

SRI SARVESHWARI TIMES

NOVEMBER 1998

True renunciation is where there is
no attachment or envy, no heaven or hell
and no me and mine

AUGHAR VANI, Avadhuta's Wisdom



Aghoreshwar
Baba Bhagwan Ramji

The Life-Philosophy of a Seeker

Date and Time: February 18, 1982, 9:30 P.M.

Place: Courtyard of *Shri Sarveshwari Niwas Varanasi, India.*

Darshi! Unfamiliar with his Prana, (life force) losing the dignity of pride, this young ascetic Sambhav has become very hard. Can you say how?

A person's clothes, appearance and hard asceticism indicate his desire to be praised by society, his desire that society should call him good. I think we are 'devotees of God in the form of Prana (life force), and we are very close to Him'. To be recognized in this way is a matter of pride for human beings. By smearing ashes on his body, carrying a wooden staff, wearing a loincloth of jute, is the young ascetic really searching for his Prana in this way? Is he trying to look for God or to recognize his own soul? No, looking for praise, respect and recognition are his goal. This is false-knowledge. Praise, respect, and recognition make a place in your heart very easily but when they begin to leave, it really wrenches your heart out.

A person who has given up the desire for praise, respect and recognition does not need to wear ashes, burn himself (with hard ascetic practices) or expect recognition from society. He keeps himself free from the distinctions and limitations of class and lineage, as also of regionality, nationality and language. Human beings remain deprived of the Supreme God resident within this beautiful body because they are confined by these limits and are afraid of what the freedom from them might bring to them.

This beautiful body is not meant to look for someone else. A person who searches in this manner is looking for someone else, he has absolutely no knowledge or recognition of himself. You should understand only the element that bows to the Prana within you. Every cell of such a person's body resonates with the holy sound. His body radiates purity and

peace. Nothing arises or disappears in him.

Darshi! Tell Sambhav seeker if he wants to progress towards a pure, clean, dilemma-free consciousness, it is possible. But till the time he does not forego his thirst for praise, respect and recognition, the hopes of this virtue arising in him are remote. If he gives up wondering about what the various holy books and saints have said, he may get to know what is happening within himself! But if he does not give up his desire, frustration and dissatisfaction will continue to bother him, he will remain impure, he will remain deprived of purity and he will appear like a mixture of sin and virtue. This will not only keep him dissatisfied but will also cause others to be dissatisfied too. In that condition his cool breath can turn into hot breath, and that will burn not only him, but others too. If he blooms artificially, he will bear fruit unexpectedly, and he will be pruned down to size like a banana tree. As the end result of this, all his hopes will turn into despair.

Be afraid of the monster of ego.

INDIVIDUAL SOUL AND GOD

Kedar Singh was a dear disciple of Baba. Baba had actually asked Kedar Singh's mother to let him remain with him. Baba was very young at that time. And Kedar Singh was a married man. He had his family responsibilities, had to take care of his mother and his wife. Even then, his devotion towards this young saint was unshakable. Since he accompanied Baba from a very young age he had a Pandora's box of Baba-experiences to narrate. Here is one that sheds some light on the nature of a single soul in the world created by God.

It was the occasion of winter Navaratri in the year 1964 or 1965. Baba was observing this period of nine days on a boat anchored on the east bank of the holy river Ganges in front of Shujabad village across from the city of Banaras. Even though it was a sacred period for Baba, devotees were free to come and go as they wished. Baba would meet and talk with everyone but few realized his deepest meditative practices.

On that particular night Kedar Singh decided to sleep on the open, flat roof of his house since the air within his room felt heavy with dampness. He put his cot on the roof and lay down on it, looking at the clear sight of the milky-way in the sky. The sky was clear except for a small cloud that seemed to be floating on the Akash Ganga (sky-Ganges). A thought struck him like a bolt of lightning, "Baba's boat is anchored on the east coast of river Ganges and you are sleeping with your feet pointing in his direction!" He became restless. Pointing with his feet towards his guru amounted, in his mind, to being disrespectful to his guru.

He got up, turned his cot the other way and lay down to sleep, this time with his head pointing east. Once again his thoughts began to bother him, "You are sleeping with your head towards the east. What if your head bumps against your guru's head?" He got up and turned his cot around again. This time his head pointed south and his feet pointed north.

He lay down on his cot to rest, once again to be assailed by thoughts of the venerated saint "August Muni" who is said to have gone north with the promise to come back, but never did. He did not want to be disrespectful to him either. So he got up again, turned his cot around so that his head pointed north and his feet pointed south, and this time when he lay down he finally fell asleep.

Next day late in the afternoon he made his way across the river Ganges to see Baba on his boat a mile away. Baba was sitting with some of his devotees. Soon as he saw Kedar Singh his behavior changed. Others exited, leaving the two alone.

Kedar Singh bowed at the feet of his guru in silence, but with a heart full of absolute love. At that one moment he lost all his outer consciousness and became one with Baba's feet. At that moment there existed only the calm wind rising from the river Ganges that bridged the distance between the guru and the disciple. Kedar Singh was soaked to his core with the love that welled up within him. It was a very sweet meeting. Losing all his senses he sat there, quietly looking at his guru's face, wondering what Baba was going to say to him today.

The Sun had by now begun to set behind the western parts of the city of Banaras. The 'chhap-chhap' sound of the waves of the river Ganges lapping against the boat seemed to him to be singing a beautiful song. Even the birds have left the skies and have come down to lay in the water near them on the occasion of this meeting of the disciple with his guru, he thought.

At that time Baba asked him, "Say Kedar! In what form do you see your guru?"

Kedar Singh kept silent, pondering the question in his mind, wondering what form did he not see his guru in. So Baba asked him again, "Do you think of him as Lord Shankar (Shiva)?"

"Yes", Kedar Singh replied promptly.

Baba smiled then and asked him, "Where has Ganga Ji (Ganges) come from?"

"From the matted locks of Shankar Ji", Kedar Singh was quick in his reply once again.

This time Baba poked fun at him, "Say Kedar! The holy Ganga has come from the matted locks of Lord Shiva, our boat is on that holy river, and you are sitting on the boat on your ass!"

Kedar Singh sat there speechless. He did not know what to say. He felt a sense of shame at this revelation, so much so that he could not even lift his eyes to look at his guru. Silence reigned supreme. After a few minutes Baba himself broke the silence and asked him again, "All right, tell me this. Why were you turning your cot around last night?"

Kedar Singh was awestruck. How could Baba see him turning his cot around more than a mile away. In the dark of the night! He wondered in amazement if Baba had the sight of Jatayu (a mythological vulture known to have the ability to see very far). How could he see things so far away while sitting on his boat on the other bank across the river Ganges? But it was the truth. He sat there silently with his head bowed down.

Finally Baba explained to him, "Listen, silly! There is nothing either outside of, or inside of, God. It is neither far, nor near. Whatever exists, as it exists, is the flesh and blood of God. What I mean to say is this - whichever way may the fish turn in the river, it will remain within the water, both with its head and its tail!

The mystery of the cot being turned was now solved. Kedar Singh had no answer left in his speech. His devotion ebbed even higher than before towards his guru.

We are thankful to Mr Jishnu Shankar for providing both materials for this issue. The Editors.

Ashram News:

Baba's Maha Samadhi Week:

Nov 21 through Nov 28 Baba's Maha Samadhi week will be observed at the ashram with chanting 108 repetitions of Aghorana paro mantr in the evening and lighting of akhand jyoti (contineous burning lamp) for the whole week.

Sadhana Weekend

Sat Nov 21st and Sunday Nov 22nd

The observance of Baba's Maha Samadhi week begins with a two-day long intensive exploring the various aspects of Sadhana at the ashram. The purpose of this intensive is to share with you the ways to strengthen your sadhana by focusing on usual tools with more intensity and precision.

Both days are filled with scheduled hours from 6:30 am to 7:30 pm for practice of asana, pranayam, pranava, jap, meditation, silence, rest, seva, talks, sharings etc. Participants are encouraged to devote these two days fully to this intensive.

Topics will include:

- Where are you with your sadhana?
- What are your stumbling blocks?
- How do you know that you are moving ahead on your path?
- What simple steps can enhance your spiritual richness?
- Instruction on creating a sacred space (altar) in your home and doing puja.

An invitation for the intensive has already been sent to all prospective practitioners. If you have not received an invitation by mail for this intensive and would like to participate in it please contact the ashram and talk to John MacKay.

Fall & Winter Schedule of the ashram:

Morning Meditation: 6:30 AM to 7:30 AM

Evening Arati: 6:30 PM to 7:15 PM

Yoga Classes:

Mon and Wed. 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM

Tue, Thurs and Sat. 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM



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