, Shivaji plunged into the task of protecting the abode of the Kundalini in the Deccan triangle. On 17th April 1645 he wrote a letter to a chief, “The god whose abode is on the hills of your valley has given us the inspiration and she will fulfill the wishes of all of us to establish our own raj. You and I have taken an oath of loyalty in the presence of Dadaji Konddeo and the idol of God. This oath is ever binding. It is God's wish that we should establish our own rule and be independent.”

At a time when communication was primitive and people were uneducated, he roused his people against Muslim rule of over three hundred years. He urged the chiefs to get rid of their petty jealousies and family feuds. He was the man of the people, and derived strength from them. The people looked upon him as their savior, and their only hope against the Muslim tyranny.

They gladly supplied soldiers, rations, money, horses, arms shelter and information. Despite lures of spoils of office from the Muslim rulers, they chose to serve Shivaji. Nonetheless, Shivaji's small army was no match against the mighty Muslim forces. However, his enlightened discretion enabled him to see the solution – guerrilla warfare.

The Sultan of Bijapur held Shivaji's father captive and ordered his execution. Shivaji prevailed upon the Moghul Emperor to revoke his execution in return for his hard earned forts. His ministers were crestfallen, he smiled, “We bought the stupid sultan so cheaply! Imagine how invincible we would become with our father's force behind us, and then we would regain all the forts in no time.”

Thereafter, the Sultan of Bijapur sent a 5000 strong army under Afzal Khan. It was large enough to crush a young man barely 18 years old and his small band of followers. Shivaji was not only a lion at heart but had also learnt the art of diplomacy from his Guru Ramdas. 'Force must be met by force, intrigue by intrigue, treachery by treachery. When he saw that the mighty Bijapur army was three times his army, he remembered his guru's advice 'It is power alone that brings peace between two kings. If one of them does not possess it and is overpowered, he should accept humiliating terms than face annihilation. He could later retake what he lost.” Shivaji prudently sought truce. A meeting was arranged with Afzal Khan. The overconfident Afzal Khan was sure of his physical prowess and intrigued to kill him at the meeting. As they cordially embraced each other Afzal Khan thrust his dagger on Shivaji's chest, but Shivaji was saved by the steel mail concealed under his robes. Next Shivaji tore off the Khan's belly with the tiger claws concealed in his hands. The Khan died instantly and his army was successfully routed in a carefully conceived surprise attack. A strict disciplinarian himself, he did not allow his army to steal from the people or ill treat the Muslim subjects.

He avoided the enemy where it was stronger, and attacked it where it was weaker. He strategically regrouped his men and ambushed convoys from vantage points. He harassed the commander, defeated his detachments when he broke away from the main body, and vanquished the main body when it was exhausted. He hit where the overconfident enemy least expected but did not repeat the same trick twice. He based his strategy on surprise, mobility, alertness and lightening speed. He allowed the enemy to chase him deep inside the mountains, so it could be ambushed. Often the enemy encountered innocent villagers who appeared busy tiling the soil. No sooner than it turned its back, the same villagers transformed into guerrillas. Gradually, the guerrillas built up their strength and raised regular troops to launch frontal attacks. Inspired by the Mother Goddess they achieved super human feats of valour.

Shivaji was always in the forefront, even if it was at the risk of his life. The Moghul general Shaista Khan succeeded in capturing his capital Pune. , Shivaji secretly penetrated the palace with a few men in the guise of a marriage party and assaulted the Khan. The Khan lost his fingers but escaped by jumping out of the window. In a letter to Raoji, Shivaji described that God Almighty gave him the inspiration for this deed.

At every step he had to overcome intrigue and treachery. But he did not waste his attention planning revenge; his vision was to achieve the freedom of his Motherland.

Guru Ramdas cautioned, “Ascribe your success to the Goddess Bhavani but do not slacken your effort.” In 1665 Shivaji was building a fort in Konkan when he was required to present himself before the Moghul emperor Aurangzeb at Agra. Soon after reaching Agra the emperor imprisoned him. But the news of his capture did not deter his people from completing the construction; they knew that the hand of the Goddess was upon him, and he would be saved - and they continued to build with renewed vigour! True to their faith, he escaped hidden in a

basket of sweets!

On his return he learnt that the Portuguese were forcibly converting Hindus to Christianity. He attacked Goa and extracted a promise from the Portuguese governor not to indulge in forcible conversions. In 1674 Guru Ramdas suggested to Shivaji that as he had accomplished his mission, he should be coroneted as emperor. Shivaji requested the coronation should be done by his hands, but Ramdas declined, and instructed him to follow the protocol at Raigad. The guns of Raigad thundered volley after volley, repeated from fort to fort to proclaim the miraculous freedom of the abode of the Kundalini!

Six years later, Shivaji peacefully passed away. On hearing the news, Ramdas said, “god's will be done”. Even his arch enemy the Mughal emperor acknowledged, “A great warrior is dead who respected his enemy's ladies...”

He was pitched against foes many times stronger than him. They were overconfident of their strength, and their bloated egos fell for Shivaji's clever traps. He thus succeeded in keeping them at bay and proved that the spirit was mightier than the sword!



CHAPTER NINE

TUKARAM

(1608-1660 A.D.)

Tukaram was born in a low caste family of a shopkeeper in Dehu. His first wife suffered from Asthma so he took a second wife who unfortunately proved troublesome. A great famine raged over Maharashtra, Tukaram was so hard hit that his first wife died of starvation crying, 'give me food, give me food'. The terrible calamity proved to be the turning point in Tukaram's life and ignited his spiritual quest.

Through the process of constant contemplation and introspection he discovered the colossal pride and self importance seated within him. He saw greed, hatred, jealousy, anger and passion pulling him down. Thus like all seekers, Tuka suffered from all the human weaknesses, and embarked his spiritual quest from the bottom of the ladder. He had no support and faced all the trials and conditionings through introspection and meditation. He realized the teachings of all philosophies yielded but one meaning; the omnipotence of God.

In the beginning, he found the old conditionings and ambitions drawing his attention away from his spirit. Gradually it dawned upon him to follow the path of devotion;

'You must surrender yourself to God, be faithful to one's self and chant his name.'

When he found it difficult to maintain the mood of

surrender he did not seek the company of saints for inspiration but in order to imbibe humility, he undertook the meanest task in village;

“Only when one becomes small as an atom, one rises to the sky”.

In fact the villagers thought he was mad. But He did not care for their rational and logic; he strived for communion with God in the realm of his own heart. He ardently prayed and prayed for it. But Without love, surrender was not possible. Initially the task of surrendering to God seemed impossible because it entailed a voluntary elimination of his conditionings and ambitions, but as his devotion grew deeper, love elevated and nurtured him, and he tasted the divine nectar. Love became the essence of his prayers. Through love alone, he experienced the universal ocean of Divine love. “I cannot forget him now, he follows me everywhere. He has stolen my precious heart. He has manifested himself and I have become mad after him. I hear nothing, I am speechless, how can I describe Him? My whole being is ecstatic with love.”

Tuka's prayer was not a begging for the mundane things, but a thirst for God. He prayed fervently for his company, “forgive me I shall never put you to such trouble on my account.”

When he got connected, his compassion embraced all humanity, and he served God by serving His children. He saw God in every being, and sought to awaken the latent love for God in every being.

“I see the whole world in my soul,
When I see the lord all agony vanishes,
I am transported into Ananda (bless).
Bliss leads to grater bliss.
I have been so blessed
To have seen the formless one.

I came to see Vithal and myself become Vithal.”

His whole being vibrated with divine joy, he did not know how to convey it so he expressed it in abhangs (songs literally meaning 'immortal words') and danced his way to the Lord; “because it is His creation, He prevails everywhere therefore, He is happy to guide whoever seeks him.”

He assured patience and prayers were the key to surrender; after listening comes thinking, then contemplation followed by meditation and finally Karma and Bhakti converge in collective consciousness.

“Blessed I am to have seen your feet today,
now I have gone beyond time.
Divine Ananda is overflowing through my body.
This very body becomes divine
when I sing your praise.
The waves and the ocean become one.
God envelopes me all around.
All things merge into unity.
All creatures have become Divine to me.
I do not belong to any place or time.
I witness my own death
And this mortal merges into God.
I am as I am.”

However, Bhakti should not be mistaken for renunciation of social life; 'to seek God in the world it is not the world one must deny.'

He believed in the institution of marriage and family life. However, his approach to life was of moderation, a normal life in which each individual leads a responsible and dutiful life, while in the divine pursuit. A society that practices Dharma is spontaneously blessed with a living and a vital culture, producing great spiritual men. This is how he instructed the mighty emperor Shivaji who was so intoxicated by Tuka's

devotional songs that he wanted to cast aside his kingdom in pursuit of God. Tuka instructed him to worship the Lord in the service to his subjects;

” Salvation can be attained by doing one's duty selflessly. It is the duty of the King to protect his subjects, fight and vanquish the foe. As a father looks after the welfare of his family, similarly when a King sees his subjects happy, he feels happy. Benevolence is the greatest attribute of a King. He should give alms generously, be righteous, just and impartial. Seeing God in all beings, there should be compassion towards all. In worship there should be love for God. Be fair in business dealings. Falsehood is the greatest sin. Following these tenets you will become a “jivan-mukta”. Why then go to the jungle to worship the Lord, for God will come to your own house.”

Shivaji prostrated before him and returned to his kingdom. Not long before, Shivaji returned with an offering of gold coins and a gift of a town. But Tuka whose mind was free from desire shunned it;

“What need have I of riches
When my soul is fulfilled within?
What is the lamp before the sun?
I have only one desire,
That you should surrender to God.
One does not have to abandon one's family
Or social ties when the soul is at peace.”

“Non-attachment is an attitude of mind, it is a state of inner contentment where there is no question of being attached or detached. It is attachment to 'I', 'Me' and 'Mine' that estranges the individual from the inner self. Non-attachment can be attained through self-restraint, sincerity, forgiveness and love of God. The one who is filled with love of God goes beyond fear, anxieties or distractions.” He could give a Brahmin the gift of turning copper coin into gold but his poor wife did not even

possess a broken jewel. Eight siddhis were always at his command but he did not even store sufficient grain for a single day. He cooked for one person and miraculously fed a multitude.

It is easier to practice austerities and do penance than to face life's daily irritants with patience, compassion and detachment. An old weary widow was going to the bazar to buy oil, but lost strength to go further. Tuka came to her rescue and brought the oil. To the widow's amazement, the oil lasted much longer than before. As the miracle of the oil lasting so long spread, everyone sought Tuka to buy oil for them and it lasted longer.

On another occasion, unruffled by a menacing dog, Tuka told him, "There is no bark in me, why do you keep it in yourself." The dog was instantly calmed and after that followed Tuka home.

"When the heart is purified with sincerity
Then even enemies become friends,
Tigers may come near but will never attack one,
Poison offered to such a one will turn into nectar,
Any harm directed towards him will result into good,
Harsh words will sound polite,
Any pain afflicted will become the source of happiness,
The flames of fire will turn cool,
For God, All Merciful is please,
If one's heart is full of compassion,
If one loves others more than oneself,
God will look upon such a one with an
Eye of mercy and bless his heart with His presence."

He denounced elaborate rituals and the priestly class;

"Like pipes carved out of carrots are these new Yogis,
They cram a lot but they only accumulate Ego,
Knowledge little, pride great,
Such hypocrites should be beaten and shooed."

A infuriated Brahmin commanded Tukaram to throw away his manuscripts in the river. For many days Tuka was dejected. However, he forgave the Brahmin and even cured him. By the grace of God, thirteen days later, the manuscript was found floating on the water.

In another interesting anecdote Tuka undertook to guard a corn field. He watched birds feed the corn but did not have the heart to shoo them away. He observed how the birds ate a few kernels but took nothing home. Seeing this he prayed to the Lord to make his soul like the birds. And lo! When Tuka returned the corn field was full again.

He did not discriminate between caste, creed, or a sinner. Though he condemned a sin, he forgave the sinners, advising them to cease their sinful lives and take the path of God. He asked them to forget the past as he had redeemed them of their sin. He had implicit faith in the Divine spirit within each individual and endeavoured to ignite it.

Once a Brahmin was possessed by a devil who demanded that if the Brahmin bequeathed the good deeds of a sacrifice to him then he would free him. As the Brahmin was poor, he could not perform the necessary sacrifices. He wandered from place to place requesting people to give him the good deed of their sacrifice. When Tukaram heard of it, he vibrated some water and gave it to the Brahmin. The Brahmin drank the water and he was cleansed of the devil.

Tuka attributed creation of universe to God's inherent power of Shakti. Shakti is both maya and creative. God enjoys his creation but seems to play hide and seek with it. When man forgets God and looks at the show world, he is deluded by Maya under the blanket of ignorance. The ego is the cause of delusion. The dominating ego eclipses the attention, and in the darkness of ignorance one easily falls into temptation. However, Tuka showed through bhakti one is able to recognize the hand of God

everywhere and the curtain of ignorance drops.

Tukaram was aware of the growing moral degradation in the world. He foresaw the coming of “Kali”. At such a critical time, when unrighteousness increases beyond limit, the balance of nature is upset and the working of Divine will is hampered, then God assumes a human form to fight evil forces. God has infinite love for his creation and assumes visible forms like incarnations to uphold Dharma and destroy the evil.

CHAPTER TEN

BULLEH SHAH

(1440-1518 A.D.)

“I must find a master, I must test him, I must drink water after straining it.” Preoccupied with these thoughts, Bulleh Shah combed Lahore for a master. One day he passed the garden of Shah Inayat and couldn't resist the sight of golden ripe mangoes. He invoked the name of God and the mangoes fell on the ground. Shah Inayat who was watching from a distance, demanded the mangoes be returned.

Bulleh Shah protested, “I did not break the mangoes.”

Shah Inayat reprimanded, “You stole the mangoes. By invoking the name of God, you got the mangoes.”

Bulleh Shah found his master in the gardner and fell at his feet,, “How to curb my mind?”

Shah Inayat smiled, “O Bulleh what of the mind? Uproot it from here and plant it there. It is simple as detaching one's mind from the world outside and attaching it to the spirit within. It is Just the shifting of attention. The power of love of God Almighty is all pervading but you are so wrapped up in your ego you do not feel the power of His love.

*“Who do you sit behind the screen and peep?
From whom do you hide yourself?
O Bulleh, make your body a furnace;
Burn your bones to ash in its blaze.
Turn it into a vessel of love;
Thus alone, can you behold the creator?”*

For a brilliant scholar like Bulleh Shah who traced lineage to Prophet Mohammed, to accept a low caste gardner as a Master created an upheaval. But it did not deter Bulleh;

*“Whatever colour I am dyed in
The dye is of deep colour;
It has the glow of my Master; O friend.”*

The dye was so deeply cast that Bulleh Shah saw God in every colour. He sang of Rama, Krishna and Muhammad. He was too intoxicated to bother about heaven or hell and even rejected the Shariat.

*“In shrines dwell robbers
In idol-horses, thugs
In mosques live vagabonds
The lovers of God remain aloof.”*
*“Mullahs and torch-bearers come from the same stock.
They give light to others and themselves are in the dark.”*
*“Paganism is for the pagan
And faith for the faithful
A bit of heartache is enough for Attar.
O Bulleh, unique is the love for the lord!
It does not blend with any other love.”*
*“Within us abides our Murshid (master)
When I fell in love, I learnt this.
O friend, I am lost to myself.”*
*“O Bulleh, what do I know who I am?
I am not among believers seen in mosques.
Nor am I versed in the traditions of unbelief.
I am not among the pious, nor among the sinful.”*
*“Repeating the name of the Beloved.
I have become the Beloved myself
Whom, shall I call the Beloved now?”*
*“In the rapture of your love I have lost my senses.
I have now found how close you and I are.
You, O Lord, are near the Royal Vein within me.”*

After self-realization the spiritual energy called the Kundalini flows through a very fine vein and enlightens the attention. Bulleh Shah and other Sufi saints referred to it as the Shah Rag or the Royal Vein because it is the ruling vein (Sushumna nadi) of the spiritual energy, connecting all the chakras to the all-pervading power of Divine love;

“Those who are able to enter the Royal Vein do not find the court of the Lord, very far,” says Bulleh. Hafiz, a great Sufi mystic of Persia counsels seekers to raise attention from six lower centers to the seven skies to be able to hear the five Divine melodies ringing within him.

This is true knowledge but, “knowledge which does not take you to the destination of reality, only ends by aggravating your ignorance,” says Bulleh.

Bulleh had the insight of God and how the One became Many.

*“I have now seen the fair Beloved,
Whose beauty shines through His creation.
When the One existed all alone,
No light of His was ever manifest.
Nor did God or His Prophets exist,
Nor the Omnipotent or the Dominant.
I have now seen the fair Beloved.”*

The Grace and mercy of the Lord is central to a Sufi's heart.
Says Bulleh Shah;

*“If you were to dispense justice,
There is no place for me;
From Your Grace alone could I get a bounty.”*

*“Wake up O Bulleh! Go face the world,
Those you forgive, God will forgive you.”*

In the strife torn Punjab of the eighteenth century or the world crisis today, Bulleh's counsel resonates;

*“You may break a Mosque,
You may break a temple,
break not a heart drenched in divine love...”*



CHAPTER ELEVEN

SHRI SAI BABA OF SHIRDI

(1838-1918 A.D.)

Dressed like the Muslim,
but donning the cast marks of a Hindu
living in the mosque ,
but burning the sacred fire of the Hindus
Begging for alms
but generous like a river,
who was this saint of Shirdi?
“Those who think I reside in Shirdi,
do not know the real Sai.

Sai is the not this three and half cubic feet of body residing
in Shirdi.

I have no abode.
By the cause of Karma I got embroiled and took this body.
The world is my abode.
Brahma is my father, Maya is my mother.
By their interlocking I got this body”.

At about 8 a.m. a knock at the village doors saw Sai begging
for alms. He gratefully collected the precious dry unleavened
bread (bhakri) in the corner of his shroud and the liquids in a
tumbler. Returning to his tiny room in an old dilapidated
mosque, he offered his precious bounties to the birds and beasts
then ate the left over. Thankful for his frugal meal he diligently
mended his torn robes.

Though he led a Spartan life, he did not advocate self mortification, renunciation, sanyas or austerities. What is purpose would penance server if the mind remained impure.

He was always laughing, talking, walking or making fun.” Why should anyone fear, when I am near. Cast all your burdens on me... pleasure and sorrow are an attribute of one's residue Karma (Prarabdha). He believed that the soul was essentially perfect, that all bondage was super imposed. Why worry about the future, be in the present and the future will take care of itself.”

He preached no sermons, performed no rituals, read no books, yet he was well versed with Sufi, Muslim and Hindu scriptures. Even scholars referred to him for elucidating texts from the Holy Quran, Gita and the Upanishads. He said, “stay with me practice silence; I will do the rest.”

He could easily command the elements; he could stop rain and wind or vanquish fire. When the village grocer refused to give him oil for his earthen lamp he just poured water and lit it.

In 1911 when a plague epidemic broke out in Shirdi, he took upon himself the ailment and saved everyone. When a mother beseeched his help for her child who had contracted plague, he took upon himself the ailment and the child immediately recovered. Reassuring the mother he showed her the egg sized buboes that suddenly erupted on his legs, “I have taken the ailment of your child, you have nothing to fear.” Such was his compassion.

It was his nature to take up the karmic sufferings of his devotees and ease their load. Service to his devotees was regarded as service to God. He granting vision to the blind, speech to the dumb and hearing to the mute. One afternoon he astonished everyone by putting his hand in the fire. A devotee rushed and extinguished it. He revealed that a child sitting on its mother's lap had fallen into the fire and he had rescued it by

putting his hand in the fire. He even brought back life into a still born child. His blessings were frequently sought for issues to the childless. He lamented, "I give people what they want in the hope that they will begin to want what I want to give them."

He taught by example rather than by preaching. He adopted a different approach towards each devotee. He did not address large audiences and often spoke in parables. "Do not read books but keep God's love in your heart. When the heart and the head are in harmony that's enough."

Devotees were instructed to introspect," Who am I? When we see the self, the rest will be revealed."

He loved and cared for his devotees like a doting parent; encouraging and at times gently correcting them. "Sincerely keep to your resolves and promises." He was very strict on financial matters and devotees were not allowed to borrow money. He discouraged actions that bloated their ego.

He melted their ego not directly or aggressively but softly with love. He found it easier to overcome the pride of Wealth, but difficult to get rid of the pride of learning, wisdom and righteousness. A devotee had developed an ego assumed a superior air and the others would flock to him for pearls of wisdom. Sai Baba reprimanded, "When I am waiting here to give you the whole length of the shawl, what is this bad habit of stealing a shred of the cloth." Implying that when the ground is ready for sowing he would himself lead the devotee. A devotee seeking through a middle man achieves nothing.

He discouraged debates and discussions on metaphysical problems and considered them ego oriented and futile. Moreover they proved disruptive to one's state of inner harmony.

A devotee who had acquired some powers of extra sensory perception from a previous false guru was told to renounce

them. Any kind of sensationalism like visions, clairvoyance or tricks were considered an impediment to spiritual ascent.

“A devotee who insulted a visitor was reprimanded, 'Are you aware of the worth of one who ascends the steps of this mosque? Insulting him amounts to insulting me.'”

The poor and down trodden, old and sick were all welcome to his mosque. “Never send any one away. Nobody comes without a bond of indebtedness from some former birth. Someone who is shooed away would never set foot on your threshold again.”

Devotees were instructed to contribute to public cause. But if one was unable or unwilling to do so, then better to politely decline than to make fun. “Never lose your temper, show off your power or wealth.”

At an audience, a certain lady devotee could not bear proximity to a leper whose filthy clothes gave a stench. As the leper rose to leave the lady heaved a sigh of relief. Sai Baba observed the lady's aversion and sent for the leper. He opened the little bundle of dirty cloth brought by the leper and found some sweet offerings. He offered one to the lady who humbly ate it...

He was very sensitive to any affront on children and wanted everyone to take great care of them. He paid handsomely for trivial services. No service was accepted gratis. He had a strange way of not allowing devotees to leave Shirdi without permission. Withholding permission was his way of testing their faith. Invariably, the delay in departure worked out to the advantage of the devotee!

There were no diet restriction; vegetarian or non vegetarian. He pointed one should eat according to one's digestion.

A devotee had been pestering for a mantra. Sai baba

rebuked, “I am not an ear whispering guru. My guru was a great master full of kindness. He did not ask me for any material thing. He only demanded two things; trust and patience. He looked after me like a tortoise nourishes her young ones, by her mere sight. He never initiated me with a mantra, so how can I initiate you with one.”

His teachings were oral;

Though the mind be fickle it should not be allowed to become impetuous.

Though the senses are agitated the body should be restrained.

By constant meditation, introspection, kindness, prayer and love for God human failings are overcome.”

Baba passed away in 1918. A dispute arose between his Hindu and Muslim devotees over the burial of his body. Finally it was resolved to bury him in the neighbouring wada where both the wada and the mosque would be open to pilgrims of all faiths.

But do the pilgrims come to pay homage to his body or his spirit. Earth returns to earth. Whatever he got, he gave away. When he passed away only 16 rupees were all that remained of his worldly belongings. Thus another saint had come and gone, who had so much to give but there were so few takers. He lamented;

“I have grown weary of people's request for wealth, wife or child. No one wants the treasure I have. I will wait a while and one day silently steal away.”



CHAPTER TWELVE

SAINTS OF THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE

From the moment of birth, the child spontaneously seeks its mother. Indeed, human consciousness is etched with the memory of the Primordial Mother that gave birth to the human race. When king Yudhishtira was questioned, “Who is greater than the Earth?” He answered, “The Mother”. The Indian peninsula is a continent with diverse languages, cultures, religions, and tribes. But despite its diversities the people share a common bond; Bharat Mata - they identify their nation as Mother and Goddess. Bharat Mata is not an abstract notion but an embodiment archetypical entity. She is a continuum of the Primordial Mother who created this beautiful world to sustain her children. Whenever her children are imperiled she protects them in the folds of her saree, and empowers them with her shakti to defend themselves. Moreover, during the freedom struggle she engenders them with the divine quality of sacrifice, for without that it was not possible to liberate their Motherland from the clutches of the British.

In 1882 the great visionary Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya envisioned the Primordial Mother in Vande Matram - Hail to you Mother! It was the mantra of liberation and its vibrations spread to every corner of India and triggered national self-consciousness. As if by magic it electrified a national struggle, and thousands sacrificed their lives at the alter

of Bharat Mata. After a long drought, the parched earth received a downpour and burst into spring.

On his deathbed Bankim Chandra revealed to his daughter the inspiration behind Vande Matram, “It is the Mother herself whose image flashed before my vision on that memorable morning eighteen years ago when I was sitting before my desk, and getting myself ready to start the day's literary work. I dipped the pen in ink and scribbled almost in a state of trance on the paper. I knew not what I wrote; my fingers I thought were being moved by some divine power.”

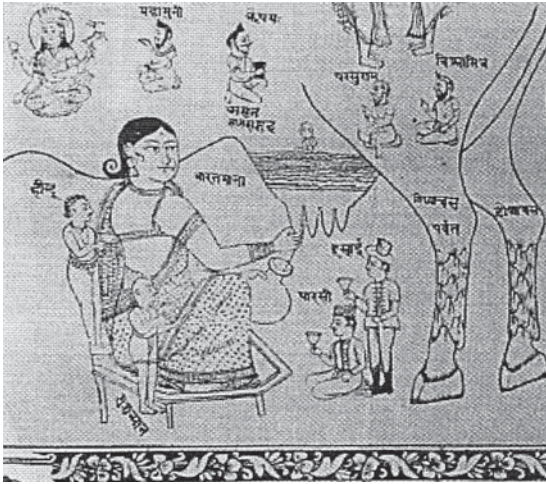
In 1896 Rabindranath Tagore set a melodious tune to Vande Matram at The All India National Congress, Kolkata. The collective unconscious revealed that the Motherland was more than just a stretch of earth or a mass of individuals – nay, she was the Primordial Mother herself in the form of Bharat Mata. Vande Mataram became the catalyst for awakening the nation. It made their spirit invincible before Pax Britannica. The British were quick to ban it. And because of the ban, the skies of Bengal rang with a redoubled force with the holy cry of open and courageous worship of the Mother rising out of the throbbing heart of the nation. The traditional religious worship of Mother Durga merged with the patriotic adoration of Bharat Mata, and the devotees vied with each other to sacrifice their lives for their Motherland.

In 1900 Bal Gangadhar Tilak foresaw, “The overburdened heart of the nation broke into a cry that rose to heaven and brought down its light to illumine its consciousness, to strengthen its resolve to do away with opposition and help rethroned the Mother in her own right and in her own glory. That this mantra contains the essential truth of Indian Nationalism, that it justified then its power in her awakening, and will yet play an immense part in a further awakening to her destiny should be no difficult matter for an Indian to understand.”



He portrayed the riches of India as the Goddess of wealth who was being dragged off by foreigners. He realized that without the purity of Shri Ganesha's love for his Mother, Bharat Mata could not pour her shakti in the freedom movement. Moreover, it could easily be hijacked by vested interests. Hence it was important to arouse the love of Shri Ganesha for his Mother. Shri Ganesha's love for his Mother translated to nationalism. Tilak revived Shri Ganesha festival as a popular and collective platform for nationalism. He pitted the coronation of Shivaji against the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria.

Bharat Mata was depicted as she was in her glorious past, as she was under the current oppression, and as she would be in her even more glorious future. As the Adi Shakti had first incarnated as a cow, artists depicted her as the sacred cow, threatened and endangered by a sword-wielding demon. The poster of the wish-fulfilling cow contained in her body all the Gods and Goddesses of India.



Bharat Mata draws milk from her and distributes it to her children impartially, whether they are Hindu, Muslim, Parsee or Christian by faith.

But as long as the concept of freedom remained a mental projection, it could not work. The reality of the collective unconscious and the incarnation of a divine personality as the mediator of the collective breakthrough had to incarnate. At this crucial juncture, when history was in making, Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi incarnated as Bharat Mata and engendered the love for the Motherland in her children. She awakened the collective Ganesha Tattwa. No one had to preach nationalism to the masses because it throbbed in their hearts.

With the love of Shri Ganesha for his Mother as a living force, nationalism took a life of its own. It came up with such a force that people forgot their, caste, colour, gender, race and religion. It was free of pretence, it was not copied or borrowed; it rose from the bones of the Motherland. Men of all faiths invoked Bharat Mata for their liberation. And she blessed them her shakti.

Gandhi ji recognized Shri Mataji and loved her very much. He used to call her 'Nepali' in reference to her half-Indian, half-Mongolian features. She nurtured his spirit with divine vibrations and revealed to him that “Shri Adi Shakti is also expressed in the Mother Earth in different places, different countries, and different cities as the manifestation of chakras. It was very important first to create a very Holy Mother Earth for human beings to be born on her. Inside the Mother Earth the kundalini came up in such a way that it cooled down the inner part of Mother Earth as much as it could, and then it manifested on the surface of the earth as different chakras. There is a tremendous similarity we have with Virata, the Mother Earth and human beings, so there has to be a great connection between them. This kundalini passed through different centres in Mother Earth and ultimately broke through Kailasha.”

She inspired him to compose a book of bhajans, 'Bhajanavali' to empower the heart chakra of the freedom fighters. But in the fight for freedom not a drop of blood should be shed. Gandhi ji resorted to his method of non-violence which later Nelson Mandela adopted in South Africa.

When independence came, it should have been a glorious day considering the people had fought long for it. While Nehru delivered his famous midnight speech, Gandhi ji was in Noakhali, Bengal, healing the people ripped apart by communal hatred. He returned to Delhi to subdue the communal frenzy by going on fast to make the hate blinded people see reason. When

an uneasy truce between him and the new political class was somehow reconciled, he was murdered by a disgruntled Hindu fanatic. Gandhi ji fell to the three bullets and with 'hey Ram' on his lips returned to the lap of Bharat Mata.

The nation was in a state of shock, but more shocking was the corruption that consumed the Motherland like cancer! It was necessary for a breakthrough in the collective awareness in order to cure the malady. Self-seeking had to be replaced by self-realization. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi revealed that true swatantra meant the freedom of the spirit; without knowing the swa- oneself, and the tantra – the mechanism of oneself, freedom would be jeopardized by corruption. Bharat Mata was the template of this inner mechanism, and she revealed how to know the self through the inner mechanism of oneself. 1970 on she began the task of awakening the inner self called the kundalini en masse. In the light of the kundalini it became possible to see the devastating effect of corruption on both the individual and collective chakras. More importantly she revealed the method to correct them through a process called Sahaja Yoga. Sahja Yoga deepened the love for the motherland and thus prevented one from doing anything against Her; “When you love your Mother, you will not do anything that will harm her.”

A corrupt person may do poojas, chant mantras, read namaz or go on pilgrimage, but the vibrations of Sahaja Yoga exposes him. Not long before, the new millennium brought to judgment mega scale cases of corruption. The worst time of Kali yuga was juxtaposed to sort out of good and evil, and to make way for India to lead the world for the collective evolutionary jump in consciousness – satya yuga; as foretold in Markandeya Purana; “Nowhere else is merit and sin acquired. This must be known to be the chief country, from where everything is rooted. And from it man gains heaven and final emancipation from existence or the human world or hell, or yet again the brute condition (canto LV.21)



THE MESSIAH OF MODERN TIMES

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE MESSIAH OF MODERN TIMES

The soothsayers of modern times predict a doom at the end of each decade. Fortunately, the advent of a new Messiah, Shri Mataji iNirmala Devi has brought a beacon of hope to our strife-torn world. She explains, “If there is a cloth which is blown off by the wind, even if you can hold it fast at one corner, you can hold the whole cloth and save it and after sometime, the storm subsides. This is what has to happen actually to the world when Sahaja Yogis will hold the cloth of the world with their wisdom and firm faith.”

She introduced an ingenious method of yoking the splintering clouds called Sahaja Yoga. Sahaja Yoga is the union of the inner self with the All Pervading Power of Divine Love of God Almighty. “You cannot know the meaning of your life until you are connected to the power that created you. You are not this body, you are not this mind, you are the spirit- this is the greatest Truth. You have to know your spirit, for without knowing your spirit you cannot know the Truth.” Sahaja Yoga integrates the message of all the realized Souls.

The advent of this great Messiah has been prophesized by ancient seers. Among all the ancient writers of astrological prediction, the greatest master is Brigu Rishi who lived more than 2000 years ago. His two great treatises BriguSamhita and Nadi Granth, written on leaves of lotus palm, describe

respectively the horoscope of man according to the combinations and permutations of stars at his birth, and the future world events of spiritual significance. At the present time when so many are seeking the New Age and so many self-certified teachers and ...masters are floating enterprises of all kinds to attract the seekers, it would help if we tallied the descriptions given in ancient prophecies against the modern reality. Whereby we would be able to recognize the incarnation described by our Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer, the Counsellor and Comforter, who will instruct in all things concerning sin and judgment. Many have predicted that this incarnation will be an expression of the feminine principle the Holy Spirit or Adi Shakti of the Indian tradition. The clearest of these incarnations is contained in Brigu's Nadi Granth, which was edited with Marathi commentary by another sage, Bujander about 300 years ago. According to the Nadi Granth, it is stated that in 1970 a new transformation in human consciousness will commence. The Sanskrit word is Manvanter. A new Era will dawn (Kali Yuga will end). Then man will rule with his supreme power (it means, with his spirit). After the death of a yogi in 1922 (Venkataswami) a great Maha Yogi will take birth. The Maha Yogi will be an incarnation of the Holy Ghost and will embody all the Divine powers of God. In previous ages, seekers of truth have to take to devotion (bhakti), knowledge (gyana), Patanjali Yoga etc. and disciplines in order to achieve the joy of salvation. In those days one had to undergo a severe type of penance in order to awaken the sleeping spiritual energy of Kundalini and to make it ascend through the different subtle chakras. But, according to the scriptures, by the grace of unprecedented method introduced by the Maha Yogi, the seekers will be able to see the rising of the Kundalini. There will be no need to give up the body by a living Samadhi. But, by the capacity of the new Yoga, there will neither the need to leave the body, nor to think of rebirth. The realized souls through this yoga will not have to

worry about food, clothing or shelter. Diseases and mental sickness will be completely destroyed and such people will not need the institutions of hospital anymore. They will have a power to develop a subtle body, and other powers...

These ancient writings are replete with proof of the advent of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi as the savior of modern times. Her person and her teachings are the fulfillment of these prophecies. She was born at the geographical centre of India in the hill station known as Chindwara, exactly at noon on the 21st March 1923, the day of spring equinox when day and night are equal. On May 5th 1970, Shri Mataji introduced the method of Sahaja Yoga by which realization is achieved effortlessly and without any penances or fasting by the seeker. The spirit manifests as the witness state and man conquers his appetite through detachment.

Thousands have seen the rising of the Kundalini and the pulsing in different chakras when Shri Mataji awakens the secret powers of the seven centres. C.J. Jung spoke of a collective unconscious common to all mankind which he himself had glimpsed through his own dreams and insight and those of his patients. He also knew and taught that this collective realm could only be attained by a maturing process of self-realization, casting off illusions and imaginings which hide the collective reality and hinder its realization into collective consciousness. With the advent of Sahaja Yoga his glimpse has become a widespread reality experienced by thousands of Sahaja Yogis all over the world.

It is true that as one establishes one's realization by giving it to others, so also material problems of income, food and shelter are all miraculously solved. This has been experienced by those practicing Sahaja Yoga.

This awareness balances, neutralizes and heals human problems and relates humanity to the Divine. Its is achieved

through Kundalini awakening and not by discussing, intellectualizing or philosophizing. It is a spontaneous, living happening which takes place without any effort on the part of the individual. All that is needed is a sincere desire for God.

The vibratory knowledge is absolute knowledge. Shri Mataji Herself never consults books, but radiates innate knowledge on every subject with astonishing insight and understanding. Sahaja Yoga is beyond rationality – it is like the sprouting of a seed into a big tree – you cannot explain it. It is the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies – the Revelation and Testament of modern times.

Throughout the modern world a sense is present that this is the eleventh hour of mankind's destiny. Prophets of doom and catastrophe are commonplace. No doubt this sense is also coming to us from the collective which is unconscious, as Jung has described it. May be there is some reality behind the feeling of crisis. But, when this collective becomes conscious through the happening of self-realization, one can perceive that the self-realization is itself the means by which the doom is to be averted. Through man's resurrection in Sahaja Yoga the spiritual dimension can blossom and bear fruit. This is the time when resurrection and judgment have been predicted. The Redeemer has come, and by Her Advent the Doom can become the Dawn of the New Age of Spirit.

And here I end my tale of Realized Saints.

The Saint and the Seeker both perish, the path remains.

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A REALISED SAINT COULD BE A POTTER, A
WEAVER, A GARDENER, A BUTCHER OR A KING.
FIVE THOUSAND YEARS AGO PRINCE ARJUNA
QUESTIONED LORD KRISHNA, "WHAT DOES A
REALISED SAINT LOOK LIKE? HOW DOES HE
WALK? HOW DO WE RECOGNISE HIM?" THE
SAME DILEMMA Baffles THE COMPLICATED
SEEKER IN MODERN TIMES WHO OFTEN FALLS
PREY TO DEVIOUS MASTER MINDS.

'REALISED SAINTS' GIVES US SOME POINTERS.



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