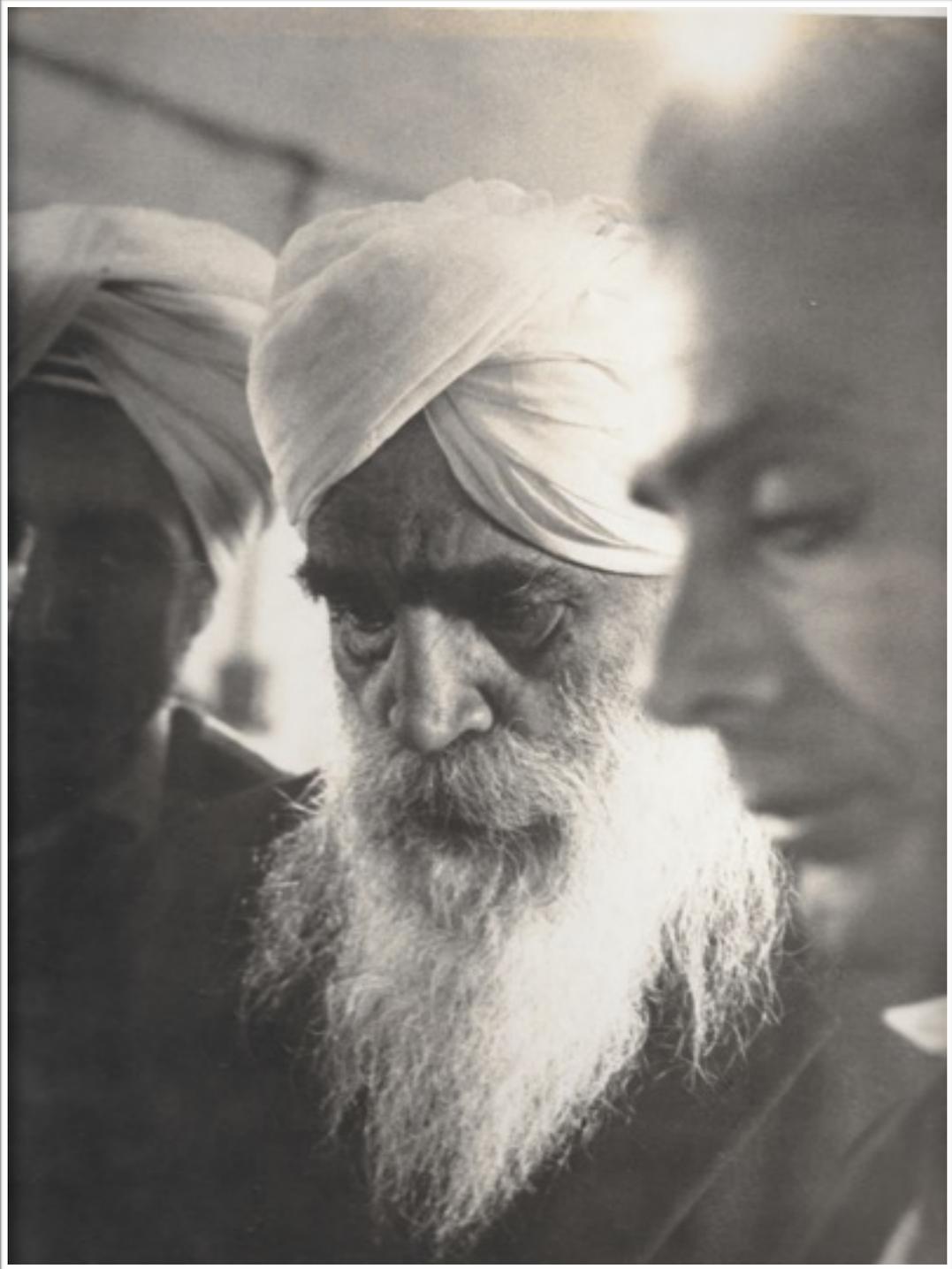


# THE GIFTS OF A SAINT

*Moments with Kirpal Singh:  
Stories of Love, Grace, Hope and Joy*

**Jon Engle**

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**Come unto to me, all ye that labor  
and are heavy laden, and I will give  
you rest.**

**Matthew 11:28**

**“I have spoken these things unto you  
that my joy may be in you and that  
your joy may be perfect.”**

**John 15:11**

**I will give you eternal life, and those to whom I  
have given, they will never perish and there is no  
power which can snatch (you) away from my  
hands.**

**John 10:28, paraphrased by Kirpal Singh**

# Introduction

**We should pray, “Oh God, save us by any excuse You can find.”**

**Kirpal Singh**

There is a story that Ramakrishna used to tell. It went something like this: Once there was a monk. He was a good person and many people trusted him for advice, which he gave freely and wisely. When he learned there was a prostitute not far from where he lived he told her of the bad karmas she incurred from her profession and that she should change her ways. She took his words to heart and tried to change but there was no other work she could do. She had to feed not only herself but her child also so she went back to being a prostitute and prayed for forgiveness. When the monk learned that she still carried on with her profession he again went to her and again warned her of the result of her deeds. When he left she prayed even harder for forgiveness but could not change. This went on for years –the monk becoming obsessed with the thought of saving her and the prostitute over and again praying for forgiveness. And so their lives continued till it happened that they both died on the same day. The prostitute had long since become forgotten and the monk had become highly respected. The prostitute was given a pauper’s burial. No one came to her funeral. No one cared. But the monk’s funeral service began with a long parade, led by dignitaries. People came from all quarters to praise him. However, from the within, Death dragged the monk down into hell. On his way, he looked up and saw the prostitute being led into heaven. “What kind of justice is this?” the monk demanded. “I led a good life and am being dragged into hell. And she, a sinner, goes to heaven. Explain this to me!” he demanded.

“To the worldly people you seemed so good and in the world you were celebrated with pomp and splendor,” Death explained. “And to the worldly people the prostitute was a forgotten sinner. No one noticed or cared about her dying. “But in your mind you thought so much of her sins and now you must pay for them. And she prayed so much for forgiveness so now she is forgiven.”

These are stories of someone -me- with many of the lesser qualities of both the monk and the prostitute and of the Great Forgiver, who first put the prayers of forgiveness in my heart and then forgave me, over and again.

Along the way, I have inserted stories that friends have told me.

These are the stories of being with a great saint, Kirpal Singh. So many memories flood my mind. So many sweet memories. Wherever we were with the Master, that was the most beautiful place on earth. Objectively speaking, Sawan Ashram was a dusty, noisy place where a loud train ran by, drowning out all other sounds and shaking the ground we stood on. A place where the river that flowed nearby was closer to a sewage flow than a river –but when the Master was there, everything glowed; everything had a magical quality to it. It was more than heaven on earth. When we toured with Master, the sweat poured off of us as we rode through long dust-filled roads; our throats were parched and the only drinks were Coca-Cola or sugary tea, which only made us thirstier. And then we’d step out of the car and there was the Master and even the dust, even our dried throats were blessed and beautiful. Or the places we stayed along the way –like the one where people upstairs walked across the room and huge centipedes fell out of the ceiling unto us –but we were with the Master and none of us would have traded where we were for anything else in this world. “Love beautifies everything.” Master often said this but there is no describing how very real those words are in his presence.

And then there was Manev Kendra; Dehra Dhun, the foothills of the Himalayas. Who can describe that beauty, watching Master walking so freely around the land? Talking, laughing, meeting with us so frequently ...until one day we couldn't meet him. Master was too sick to come out. For some reason, I woke up while everyone else slept. I walked out to the Mansover (a large pool of water on Manev Kendra) and sat to mediate throughout the night. I was no perfect meditator. If I had been I probably wouldn't have heard Master coughing and suffering. I wouldn't have looked up and saw the lights in his house go on and watched sevadars run across the room trying to somehow relieve His agony. And then after some time, watched the lights go off...only to go on again when His coughing and thrashing resumed, and then the same scene again and again, over and over, all night long. Since there was no schedule, when others went to breakfast, I went to sleep. I woke up later and then through the next night watched it all happen again and then the next and the next, on and on. Why was I "picked" to watch this? I'll never know. And I'll never know how much of that suffering was because of me. But I do know how much it hurt to see the deep agony Master suffered like that. Suffered for us. And remembering that scene, I pray to be better than I am.

So these are stories of Love and Forgiveness. And of the One who gave so much more of life, love and happiness than I ever imagined possible. These are the stories of Gifts of a Saint.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Oberoi told me the story of one his niece's marriages. I believe it's also in one of the books somewhere. Master, of course, was there with the bride but the groom was a close disciple of Sawan Singh's grandson (who claimed to be Sawan Singh's successor and that Kirpal Singh was false). When the grandson appeared with the groom the entire audience tensed –the entire audience except Kirpal. He walked up to the grandson and humbly paid him obeisance. The grandson jumped back and snapped, "Don't you think you're being a bit extreme?" But Kirpal quietly replied, "Not at all. You are the family of my Master and everything that I am is from Him."

I have always liked this story because it shows an inkling of the love Kirpal had for his Master, Baba Sawan Singh. It never bothered Kirpal how things looked to anyone else; he only cared about that love. I have also liked the metaphor that this story offers. Anyone who was close heard what Kirpal had to say and saw that what he did was out of love and humility. But anyone who was farther back might not have heard his words and could easily have mistaken what happened as a "clear sign" of his recognizing the grandson as the true successor of Sawan.

I'm telling these stories from the perspective of someone who, spiritually speaking, is standing far back. I'm telling things to the best of my ability but it's always possible that I have misrepresented the Master or misunderstood his message. If so, for that my deepest apologies.

I'm also telling these stories from the point of view of the Master's Grace and Love but implicit in them is our part, our responsibility. While admitting to a limited insight, I often think of this Path as 99.99% Grace and .01% our efforts. However, many of us have had times when our ".01" has seemed huge to us; perhaps there have even been moments when it felt insurmountable. Like most of us, I have sometimes come up

short, but would feel remiss if I didn't say this too: I believe our part is best encapsulated in Christ's words that Master so often quoted: *If you love me, keep my commandments*. And if we fail in one way or another, we have to get back up. Or as Kirpal acknowledged, *"(One) becomes a good rider after many a fall."*...and for those seemingly insurmountable moments, again, a quote from Kirpal: *"Courage is nothing but determination."*

Finally, while I would like to make this writing as readable as possible, my intentions are not creating a piece of "fine literature." I simply want to share moments of the love, the joy and the grace that our Master gave out so freely; of just how deeply human in every way Kirpal Singh was while at the same time being such a tremendous spiritual force. Keeping this in mind, I found it challenging to smoothly thread together certain stories without adding parts that detract from my intentions.

I like to think of this writing as a sort of a patch work quilt. Each little story was a separate inspiration for me to remember and write down; each little part held its own beauty for me. And each little part when joined to all the others created the quilt.

*Perhaps each one of you know that the tongue of love is dumb. The feelings of heart cannot be expressed in words. The power has not been given to the words to express the feelings of the heart. The only thing that I can tell you, as God loves me, through my Master, I have the same love for you. I wish you progress.*

**---Kirpal Singh**

# *Chapter One: The Beginning*

**Thou hast created my soul, O God, after Thee, and it is restless until it rests in Thee.**

**St. Augustine**

Like most of us, I had my plans and priorities in life. Which roads to take and which to avoid. Then there were the paths to fall back on if things didn't go as planned. And like so many of us, I often found myself catapulted into situations that were nowhere on my radar. Sometimes these were situations that were more despair and anguish than I would have wished for anyone. Sometimes I found myself pushed right to the edge wondering if I'd make it. And yet without fail, each one of these roads ultimately was a Gift. Though they were gifts I never would have accepted if given the choice they were Gifts that led to new dimensions of insights and beauty. They were Gifts of Grace. Yes, "These too are Thy Gifts, O Lord."

I had gone to a strict, somewhat old fashioned prep school. By the time I was in my senior year I had, in my own mind summarized what it preached as the goal of life: be rich and important. Somehow I inextricably linked to that this other thought: one day I will die and then all that will have been for nothing. I was often overwhelmed with this thought of death. I guess it was in a negative sort of way that I began my search for something deeper in life. After high school I went to a liberal, progressive college in Vermont. Everything was so different from what I had lived previously. I didn't know anyone and felt lonely, lost and homesick. I soon started taking long walks into the fields behind campus just to get away. One day feeling especially alone, I sat on a hill and felt the autumn wind blow in my face. And then in a moment I found myself absorbed; I had "disappeared" into a Oneness. When I "came back" there was a gentle and soothing rain and I was ensconced in a refreshing sense of peace and joy that I could never have described. I had this same experience a few days later. This led to a

passionate search for what this experience was about. I began to read everything on the subject of spirituality that I could get my hands on. I asked people questions. I looked everywhere I could think of.

I had been searching this spiritual question for some time when a friend asked me if I wanted to visit an ashram. (I had no clue what an ashram was but I was game.) When he mentioned that it was the spiritual center of the universe I knew I this would be something pretty hokey but maybe we'd have fun. Off we drove -6 or 7 of us crammed in my little meant-for-4 people, 2-cycle Saab. The music blasted; we were laughing and joking as I fishtailed the car around corners on those back-country roads at insanely crazy speeds. As a city boy, I didn't know there were still dirt roads in America and we spent hours lost. Finally we came around a corner and I hit the brakes. We all gasped a simultaneous "Wow!" as we came out of the woods and into a clearing with a beautiful mountain view. A little farther down the road the band on my tape deck sang out, "Holy mountain be restored..." just as we approached a sign that read "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." And there it was! Kirpal Ashram!

It was like walking into a different dimension. (The center of the universe?) Like someone let out from a cage, I was overwhelmed with a sense of freedom of the heart, of the soul. A kind of wild joy and peace. Immediately I felt a strong pull to this path... Then we went inside and learned more about the Path and I was at once repulsed by it. Too many rules. Too many things that didn't jive with all my ideas of "spirituality." I guess this was the beginning of a life-long battle between worldliness and spirituality. Between reality and theory. After talking to us about the Master, Nina Gitana, the ashram leader, played a tape recording of Kirpal. I couldn't understand a single word he said. Finally, one sentence rang out in crystal clarity: "I was born in a Sikh family." But I heard it as "I was born in a sick family" and I thought something to the effect of:

“Man, what a fanatic this guru must be. He thinks his own family is sick just because they don’t think like he does.” Then we were fed a small meal and finished up our visit. As we drove out of the ashram driveway, I was a man torn in three directions. First, I thought this was a fun day but it wasn’t for me. Everything about it contradicted all that I’d read, all that I was brought up to believe. I just wanted to leave. Another part of me was drawn *so* powerfully. Something in my heart, my soul, felt completely fulfilled, like this was the most real thing I’d ever come across. I never wanted to leave. Ever!

But it was the third part of me that spoke up first. “I’m starving. Let’s go get some hamburgers,” I blurted out as I drove my car back toward civilization. That little bit of rice and a few vegetables just didn’t cut it for me.”

“No, let’s be vegetarians,” someone said. I thought to myself that I’d go along with it as long as she did. It’s almost fifty years later and I’ve been a vegetarian ever since that day.

(A footnote to my vegetable struggles: A few days later back at college, as we sat down to breakfast, one of our ashram team sat down with muffins on her tray. “You can’t eat those,” I told her. “They have eggs in them.” She frowned and pushed them aside. A day or two later, it was pancake breakfast. I piled them high on my plate, gobbled with butter and a fountain of maple syrup. I had barely sat down when the “muffin person” came running over, intent on saving me from sin. “You can’t eat those pancakes,” she said. “They have eggs in them.” I scowled and probably had coffee and a cigarette for breakfast that day. She had the sweet taste of revenge. The vegetarian diet was a sealed deal after I returned home. The first dinner (Christmas dinner) we had my father offered me a nice cut of roast beef. It was a little tempting but, with some reluctance, I turned it down. “I’m a vegetarian now,” I told him. My grandmother looked at my

father as if I wasn't even there and said to my father, "Don't worry dear, he'll get over it." There was no going back after that!)

Anyway, back to more serious things, something drew me back over and again and very quickly I knew this is what I wanted. At least I knew that until I went to the Satsangs in Miami.

Miami Satsangs were upstairs in a bank (a far cry from the beauty of a wooded ashram). On my first experience there, I walked into a mostly empty room, found a seat in the middle of one of the rows of chairs and closed my eyes for the pre-Satsang meditation. At the words, "Leave off please," I opened my eyes to a middle-aged woman at the front of the room. She was wearing a mini-skirt, rattlesnake cowboy boots and a turban with a feather in the front. If the Vermont ashram was the "center of the universe" I dreaded the thought of where I was now! Unfortunately, the way she looked was calming compared to her talk. I started to leave but was trapped in the middle of the row. When Satsang finally ended, I just wanted to get out of there –and everyone else just wanted to hug me and tell me how "beeeautiful" it was. I'm not a particularly huggy person so as much as I didn't enjoy the Satsang, I disliked this finale even less. Finally, I made it to the stairs and someone my age approached me. Calmly and in a way I could relate to, he asked what I thought of the Satsang. "My life is crazy enough. I don't need this," I answered. He went on to tell me how he had the same reaction; how he had been struggling with drug addiction and how, as much as he was turned off by the whole thing, something pulled him back there the next week. And then again, until finally he found a peace and a strength to deal with his addiction. Something he couldn't find anywhere else. A peace that permeated the atmosphere in spite of the craziness. He suggested that I try coming back once more. I did and I found the same thing he did. I never saw him again, though. He had gone back home

after our first meeting but that he happened to be there stayed with me and played a vital part in my spiritual growth.

This particular group leader would read a few sentences from Kirpal Singh and then go off on her tangents. Don't ask me how...grace, I guess—but I learned to close my eyes and enjoy a peace while tuning out what seemed to me to be the craziness. But one Satsang, she told an interesting story of an incident that had recently happened:

*I remember when a couple and their young boy came to our beautiful Satsang. They drove all over the country seeking the Truth. And in the middle of our Satsang, their little boy came up front, picked up a picture of Master and stared at it for the longest time. Then he went back to his parents and whispered to them, "This is the path you should follow."*

Not too long after this that I got initiated by Great Master Kirpal Singh, and during the interim of that first Miami Satsang and my initiation, my heart softened toward that “mad” group leader.

It was the late 60's when I was introduced to the Path and this was a time when most group leaders gave out meditation instructions and group meditations were open to anyone. By the time I was initiated I was already meditating quite a bit, I had read all the literature and I had managed to become a bit of a fanatic. Furthermore, the different leaders in the areas where I lived were obsessed with their particular health diets. Since they didn't always agree —some were macrobiotic, some fruitarians, etc. — I became overwhelmed and confused regarding diet. (The vegetarian diet in itself involved a large change for most Americans in those days.) In short order, I went from a fit, athletic build to a mere skeleton. The one commonality all these diets had was NO SUGAR and NO CAFFEINE and sadly, I was led to believe that these diets were as important as meditation.

## *Chapter Two - My First Trip to India*

One year after initiation, I made my first trip to India. India was something different from anything I had ever experienced. Someone once described it as “A place where if it’s supposed to work, it won’t; if it can’t happen, it will.” The more time there, the more I realized how true this was, especially the latter part, especially in the presence of our Master.

I arrived in India exhausted, jet lagged and underfed. (The public understanding of the vegetarian diet was vastly different than it is now. If it wasn’t a steak, it had to be vegetarian, right?) Add to that, my misconstrued ideas about diet and there was very little I could eat during the twenty-four plus hours that I sat on planes and in airports.) Before leaving Delhi for Dehra Dun, where the Master was overseeing the construction of Manev Kendra, I had a day to rest and get some government paper work done. (I was young, naïve and my fearless group leader told me I didn’t need a visa. Wrong!) Even though Master wasn’t in Delhi, I looked forward to mediating in the silence and tranquility of Sawan Ashram. I had loved those New England wooded ashrams where all was silent and I looked forward to something of the same. Was I in for a shock! Right outside my window, people constantly yelled, bands played (I’m not kidding), hawkers shouted out about their goods and when the people finally went to sleep, the dogs barked, and barked and barked. There were times that I enjoyed the cacophony of all three at once but there was never a moment, literally, when one wasn’t making sure that there wouldn’t be silence. And of course, there was the train which periodically went by right outside the ashram, so close that the walls shook and if you happened to be talking, you had to wait for it to pass to finish. “Man learns swimming in water,” as the Master often said and it was clear that the disciple must learn to meditate in noise. It was a simple but important lesson for me to learn.

The day that I first met the Master, I was nervous –I’m not sure why, but I was actually scared to death as I waited for him to call me over. But still, there he was, larger than Life, beautiful and so human and yet more than human.

And the first thing he did was hand me the most sugary tea I had ever had in my life. (So much for this ‘no sugar, no caffeine’ stuff.) and then made sure I was comfortable. I spent the rest of that day at Manev

Kendra and in the evening went back to Master’s house in Rajpur where the other Westerners were staying.

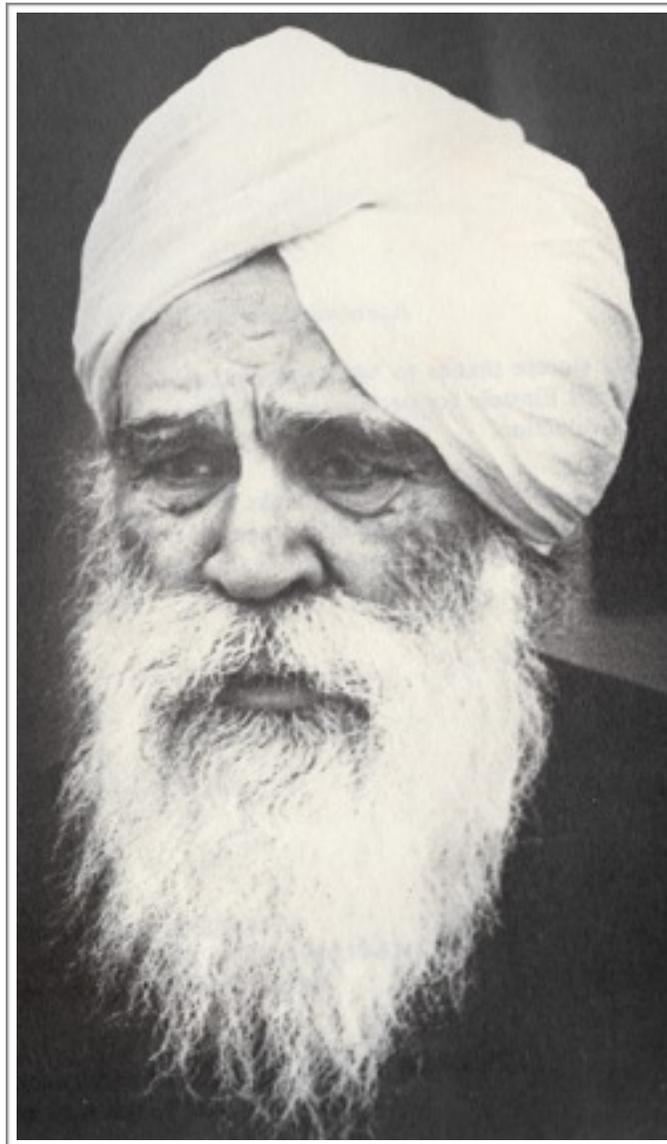
**Heard this one from Jerry: Master always stayed with a certain group leader when he came on tour to her area. She felt we weren’t allowed caffeine but she just couldn’t give up her coffee. It was her one guilty pleasure. When Master came to her house, she craved a cup of coffee but didn’t dare have any...until the Master said he had to take care of a few things and would be back in a couple of hours. Immediately she started brewing up that cup of coffee. For some reason the Master returned in minutes, not hours. “What’s that I smell? Is that coffee?” he asked her. Guilt was all over her face but before she could say a word he asked, “May I have a cup, please?”**

I stayed in a room with Tom, a good friend of mine from Miami, who filled me in on many of the details that I needed to know. He also told me about first arriving in India.

*I flew here with another man, Roger, and on the plane we met someone named Charlie, who was interested in the spiritual things. He wasn’t initiated and he hadn’t made any kind of communications with the Master. He may not have even planned to come to see him. At the very least, he figured he’d just show up. Practically the first thing Master said to us was, “Where’s the other man?” We were both a little puzzled. “What other man, Master? There’s just the two of us.” “No, the other man. The one on the plane,” Master persisted. “You mean Charlie?” Roger and I were both a bit taken aback since Charlie had made it clear he hadn’t told Master anything about his coming and he wasn’t initiated.*

*Anyway, we told Master that Charlie was taking care of a few things in Delhi and planned to find the Master in a few days.. Now the Master was satisfied.*

*Charlie did show up. When he first came he was gruff and fanatical, especially about food. He was only here a few days and he started lecturing the Master about health foods. Incredibly, Master listened patiently to everything he said. Then Charlie starts into how bad sugar is for you. He's listing off all the bad effects it has and finishes telling the Master, "...and besides all that, it rots your teeth." Master opens his mouth in a huge grin – showing that all his front upper teeth are missing- and says, "Oh, is that how I lost my teeth?"*



He appears a moon the like of which  
The sky has never seen,  
Not even in dreams  
And from the wine of Your Love, O Lord,  
My soul is swimming.

*--Maulana Rumi*

It's not so hard to describe my shortcomings. It's even possible to describe Master's sweet, kind words. Those words that pick you up the most when you most need them. Those beautiful words that inspire you to go on with this Path. But to describe the silent Love that is always there in His presence; the joy that fills your heart when He walks into the room with you; those are the things that are impossible to fully describe. But in all these stories, please remember that the love is always there.

While we were at Master's house in Rajpur, it was expected that we would meditate at least six hours every day. Then Master would meet with us mornings and evenings. My first few days there I was so nervous I could hardly talk to the Master. When he asked me a question all I could do was nod my head. Finally, I decided what I would say. When he asked how I was doing, I'd tell him, in Hindi no less, that I was "going strong." This 'great idea' went through my head all day long. I probably said it more to myself than Simran, even during my meditations. The next morning everything went as planned...up to a point. Master asked me how I was doing and I gave my very clever reply, only it came out in a tiny, squeaky, mouse-like voice –not very strong at all. Even to me it sounded pretty phony. In that flash of time was a great lesson. Friends scowled at me. I think they would have moved farther away if there had been enough room. People who told me never to take my eyes off the Master, even if bombs were dropping all around, turned around and gave me that look that said "My God, you are so stupid,

Jon!” (Apparently I dropped quite a bomb.) I dreaded looking up at the Master. I just knew he would have that “would-you-please-get-real” look on his face. But look up at him I did and lo and behold, there he was with the kindest, sweetest smile on his face, as if I were a little kid who just said the most adorable thing: a little kid whom he loved very much. Even in the little things with the Master, you take something to heart that’s deep and stays with you forever. In that one moment he told me that my friends might turn against me (which some did when things were tough); that trusts might be broken (which sometimes happened) but he would always be there with love and understanding. No matter how foolish or phony I was; no matter how low I fell. All I had to do was look up and He’d be there. That is something He has never gone back on.

\* \* \* \* \*

There were rarely more than ten to twelve Westerners there at a time and Master so patiently answered our questions and listened to our concerns and different ideas. One morning someone mentioned that they passed a shop with photographs of the Master, he replied, “Pity it is they can photograph the body but not the man inside.” But, nonetheless, “The physical presence of the Master cannot be underrated.”

Another morning someone asked Master to please give them love and spiritual blessings. “Money is already in your bank,” he replied. “You just have to go to the window to take it out.” Then he added, “Three blessings are necessary: God’s, Guru’s and your own. God’s you have received when you got the man (human) body. Guru’s you received when you were initiated. It is your own blessing that is missing.” Much work was happening at Manev Kendra at the time and someone asked if we could go there to do seva. “Look here,” he said. “They’re digging in the earth. You are digging in heaven. Go on digging in heaven.”

And then there was the morning when someone told the Master that he had trouble having faith in Him. Inwardly I gasped, expecting Master to be upset about a comment like that. Instead he answered so kindly, “That’s all right” and he continued with this talk about receptivity. “When (Christ) asked, ‘Do you know who I am?’ Some said, ‘You are the son of a carpenter, such and such...’ And Simon Peter said, ‘You are the living son of God.’ It is in the opening of awareness on the inner level. Some see He is God walking on earth in man-body, because they have developed that way. Others say, ‘no.’ Develop receptivity, that’s all. Hafiz says, “If you want to meet God...leave everything and go to the wilderness. But there was another imbued with the Lord who said, ‘Why do you run away? God is standing before you.’ He said ‘God is standing before you in the man-body.’”

**Suppose the dissolution comes up. You are under the care of Someone - He has to take care of you. Why are you afraid...You have no faith in your own Master. You have faith in the stones and that god will appear out of there and you have no faith in a man moving on earth? What more is wanted.**

**Kirpal Singh summer 1973**

Later someone asked why we were so fortunate to be with the Master. with near certainty, I anticipated His response: “*You are here because of rare, past noble karmas.*” Then Master spoke, “One man is bleeding to death; another has cut his thumb. Who does the doctor have to tend to first?” ...Not even close, Jon!

In those days there were all the rumors about prophecies including that parts of America would fall into the ocean. At that time there were two Representatives –Mr. Khanna on the east coast and Dona Kelley in California. Someone once asked Master about predictions of California falling into the ocean. Mrs. Khanna happened to be there at the time and Master looked at her and laughed, “Then Mr. Khanna can run the whole show.”

There were also evening meetings with the Master. Due to his busy schedule, there was no set time he'd meet with us but usually it was around 7:00 or 7:30. Even if it was much later, he would still take time to meet with us. Sometimes he returned from Manev Kendra 9:00 P.M. or even considerably later than that. Still, he would come to meet with us almost directly upon his getting back. With no thoughts for his own comforts, he would sit with us, laughing and answering our questions or silently, beautifully giving his darshan. Sometimes Tai Ji would come out and scold him, telling him to stop tending to us and get some rest but he would laugh and tell her how happy he was being with his children. Tai Ji had a tough job, one that I think few besides her could handle. Her job was to make sure Master was taken care of, but he constantly gave so much of himself to everyone at every level. Soon we all got into different cars and we went back to Delhi with the Master.

Shortly after we settled in, my friend Tom took me to meet Master's pathi, Pratap Singh, better know as Masterji (the music master). Masterji lived in a tiny apartment-like room where he spent much of his time in meditation. Tom asked him if he would sing a bhajan by Mira Bai, the famous Indian princess and saint. A rough translation follows:

High and low I have searched for You.

But You dwell in the gagan (heaven) and I am lost in this body below.

Without You, O Lord, Mira has gone mad.

Please come and meet me, I, Your servant, Mira prays, over and again.

When he finished singing, Masterji said, "From here (pointing to his forehead) sing. Direct talk to Maharaji....From here sing." Before he sang another song, an Indian gentleman entered the room and started telling one of the stories in *Tales of the Mystic*

*East.* I was becoming impatient with him; I had already heard that story two or three times. Then I looked up at Masterji and even though he was initiated by Sawan Singh so many years earlier, even though he must have heard this story *thousands* of times, he was laughing and laughing as if this was the first time he had heard it. Another small lesson in humility.

When you sat with the Master you know that he saw you for what you are –and somehow he still loved you. And somehow he had the patience to deal with you at whatever level you were at. Once when Master was speaking about disciples who had set themselves up as masters, he said, “Those who go to the highest, see what is what but they don’t lose the respect, mind you.” And then very quietly, he added, “You people lose the respect and you are the losers.” And it wasn’t just with people that he kept the love and respect. In the early 70’s there was a lot of upheaval in America and a lot of people complained about things there. Master knew what was right and wrong with America but he always told us to be thankful for the many opportunities and great things that America offered. When people complained about their parents, he told the story of a judge who sentenced an ungrateful youth to nine months of carrying a heavy weight around his stomach to sense what his mother had done for him even before he was born. “Bring them round by love,” was his constant message. And of course, people complained about their spouses, how in one way or another the spouse interfered with the spiritual practices. Again and again the message was, “Bring them round by love.”

We weren’t in Delhi long before Master took us all to a wedding. There were huge tents, bands playing and tables covered with delicious food. We were like little kids at a birthday party, all the while Master walking around amongst us, checking in to see how we were doing. We were all so happy. We were happy until he walked with the wedding

party into a small cottage and then all that happiness went away. My plate of food slipped out of my hands and tears filled my eyes. I couldn't take my eyes off of that cottage. How could Master just walk away like that?! There were two large Sikh gentlemen guarding the only door to the cottage Master was in but all that I could think of was getting in there. The Love pulled so strongly at my heart. Then I saw a window. I looked at the guards; I looked at the window. I looked back at the guards. I was sizing up if I could get past the guards and jump through the window before they could catch me. Suddenly, out of nowhere, an Indian gentleman came from behind me, grabbed me by the elbow and started scolding me, "What are you doing here?! This is not where you're supposed to be." He dragged me into the cottage and sat me down literally inches away from the Master. Master looked down at me with those deep, beautiful eyes that swallow you up into a swirl of love and then he smiled. The lost little boy was reunited with the Father.

**Steve's story:** As they were leaving one place, Master walked Steve over to the cars. The Master and Steve were talking about different things as they approached a car and the Master patted Steve on the back and suggested that Steve ride in "this one." Just as he settled in Mrs. Khanna came over and asked him to change cars with her. "My driver is playing such loud music. I can't stand it." He didn't see any problem so he gave her his seat and walked over to her car. Sometime later, they arrived where they were going and met with the Master. After a couple of minutes Master looked around the room, "Where's Mrs. Khanna?" he asked. When someone said her car must have broken down because she hadn't arrived yet, Master looked at Steve and said very sternly, "I told you to ride in that car." It was many hours later that she finally arrived. One year later Steve was back in India. As they were preparing to leave Delhi, Master walked Steve over to the cars. Once again as they approached one, Master suggested that Steve ride in "this one." This time Steve wouldn't have considered changing. The trip began fine and then in the middle of nowhere the car got a flat tire. "Ooops, no spare," Ram Sarup, the driver, said and after some time he was able to flag down a donkey cart. He threw the tire and himself onto the back and headed off for some place to fix the tire. Day had turned to night and still more hours passed before Ram Sarup returned with the repaired tire. This time it was Steve who came in six or seven hours behind everyone else.

A few days later, I said a tearful goodbye to the Master and came back to America.

*Love burns the lover, and devotion burns the beloved. He has to take care of everything for you when you are devoted. Love seeks happiness for the beloved, not for the self, mind that. We sometimes love in a business-like way. Love knows giving.*

*Devotion seeks blessings from the beloved. His kind look is all he wants. Nothing more. He is not showy. He sees the heart in you. That power which is working at that human pole is residing in you. He sees all hearts, also the heart within you. So love seeks to shoulder the burden of the beloved. He wants to shoulder whatever the beloved has taken up and help him with that. And what do we do? We show more and do little.*

*Devotion throws the burden on the beloved, mind that.*

*So devotion seeks blessings from the beloved, but love seeks to shoulder the burden of the beloved. And devotion throws the burden on the beloved. Love gives: love does not require the presence of the beloved, mind that, in order to love. One who loves, he loves--that's all. He is never alone: a lover is never alone, mind that. He may be in the wilderness: he keeps sweet love for the pure. He resides in him--the beloved resides in him. They are one, whether they are near or far. So devotion asks, and love is silent--and sublime, devoid of outward expression. Such is the ideal of love. This is what Master always referred to as love, love, love, and love. Love has great blessings. Devotion expresses itself in outward things, but devotion demands the presence of the beloved to express affection to the beloved. Then what is greater? Love--and surrender.*

*Kirpal Singh*

## **GRACE FOLLOWS ME BACK TO AMERICA**

It was about this time that my dad got very sick. To say he was a hard worker would be a gross understatement. And there he was, laid up in bed. Not being able to work made him depressed. Walking into the house felt like walking into a cloud of Death. It had reached the point where even his close friends who were doctors had given up on him so when he had the idea of going to the Mayo Clinic they thought he'd only be wasting his time and money. My father wasn't one to let someone else's ideas get in his way and of course he went. When he came back home he wasn't just healthy, he was like a different person, full of vitality and a positive attitude. My mom told me something about the stay there. "There was one doctor that I saw all the time," she said. "He looked just like the Master and he was almost always surrounded by children, laughing and happy. When he wasn't surrounded by children, he didn't seem to walk on the ground. It was like he floated to wherever he went. One day I was right behind him in a line so I snuck a peek at his clipboard. His name was Dr. Kirpal Singh."

At this time, I could not get the idea out of my mind that I should go to Washington, D.C. and for the next two years I lived at Mr. Khanna's house. This time period was like a spiritual seva boot camp. Mr. Khanna was of course Master's East coast representative and an initiate of Baba Sawan Singh. It was a time of hard work, of meeting many old-time initiates and of listening to many stories of our Master as well as stories of Baba Sawan Singh and Baba Jaimal Singh. It was an opportunity to not only have the privilege of doing considerable amounts of seva, but also a time of incredible "man making" for me.

Almost a year had passed at Mr. Khanna's house when I felt the strong pull to return to India and by the Grace of God, I soon found myself once again on my way to Sawan Ashram.

## *Chapter Three: Second Trip to India*

### **DECEMBER 1971 AND WINTER 1972**

I arrived in Sawan Ashram, settled into my room and after a short while went to meet the Master. There were only three other Westerners there when I arrived. The rest were staying at Manev Kendra in Dehra Dun. For the next day or two we met with the Master in the mornings and evenings and then we packed up for our ride to Manev Kendra. That morning I found out that I and another man were to be the passengers in the car that Master was riding in. What a blessed, happy trip. There was so much individual attention. By the time we drove into Manev Kendra I was filled up with the love and grace that the Master so generously gives out. I looked out of the car and throngs of people had gathered for his arrival. When he went into his room people crowded around me and I was greeted by comments like, “Wow! You are so lucky.” “Can I touch you?” In retrospect, it now seems so silly of me but I quickly traded in all that love, grace and happiness for a sense of self-importance. Master’s driver started handing me things to take to the Master. More self-importance. I walked into Master’s room and asked him where I should put these things. He looked up at me with a blank expression on his face, “Yes please? Who are you?” he asked. Ahh, Master. Thank you for all the love and grace that you give out and thank you for the many times you have so kindly put me back in my place. This was hardly the last time that he had to remind me that the Love doesn’t fit in the same place as a huge ego.

So here I was, back in the Master’s presence. You’d think I would know better by now but somehow it had gotten into my mind that spiritual people were austere, silent and humorless. Right before I left for India, Mr. Khanna had put together a piece of Baba Sawan Singh’s about how to behave when having the Master’s Darshan. Mostly it was about love and devotion but at one point it did mention something about not laughing

when having Darshan. Anyway, I was doing a good job playing this “not-laughing” part till finally Master looked at me and asked, “Why the long face? God is all joy, is He not?” He then went on to tell the story of two men who were in the hospital, in a hopeless condition. Then one of the men threw a pillow at the other man, who then threw the pillow back. This went on till both were laughing so hard and quickly found their conditions to be much better. Master then added, “You should laugh every day. It will turn your blood over.”

**Selections from the Discourses of Baba Sawan Singh: Remember the Satguru so much so that at every breath a pang of separation from Him troubles the heart. This condition will only come when you drive away all other thoughts. When you meet the Great Master, as a result of good fortune, then have Master’s Darshan as if you were a man tormented by acute hunger, or like an infant who yearns for the protective mother, the only source of nourishment; if anyone interferes between him and his mother, he cries painfully and falls into desperation-**

**Like this, one should get elated on seeing the Satguru, so much so that on having Darshan, the devotee should forget the consciousness of his body and have no thought or consideration of rain, sunshine, or shadow. Look minutely into the middle of Master’s two luminous eyes, riveting your attention. Silently, imbibe the utterances of the Satguru. Be so much absorbed that your attention doesn’t divert toward (any) person who might interrupt.**

**Do not laugh in the Satsang. Even if the Master laughs, you need not do it. If my Satguru (Great Master Baba Jaimal Singh) would come and give me Darshan even for a minute, I would gladly give away everything I have. When the Master gets up from the Satsang, having finished His discourse, consider yourselves as unfortunate that this most valuable time went out of your hands.**

**Selections of talk taken from July 1971 Sat Sandesh**

Princess Narendra

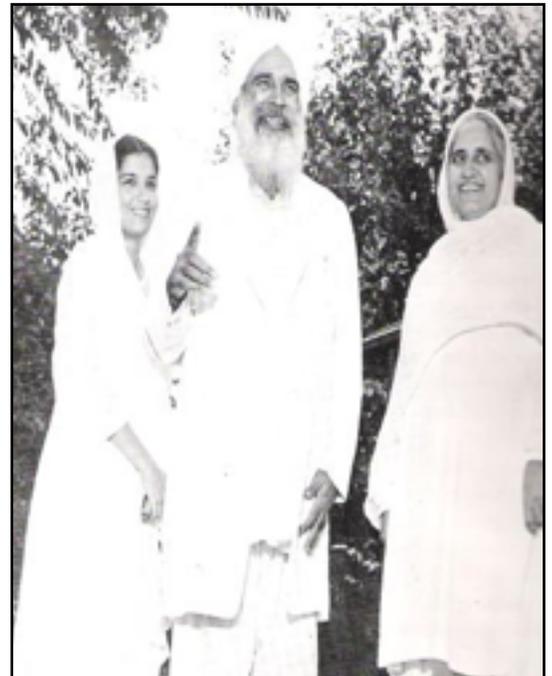
One person who laughed a lot was Princess Narendra, affectionately called Khuku. Her laughter was especially impressive since she had the duty of dealing with us Westerners. (When Sawan Ashram was in its early days, Master showed her his plans for Western quarters. She said Westerners would never like them. They would each want their own private room. Master was taken aback. He told her how when he went to Dera Baba Jaimal Singh he stayed in a room with several other men. They talked all through the night while he meditated all night.) She was the daughter of the Maharaj of Jind but she gave up her “princess-ness” to be a hard-working, devoted sevadar of the Master’s. I think she became much more than an Indian princess.

I had heard earlier that when she considered initiation from the Master she wanted him to prove himself to her. She thought to herself that she would get initiated if he came to a certain shop she was going to and spoke to her there. Sure enough, when she got there, the Master’s car drove up, he rolled down the window and greeted her and then drove off. She later learned that Master was in the middle of some important work when suddenly he jumped up and said to get his car ready. Something urgent had come up. He asked to be driven to that shop, greeted Khuku and then returned home.

One day she came into our dorm room and told us about her early days with the Master. After she was initiated, she lived in a town that had only one phone and every time she went to make a call to the Master, (she was laughing and laughing, telling this story) the whole town would rush to that shop to listen in. At one point, she had the experience of a loud inner voice telling her, “Kirpal Singh is false.” When she called the Master and asked him what she should do, he simply gave out the same instructions he always gave: “Ask it to come before you and repeat the Five Names. If it stays, you

may follow it.” The next time that voice came to her, she asked it to come in front of her and it went away, never to come back.

A recent copy of Sat Sandesh with a picture of the Master from the '55 tour on the cover had arrived. The picture shows a scene where Tai Ji and Khuku are standing beside the Master and he is laughing and pointing toward the sky. As the photographer went to take the picture, Master looked at him rather sternly. The photographer told Master to smile but Master instead became even more serious, “Why should I smile?” he asked. Photographer: “That’s just what we do in the West.” Master: “But why should I smile?” The photographer became a bit perplexed and then Master pointed at the sky and asked, with a huge smile on his face- “Should I smile at that?” at which point the photographer clicked his camera. Master had a very subtle but wonderful sense of humor.



Here are a couple other stories I had heard about her: Khuku’s husband was a very high ranking officer in the Indian Air Force who was killed when his plane crashed. One day in meditation she saw him in a hellish like place. She ran to the Master and asked him if this was true. He said he was afraid so. “Please, can you do something about it, Master?” she pleaded. Master thought for a minute and then said, “All right.” Sometime later when she was sitting in meditation a radiant figure appeared before her. He was so beautiful she couldn’t take her eyes off of him. It was her husband. Over and again, he bowed to her, saying, “Thank you, thank you, thank you.” And then he disappeared.

Another time she had gone to an astrologer who told her that she had sought liberation in her previous life and couldn't find it. Again in this life she would seek it but again she wouldn't find it. Of course she was upset by this and went to the Master. He told her not to worry. Astrology is true only for those who don't go beyond a certain stage in their spiritual development he told her. "But Master, I don't go that high," she said. "Don't worry. I do." He replied. So much love, so much grace, so much power—all in our Beloved Master.

### LOVE KNOWS NO LAW...

...how often did we see that with the Master and at so many different levels. Here are a few instances of that "lawless" love.

Once, someone pulled out a bag of sweets and asked Master to bless it as parshad. Master was very serious this day. "Whose parshad is it? Is it your parshad?" "No, Master," they replied, somewhat taken aback, "It's your parshad." Master then spoke of parshad, the gist of which is that parshad is parshad only that the Master gives of his own free will, without being asked. Shortly after the talk Khuku explained her understanding of the different levels of parshad, the highest, she said, was parshad that the Master eats some of himself. Just a few days later we were walking around Manev Kendra with the Master when someone took out a small bag of cashews and asked if the Master would bless them as parshad to pass out to us. I couldn't believe it! "*Don't you listen to anything?*" I thought. But the Master, with the sweetest and most innocent 'five-year-old' look on his face politely asked, "May I have some too, please?" (It was extremely rare for Master to take even the smallest thing from someone.) With that person's permission, Master took a tiny piece of cashew and handed out the rest to all of us.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Master, may I ask you a question,” someone asked.

“Surely. A hundred and one questions if you want.”

“Well, it’s not a spiritual question. It’s just...”

“That’s all right,” Master answered in that so kind, sweet voice.

The person then asked about life in outer space and the Master kept on answering his questions, at one point adding, “When you leave the body at will, you can go anywhere you want.”

Then someone else asked a question about life in other galaxies and Master looked at him sternly and said, “How does that affect you? Mind your own business.” He then went back to the first person and continued answering all his questions. (I later talked with the first questioner. He told me that extraterrestrial life was something that he was almost obsessed with but after Master answered his questions, he never thought much about it again.)

\* \* \* \* \*

At that time, we were almost all in our twenties; all a bit scruffy and dressed in Indian pajamas and were sitting with the Master in what was to become the Manev Kendra library. Master was talking with us when in walked a Western couple that could not have looked more out of place. The first thing that I noticed was a strong perfume smell and then I noticed how nervous they looked. The woman had coifed hair, lots of lip stick and painted finger nails. They both were dressed in fine, expensive clothes. As soon as they walked in, Master told us to move back and make room for them. He spoke to them for a moment and then proceeded to initiate them. After the first sitting, I don’t remember the specifics but I do remember that the women said that Master’s radiant form met her as soon as she closed her eyes and led her to a very high experience. The man explained that he had a terrible pain until Master put his hand on his forehead. Then he rode up on a great shaft of light and a radiant figure appeared –

but it wasn't the Master. He didn't know who it was. Master said something to one of the Indian sevadars who ran into Master's room and brought back a picture of Baba Sawan Singh. "Yes, yes! That's him!" the man explained. "As soon as I saw him he led me higher and higher." (Probably not his exact words, but something like that.) They sat for sound; Master spoke to them a bit more and then they left. I don't remember if Master told us the rest of story or if it was one of the sevadars but this is what we were told:

The couple were on a trip around the world with only a three-hour stopover in Delhi. (No plans at all to spend any time in India.) As the woman walked off the plane a voice told her to go to Dera Dun, find Kirpal Singh and get initiated. While this entailed a large change of plans, they made the trip to Manev Kendra (It was a day long trip.), met the Master, got initiated and then went back. I don't know if they are people who we all know or if they never had anything to do with the Sangat again. I do know that when Master wants to call someone to Him He has his own way of doing it and this was one small example of how his love works.

\* \* \* \* \*

We were all meditating several hours a day along with Satsang and Darshan talks and I felt my body saying it needed to move around more. When Master mentioned that some seva and exercise might be good I asked one of the sevadars if I could help out in any way. He gave me a shovel, some instructions and added that if I saw the Master walking around, I wasn't to gawk at him but just go on with my work. I was working hard when I looked up and saw the Master walking among some workers somewhere in the far distance. A strong pull in my heart sang out, "They are the luckiest people in the world because you are with them, Master. And I would be the luckiest person if you would look up at me for even just a moment." Then I remembered that I wasn't

supposed to be staring and I went back to work. I had hardly dug more than a shovel full when I felt a hand on my shoulder. I turned around and there was the Master. All your heart dances when the Master looks at you. There are no words to describe the happiness of those moments. “So you are working too?” he asked smiling at me. He said a few more things, patted me on the back and then went on about his work.

Dumbfounded with love, I watched him walk away and started back to work. I cannot think of a single time when my heart called out that the Master didn't respond. This is just a small inkling of the glory of Kirpal Singh.

Having noticed the attention I got, the next day many of the Westerners decided to do some seva and soon the Master came over and started talking to someone. He was looking at them with his back to me. I thought, “It's because of me that everyone is working here” and I started digging a small trench so I'd be in front of the Master. Just when I reached a spot where he would have noticed me, he stopped talking to the first person, walked over to someone opposite – again with his back toward me- and started talking to them. Again, I started shoveling to where I could be noticed and again the same thing happened. The whole thing happened a third time and finally, I got it! You can't fool the Master into giving you love. It just doesn't fit in the same place as pride.

And then there's LOVE AND HUMILITY

Master always stood out in a crowd but never seemed to want to. When people praised him, he gave all credit to his Master, Baba Sawan Singh. When someone criticized him he was always unruffled. Once one man told the Master that he was in town and heard someone saying all sorts of bad things about the Master and he wondered what he should have done. Master told him to always listen carefully to criticism. If there is some truth to it, then we can learn something. “If not, pray for them.” Another day, I was standing right behind the Master on his porch at Manev Kendra when someone

came running up to him with a newspaper in hand. “Look, look, Maharaji. Look at this great article!” he exclaimed. Master took the paper and I looked over his shoulder. There was a front page article praising the wonderful works happening at Manev Kendra and in the middle of the article was a great color picture of the Master at work there. The picture’s caption read something about “His Holiness Sant Kirpal Singh.” Master scanned the paper for a moment and then made his only comment: “Why ‘His Holiness?’” clearly unhappy with the title.

Similarly, Master had little concern for form and rituals. In India, it is the custom to touch the feet of a respected person – one’s parents, one’s guru, etc. When people tried to touch Master’s feet he would jump out of the way. He did not seem to like this custom one bit. Once when a Westerner tried to touch his feet, he looked at him with displeasure and said “Now you have got the same disease as they do.

\* \* \* \* \*

*So love, ultimately, after yearning, wants to be near him; to obey him: and then obedience will result in surrender. Obedience seeks the pleasure of the beloved. Why do you want to be obedient? You want to seek the pleasure of the beloved, whom you love. One who loves is a lover of the beloved, and one who obeys is the beloved of the beloved. If you love your Master, Master loves you. Those who are more obedient, who love him and never transcend any of his injunctions, become the most beloved of him. Ramakrishna was sometimes seen weeping for Swami Vivekananda, when he did not find him. It was by the grace of my Master that I used to go to him twice a week, sometimes weekly, the maximum number of times I could. Sometimes it happened that I could not go. And he would send someone to go and find out why I did not come. It also happened that he took the car and drove to Lahore, about forty miles, and he went and stood under my office and sent a man up to call me down. Do you see? If you love the Master, the Master loves you the most: you become the beloved of the beloved.*

--Kirpal Singh

## CHRISTMAS WITH THE MASTER

As Christmas approached, skirmishes were happening between Pakistan and India and we had to cover our windows and black everything out at night. Master recommended that people with responsibilities to their families should leave. For a few days there were only three or four Westerners there. Outside lights were forbidden. When a sevadar came around to find someone who could type, I jumped at the opportunity. They took me to Master's room and he handed me his Christmas message for that year and walked me over to the offices. On the way over I walked a step behind him and he gave me various instructions. He told me that if there were any mistakes I should correct them. I –in all my false humility- thought “I should correct *you*, Master?!” He stopped, turned around and gave me a look that clearly said, “Would you please get real” and then turned back around and continued walking. As it turned out, there was one grammatical error that I fixed –“to whosoever” to “whomsoever”- and I thought to myself that it was good that I was chosen to type this because of all the grammar I studied in high school. (The message appeared in Sat Sandesh magazine exactly as sent, except the one thing I had changed was changed back to Master's original wording. By some technicality that it took me years to figure out, my grammar was wrong and Master's was right.) It was pitch black when I started for Master's house to give him the typed message. I couldn't see more than a foot in front of me and somewhere half way between here and there I tripped on something and rolled down a hill. Fortunately, it was a soft fall and even though my glasses came off I found them right away and continued on my way to Master's house. When I got to Master's house, he dusted off the message and I explained that I had tripped on the way over. He chuckled. The next day, I looked at where I had fallen. It was a huge fall down a very steep hill! I couldn't believe that it seemed like nothing the night before. Well, only because of the Master could I believe it.

The next day was Christmas day. Someone had put a card with a picture of Maharaj Sawan Singh on it which said, "Happy Kirpalmas." Master looked at the card and spoke about being with his Master:

There's a vast difference between the physical Master in the physical body and the Master beyond. At the human level, at same level as you, you fly in the air, in all joy and ecstasy. Even though Master does not leave the initiate till the end of the world, but to be on the same plane both together is bliss filled. So happy you are, of course, we are in the physical body with your Master; we used to remember the days. Even now, when we remember those days, tears are shed, heart bursts. He is not away from us. I know He is with me yet with all that, physical presence cannot be underrated. That is why, I tell you, you are happy of course, I am not. It does not mean Master is not with me. He is with me. He is never away from me even for a moment but to be on the same plane together, that is blessedness. So enjoy the physical presence of the Master. It cannot be underrated... So you are blessed but make the best use of it...

May there never be a day when you forget your Master. To remain in constant remembrance of the Master is a great boon. In that case you don't fall away in lower pursuits. You see your Master sees you every moment of life, how can you do something wrong? So blessed you are. I wish you a merry Christmas...So we should celebrate Master's birth daily, at every moment of life. ...Don't forget him; do nothing more, you'll become what he is. But we are always thinking of the worldly things. Sweet remembrance of the Master is the sum total of all practices. We do that only so that He may not be forgotten in weal or woe. As you think, so you become.

Celebrate your Master's birthday daily. He is not the physical body. He is working through the physical body and those who see him at the same level are very fortunate. He is not son of man; he is God in man. Once he initiates he never leaves him till the end of the world. Your friend sent me a letter: "I am going with my family to such and such a place. Very many thanks for what you did for me." So I wrote to him, "You may go to any corner of the world. That power won't leave you." With all that happened, I still love him... This attitude of mind of the Masters cannot be appreciated by those who are groveling in the physical body.

So Happy Christmas to you every moment of life...

You people are more fortunate than me. I'm talking of the physical plane, don't misunderstand me.

When asked why he came for us, he replied:

I am sent. I'm under orders. I was not prepared to live even one moment after Him. I prayed to Him all through life. I was initiated in 1924 but I was with Him seven years before I met Him, on the inner planes. In 1927 I had a vision. I saw Master leaving earth, twenty-one years before He really left the physical body. I never had a moment of joy afterwards in His lifetime because I always had the sting, I tell you. I knew that was the very thorn that was awaiting me. So I always prayed, "Beloved Master, let me go before you." He said, "No, you are to continue." ...Orders cannot be questioned.

*Gurmat Sidhant* is a book written by me –through my hands, I would say, not by me, but by the God, Master within me. I used to write it down and take it to the Master to read it to him so that he may give the final yes. Once I wrote what happens to an initiate who is left behind after the Master leaves the physical plane. That is a very pathetic statement. There was one Master...who had an initiate who was not at the place when his Master left the body. When he came to

his tomb, he lay down on the tomb and repeated the couplet, “Oh Master, without You I could not live even for a moment. It is unbearable.” And he lay down on the tomb and he died. The second guru of the Sikhs, when his Master left the body, became a recluse, never to show his face to anybody. To live without the Master is very difficult, unbearable. We know when the Master leaves -He is never away from the initiate, but the initiate as a son of man has a great suffering. Even now when I remember my Master, I shed tears. But he left orders. Why? (why am I here for you?) There is no question why.

When I read out that part of the *Gurmat Sidhandt* to him he said, “That’s all right, Kirpal Singh. Read it again!” I had just quoted two or three sentences like that. Then again I read it to him. Again he said, “Will you read it again?” Again I read it. Perhaps, he was telling me, “You poor fellow have this same fate awaiting you.” He was perhaps telling me, “You poor fellow will have the same fate after me.”

...One poet says, “To live in paradise without the Master is a hell for me. And to live in hell with my Master is a paradise for me.” But these words can be appreciated only by those who are really devoted to the Master.

When asked if we could someday have “a feast of Satsangs all day long,” Master replied:

Pity it is, that feast is given every day by radiation, but you people don’t enjoy it. His very moving on earth is a regular feast. An actor acts in whatever way of life he is engaged. When he’s eating, he’s acting. (And whatever he does) the Master is radiating Love. Even if he is harsh (He never becomes harsh) but still that love is radiating.

...If you learn this message of the Christmas Day I think you’ll become Lords yourselves. You are Lords, you are micro-gods. Every father wants his children to progress more than himself. All children coming to him must become saints.

Later that day Master came to our quarters and served us lunch with his own hands. With all of his busy schedule, he always made time for more blessings.

**You would not like to leave the heaven at the feet of the Master and go to another heaven above. God resides in the company of a Saint.**

**Kirpal Singh**

I do not deal in copper or tin.  
Not even in silver or gold do I deal.  
I deal in diamonds only.  
Why would I go to a puddle  
When the entire ocean lies before me?  
--Mira Bai

Sometime a bit more than a hundred years ago, two men went into Texas with the idea that they could make a little money drilling for water there. By mistake, they hit oil. That “mistake” was the foundation for some of the world’s greatest fortunes.

I always thought of that as an analogy for my life. I was like a little boy digging in the sand for pretty shells, and by mistake I found a mine of diamonds...a mine in the form of Kirpal Singh. (or is it that He found me?!)

*The ship laden with poison (Maya) has been drifting on the limitless ocean;  
On no side can the shore be seen.  
There is no compass or pilot on our ship,  
And the ocean is wild and terrifying  
Baba (God), the world is trapped in a huge net.  
Wherever that True Naam is, that will take you across the ocean of life.  
-Guru Nanak, from "Sail on the Satguru's Ship"*

Or maybe you could describe my place in this world like this: someone who was drowning in the middle of a vast ocean. Shivering and frightened, a book of rules on how to survive in this ocean appears. Looking up how to stay warm, it says to thrash around in order to keep you healthy and warm. But before doing a thing you notice a warning: Do not thrash around in this ocean. It will attract sharks. And so you stay cold and shivering.

When the current starts to drag you, again you wonder what to do. Again you check the rule book. Do no fight the current, it warns. It will wear you down and cause your drowning. For a moment you relax, but then find another warning: Do not allow the current to drag you. If you do, it will pull you over rocks and reefs and you will be torn apart.

Whatever you do, however hard you try. it feels like you are fighting a losing battle.

And then out of nowhere, the Ship appears and you are taken aboard. You wash the stickiness of the salt water off; you are fed, dry and warm. And you are Safe. Now there is only one rule, a rule of Love: Do Not Fall Off The Ship.

And forever and ever you are grateful to the Captain.



## WINTER 1972, SAWAN ASHRAM, INDIA

A friend was getting sicker and sicker. He'd be freezing inside so we'd cover him with blankets. Since he was still shivering he asked if we'd take him out into the sunlight. We carried him out in his bed – his skin was a bright yellow color from hepatitis- but in moments the sun made him uncomfortably hot so we took him back inside. And then it was time to meet with the Master. We were there for just moments when Master interrupted our questions and said, "One man is missing. Where is he?" We explained that he was sick. The Master became very serious and said, "You people need to tell me these things. I'm responsible for him. Go and tell him that I will come to see him." Master did come to see him, spoke with him for some time and then said he would arrange for a doctor. He advised the sick man not to get out of bed. Master left and in no time the man was so much better; he was like a little kid running around the room, laughing and playing. When someone saw Master coming with a doctor, he jumped back in bed and acted as if he'd been there all along. Later he told me that when the Master looked at him, it felt like he was inside Master's body. When Master stroked his beard, it felt like the sick person was stroking it. "In his body, but sadly not in his mind," he explained.

Steve' story: Master was touring local Indian villages and invited only Steve among the Westerners. Shortly before leaving Steve had some sort of an eye injury and the doctor warned him to stay in bed - and certainly no traveling around- or he would be blind in that eye. Steve went to the Master and told him he wouldn't be able to go on tour with him because of his eye. The day before Master was scheduled to leave Khuku asked Steve if he was ready to go. He explained how he couldn't go because of his eye. Khuku couldn't believe what she just heard: "You care more about your eye than a rare opportunity to travel with the Master?!" and walked out of the room. (Admittedly, not very many of us have that kind of faith.) Shaken by her comment, Steve went to the Master and asked if it would be ok if he went after all and of course it was. The morning of traveling Steve woke up and couldn't believe it: his eye was 100% cured. When he went to see the Master, Master's eye was sore and swollen.

\* \* \* \* \*

As I said earlier, there were often important lessons to learn even in small outward moments with the Master. One morning we were sitting with the Master when he asked about someone who was outside. No one wanted to leave Master's presence to find out about him. Then one young woman offered and ran out to get him. Master started handing out scoops of halva parshad. We all felt lucky that we were there and Master was giving us this parshad. When that woman returned, Master called her over to get her parshad. She walked up to him and he stuffed a handful of halva into her mouth. Master started laughing and stuffed more and more halva into her mouth. We got a small spoonful; she got mouthfuls, hand-fed.

No doubt it's a great blessing to be in the Master's presence but it's an even greater blessing to do his bidding.

\* \* \* \* \*

One wonderful day passed into the next and soon we approached the day of Master's birthday. A large Bandara celebrating that day was upon us and people flocked to Manev Kendra from all over the world. Westerners were moved to different quarters. Unfortunately, it seemed that the more people that came the more rain fell. Tents were washed away in the torrential downpours and there was chaos everywhere –everywhere but in Master's direct presence. He forever seemed to be concerned about the smallest inconvenience to anyone while at the same time above the fray. And of course –God only knows how- he always found time to meet with us Westerners. One evening, as Master met with us someone's baby crawled up to his feet. Master bent over and picked it up unto his lap. For the next several minutes, he played with the baby laughing and talking to it. As the baby made its "baby talk" Master would imitate it and say, "I also used to speak your language." He looked at all of us, "I am thankful, Lord, that You have kept this secret from the worldly wise and given to the babes," He quoted.

"Children are very innocent, you know." Finally, Master turned the baby around and indicated for it to go back to its mother. The baby looked at his mother, looked at the Master, looked back at its mother and then turned around and jumped forward, giving the Master a huge hug. Master laughed and then called out to Tai Ji. She appeared moments later with a plate of cookies. He broke off a small piece of one and gave it to baby. He then teased it with another piece of cookie and held it toward his knee. As the baby crawled toward Master's knee, Master held the cookie a little farther away, till finally the baby crawled off His lap and over toward his mother, who now held the rest of the cookie. The analogy was apparent to all of us: We were once in the lap of the Father, but for a "cookie" we came back to this world.

A few days passed and on the eve of Master's birthday bhandara, Master asked that there not be the usual 4:00 A.M. celebration because of the weather. But that morning, the rain stopped, the sun came out and it was a beautiful, clear, crisp day. The sky was amazingly blue and the air was cool and wonderful. Word was buzzing around that Bibi Lajjo had come to pay her respects to Master. Bibi Lajjo was the woman who served Sawan Singh in the much the same way that Taiji served Master Kirpal. I was impressed that she would be at the Bhandara. "Wow! Bibi Lajjo is coming to pay her respects," I said to one sevadar. He gave me a sharp look and a grunt and walked away. I was perplexed. Then I saw Khuku. "Wow! Bibi Lajjo is coming to pay her respects," I said again. She gave me that same scolding look and said rather scornfully, "She of all people knew who the True Master is and still she went to the other one." I had never heard Khuku say an unkind word about anyone so now when someone mentioned Bibi Lajjo, I looked at them with contempt and in my "know-it-all" voice repeated Khuku's words, "She of all people..." Time passed and the big Satsang began. Somewhere in the midst of Master's talk on Bhandara Day, word went through the crowd that Bibi Lajjo was here. As she approached the dais, I felt certain of what would happen. She

would walk up to the Master and he would turn his back to her in displeasure. How wrong I was! Master patted the seat next to him and as she came onto the dais and tried to bow down to him, he stopped her. Instead, he covered her hands with his own and holding them to his forehead said with so much love, so much sweetness, "These are the hands that served my Master." This was our Master; he so loved all of us, regardless of who we were or what we had done. But if somehow someone ever did anything to serve his Master, Baba Sawan Singh, that love went to limits that we ordinary people may never understand.

Soon we went back to Delhi and all too shortly after that, I returned to America and to Mr. Khanna's house where we made preparations for Master's upcoming Western Tour.

**From Helen:**

"Before Master arrived in Washington, D.C. in 1955 Mr. Khanna gave us all strict instructions on how to greet him. 'Do not touch the Master. It is not okay even to shake hands with him,' he instructed. He showed us the Indian greeting of respectfully folding our hands as in prayer. 'This is the way you are to greet the Master. Remember, do not touch the Master. In India, that would be considered very disrespectful.'

"When Master's plane arrived, we had a band with bagpipes that began to play and as he came unto the stairs to deplane, someone rolled out a red carpet for him. He looked at the carpet, not at all happy with it and took a large step to the side so as not to even take one step on it. He then went over to the band and waved them away. At this point we wondered if he'd greet us with the same disapproval. But having disbanded the pomp and ceremony he walked over to where we all were and his mood changed to one of welcoming his children. We all stood there with our hands respectfully folded in Indian greeting but the Master with his big gracious smile, held out his hand for us to shake. He then started shaking hands with everyone."

"So what did you do, Helen?" I asked.

She looked at me as if what she did was the most obvious thing in the world: "Why," she drawled in her sweet Southern accent, "I jus' went up ta' him and gave him a great big ol' hug."

## Chapter Four: The Western Tour

“I may submit to you...that the subject of spirituality wholly hinges on the word ‘Master’ or ‘Guru.’ If you understand the word ‘Master’ or ‘Guru,’ you understand the whole theory of the teachings of the Masters.”

Kirpal Singh, Sant Bani Ashram, 1972

I was able to spend almost the entire third world tour with the Master but there are only a few stories that stand out.

First of all, before Master came to visit us he requested to go only to one or two places as his body was getting older and the constant traveling was getting more difficult for him. Little by little, however, the tour schedule filled up with His going to so many places that he rarely stayed in one place for more than two or three days. And yet no one could keep up with the Master. His schedule was tireless. Once, it's said, Sawan Singh had a young, healthy Pathan driver taking Him through various villages. After several days of touring, the Pathan went to Sawan Singh and begged him: “Please respected sir, do not forget me. I cannot keep up with you. You don't stop to eat or sleep. You go on and on serving the people and yet you never seem tired. You must be God because no ordinary person could do what you do daily.” And here was Kirpal nearing eighty years and no one could keep up with him and his schedule that went on for months.

Something interesting about the tour was how much each group tried to keep the Master just to themselves. When no one paid any attention to one stop's request that “this is only for local initiates” the leaders would get upset. And then those same people would ignore the requests made at every other stop. In New York, Master stayed and spoke in the Plaza Hotel, a very upscale place which did not appreciate a lot of young

hippy-like people sitting around the hotel eating sunflower seeds. When Master left the group leaders announced how unhappy they were with everyone's behavior, especially since they had asked that no one not from NY should even come. Then they went on, "Master is staying overnight at a certain house and absolutely NO ONE is to go there!" Well, a carload of young women did go there, driving through pouring rain to find the place. That group leader was furious and told them in no uncertain terms that they were not welcome and should leave

immediately. He was about to slam the door on them when the Master walked out. He saw what was happening, and now He was very upset:

"These are my daughters and you are turning them out in the rain! Bring them in and feed them," which of course he did, though maybe a bit begrudgingly. Most of us younger people who were doing much of the tour had a hard time with that particular person and we took pleasure in seeing him be chastised. The next evening Master gave a talk and I expected him to turn his back on that group leader. Instead, he laughed and joked with him about the incident. Thank God he loves and forgives us all.

**Judy's story: Master never took anything from his disciples. He lived strictly on his own earned money. When he came to America Reno Serrine handed him an envelope of money but Master refused it. Reno persisted and finally Master took it and put it in his pocket. As the tour progressed, Reno saw the Master handing out money to people in need, paying for people's meals, etc. and was pleased that he insisted that Master take the money. When the tour ended, Reno said his farewells to the Master, which Master kindly reciprocated and then patted him on the back. After the Master left, Reno put his hand into his coat pocket and there was that envelope, unopened without a cent of Reno's money being spent.**

Before Master came to Washington, I was living at Mr. Khanna's home and helping with tour arrangements. Most talks were scheduled at the American Legion Hall but there were certain evenings that we had to make other arrangements. I made several trips into Washington, D.C. and was finally able to find a place where Master was welcomed to speak. It was a church which had a very expensive organ and they

requested that no one should go into the area where the organ was. On the night that Master spoke, Mr. Khanna asked me to announce that people stay away from the organ. It was a small thing but I was very self-conscious about announcing it. Anyway, there was a microphone on the floor right below the stage from where Master would speak. I was so nervous about saying anything to the crowd that I hadn't thought about where I was sitting. When Master came out to speak I looked up and couldn't see him at all. The only thing I could see was the back of the podium he was speaking behind. I looked behind me and I had nowhere to move to; I was boxed in by the crowd. "I did all this work arranging this place and I don't even get to see the Master," I thought to myself. Then something made me look up. There was the Master standing on his tiptoes so he could look over the podium directly down at me. This had to be an awkward way for him to stand but it didn't happen just once; over and over again throughout the talk he would stretch himself over that podium to give me Darshan. Always, he showed so much awareness of every little thing in our hearts and he showed it with so much love.

**Steve's story: Steve had hired someone to fix some things in his bathroom. As soon as the worker came, Steve regretted it. The worker was a chain smoker with a furious temper who spent the next two days of work swearing, throwing things and fouling up the house with cigarette smoke. Steve was relieved when the job finally ended and the man came into the living room to get paid. But instead of going to where Steve held a check for him, he walked straight up to a picture of the Master and just stared at it. "I don't know what I'm going to do if this man starts insulting the Master," Steve thought. But the worker turned around with an entirely different look on his face; one of peace and calm as told his story: "My father was a fisherman in Cuba and when I was six I was lying down in his boat, looking up at the sky. Then He (the Master) appeared. He looked down and when he smiled at me I knew that He was God."**

From D.C., Master worked his way north. When he came to New Hampshire, my sister came over from Vermont to see Him. I had given her a picture which she really liked but somehow had lost. She looked everywhere for it but couldn't find it. After seeing the

Master she went back to Vermont. When she woke up the next morning, right beside her head on her pillow was that picture of Master.

And then there are those moments with the Master when time stops. Even if it's just a part of a second, you know that it's an eternity. Sometimes just a glance but you know it's just for you. This happened to a family friend who later told my mother. She said, "I don't think I want a guru but if I did I would want Jonny's because right in the middle of his talk he stopped everything. Then he smiled at me in a way that no one else ever could."

Whatever Master did, where ever he went there was always something so majestic about the him.

\* \* \* \* \*

My parents flew up to Virginia to meet the Master and we drove into Sharma's farm that day. My dad was a forward sort of person (an understatement) and my mom, though elegant in her own way, was very shy and quiet.

Immediately, my dad made arrangements for him to meet with the Master, leaving my mom on her own. When his time to meet Master came up, no one could find him. (Embarrassingly enough, he was introducing himself to everyone he saw. "I'm Dr. Engle, Jon Engle's father." Fortunately, almost no one knew who I was.) Meanwhile, Mom was standing around thinking that my dad "gets to meet everyone. He's met the pope, he always meets these dignitaries and I don't even get to meet with my own master. (She had been initiated about a year or two earlier.) Suddenly someone

**I'll give you an example: there is a long-run race going on. Everybody's running to reach the goal. What should we do? He should do his best to reach the goal. If possible, to be the first man to reach there, to get the first prize. When you are put on the Way -HEAR YOU ALL; OPEN YOUR EARS- Don't look to the right or left or those who are coming behind. Don't compare with those who are going ahead. Do your best to reach the goal. Kirpal Singh Kashmire 1973**

grabbed Mom. “What are you doing?! Master is waiting for you.” And my mom got shoved into the room with him. I think if she had it arranged to meet him, she would have been so nervous the whole meeting would have not been as great. So she sat down in front of him and after a few words, Master asked her about her meditations. “I haven’t been meditating much, Master,” she replied. Knowing the difficulties she’d been facing her whole life he looked at her so kindly and said, “That’s all right.” He then asked her about keeping the diary. Again she said she wasn’t keeping up with it. Again, so kindly he repeated, “That’s all right.” (I’d never know him, before or after that time, to respond in any way less than being very strict about meditation and diaries.) Just then Harcharan came in with the Master’s lunch. Mom got up to leave but Master told her to sit down and shoed Harcharan out. My mother protested, “But Master, it’s your lunch time. I should leave.” “No, no,” he replied. “I’ve come here just for you. Come and see me any time, even at midnight.” Later that morning Dad also met with Him and though not one to be easily impressed, especially with people representing spiritual ideas, he was forever moved by his meeting with the Master. (On his death bed, my father was frequently less than aware of what was going on but when I went to Florida to see him, he had asked that morning if I had come yet even though no one told him I was coming. When I walked into the room the nurse asked if he knew who I was. “Of course! That’s Jon with Kirpal Singh.” Shortly after, he spoke his last words; words no one had ever heard before from him: “I’m so happy. I’m so happy.”)

**Helen’s story: in 1955 Helen had taken Master into the city. As they walked past a window there was a picture of the Duke of Wellington. The Master stopped and stared at it for a moment. “He gave up his throne for a woman. I gave mine up for God.” As they walked a little farther, Helen started crying uncontrollably. “Don’t cry,” Master told her. “Tears are like brain water.” “But Master, I can’t help it,” she sobbed. “That’s all right then,” He replied.**

\* \* \* \* \*

During one question and answer session someone mentioned that he had to move to an area where there were no Satsangis. He knew Master had so often said that “wherever two or more are gathered in my Name, I am there” but he would be there by himself. How should he deal with this? Master said something to the effect of, “Don’t worry. You will be there and I will also be there. That makes two.”

Sometimes Master teaches us little lessons about life as daily activities unfold. Here is a particular case about passing judgement of others. I had come to like Reno Serrine (Master’s West coast representative at that time) as long as I was able to avoid his volcanic temper but for some reason I had a much lower opinion of his wife. Well, it so happened that one day fairly far along on the tour people were beginning to get worn down and something hadn’t been going right. I was in the room with Reno and a few other big wigs (as Mr. Khanna referred to them). Tensions were mounting when Mrs. Serrine walked in. She looked around for a moment, sized things up and then started saying the nastiest things to Reno. Everyone looked at her. We were shocked at her mean-spiritedness. My opinion of her sunk even lower. Reno Serrine shouted at her but she stood her ground and continued with her nasty digs. Finally, Reno yelled something more at her, stomped out the door and slammed it so hard that the room shook. We stood there in a stunned silence, looking at Mrs. Serrine in shocked disbelief. She took a deep breath and then she smiled: “I could tell Reno was about to explode and I thought it was better that he blowup at me than at any of you.” In one moment my opinion of her jumped from shrew to Supergirl; from petty to an utterly amazing woman. Don’t be so quick to judge, Jon. “There is something to learn from everyone.”

\* \* \* \* \*

*“It happened that a learned man went to a boatman to take him across the river. When he sat in the boat, he asked the boatman, “Have you learned anything intellectually?”*

*He said, “No.”*

*“Then your half life is doomed,” he said.*

*When the boat was passing through the river, there was torrent and the boat began to sink.*

*And the boatman asked the learned man, ‘Do you know about swimming?’*

*‘Yes, yes! I have read in books.’*

*‘But do you know swimming?’*

*He said, ‘No.’*

*‘Then your whole life is doomed.’*

*It is something like that, excuse me. We know so much intellectually, given in books. We have to leave the body...but with all that we do not know how to leave the body. (So spirituality) is purely a matter of self analysis, rising above body consciousness to know one self and know (the) Overself.*

*--Kirpal Singh, Zurich, 1973*

Before I had come to the Path, I had begun my search by reading several different books. By the time I was initiated, I had read all of the Master’s books at least once. I had only been initiated a few months and I found myself explaining a lot of things to initiates. As I finished explaining things to one person, I thought to myself —with no small lack of humility—this person has been initiated for years and I for only months and still, I have to explain things to her. Well, it so happened that one day during meditations with the Master I sat behind her and Master asked her about her meditations. She may not have been learned but she was a much more spiritual person than I was. Compared to her I was simply like the learned person who knew ‘so much given in books’ but did not know ‘swimming.’

After Master's last scheduled stop in South America we were warned that there was no program in Venezuela. Master was just resting for a day and then flying out. Five or six of us decided to go anyway. We'd take our chances, hoping we might get short times with the Master. We did. The first evening after arriving, Master was gracious enough to meet with us. One of our group met someone who was a disciple of another guru in India and she also joined us. Master asked her who her master was but when she told him he said he had never heard of him. He went on to speak of other things. The next day we met with the Master again and that same woman joined us. Again Master asked about her guru but when she said his name, Master seemed to know everything about him. He mentioned what village the guru lived in and several other things about him. Then he asked her if she ever saw her master inside. She described a vision she once had of her master sitting on a cloud. Master: "Next time you see him, ask him about me." She replied that she was going to India in a couple of months to see him but Master interrupted her. "No, no. Next time you see him *inside* ask him about me."

That afternoon, Master caught his flight, ending his North and South American tour.

\* \* \* \* \*

A story from “Mary”

“Mary’s” good friend’s husband had just left her for another woman. That was bad enough “Mary” thought but when he showed up to see the Master with his new girlfriend that was more than she could take. She started to walk across the room thinking she would tell him, in no uncertain terms, what a mistake he had made. Just as she started toward the husband and his new girlfriend, the Master walked into the room. She stopped, but Master walked right up to her; looked her in the eye and said, “Mind your own business,” and then continued up to the podium to begin his talk.

This is a story that has a second part.

“Mary’s” good friend spoke to the Master about her situation and Master’s concern was had she forgiven him. “Yes, Master, I have. And every night I pray that I forgive him,” she told him.

Master seemed happy to hear that.

Two days later the good friend was killed in a hit-and-run accident.

(Of course, Master would not condone what the husband did. He was, however, concerned that this woman’s heart be clear and free of enmity and rancor, especially since he could almost certainly see what her immediate future held.)

Whatever You give me, O Lord,  
That will be my happiness.  
Wherever You place me,  
There is my heaven.

Gurbani

## SOME DIFFERENT KINDS OF MEETINGS

Master met with many dignitaries. Here are three “meetings” which are a little out of the ordinary.

One day at Manev Kendra Master started talking about his meeting with the pope. During the '63 tour, The Baron von Bloomberg arranged several meetings for the Master. In Italy, Master asked him to arrange a meeting with the pope. The baron went to the Vatican and tried to set up the audience but he was told the pope would not meet with the Master. Master told the baron to go back and ask again. The Baron explained to the Master that if you're refused an audience, you don't go back and ask again but Master was insistent. Hesitantly, the baron returned but the audience was again refused. Master sent him back a third time and *very* reluctantly the baron returned to the Vatican. Finally, the Vatican gave in and said that Master could meet with the pope for 20 minutes, but not a moment more. Once he met with the pope, Master said “They wouldn't let me go. They kept me for...hours.” Master was even taken into the Vatican library, shown several rare books and asked to explain them. Master began telling us the meaning of these books and how they affected the writings in the Bible. He *began* to tell us but almost right away someone butted in and started asking questions. Master looked at the questioner sternly and said, “How does that affect you? The teachings are there (in the Bible).” And then He changed the subject.

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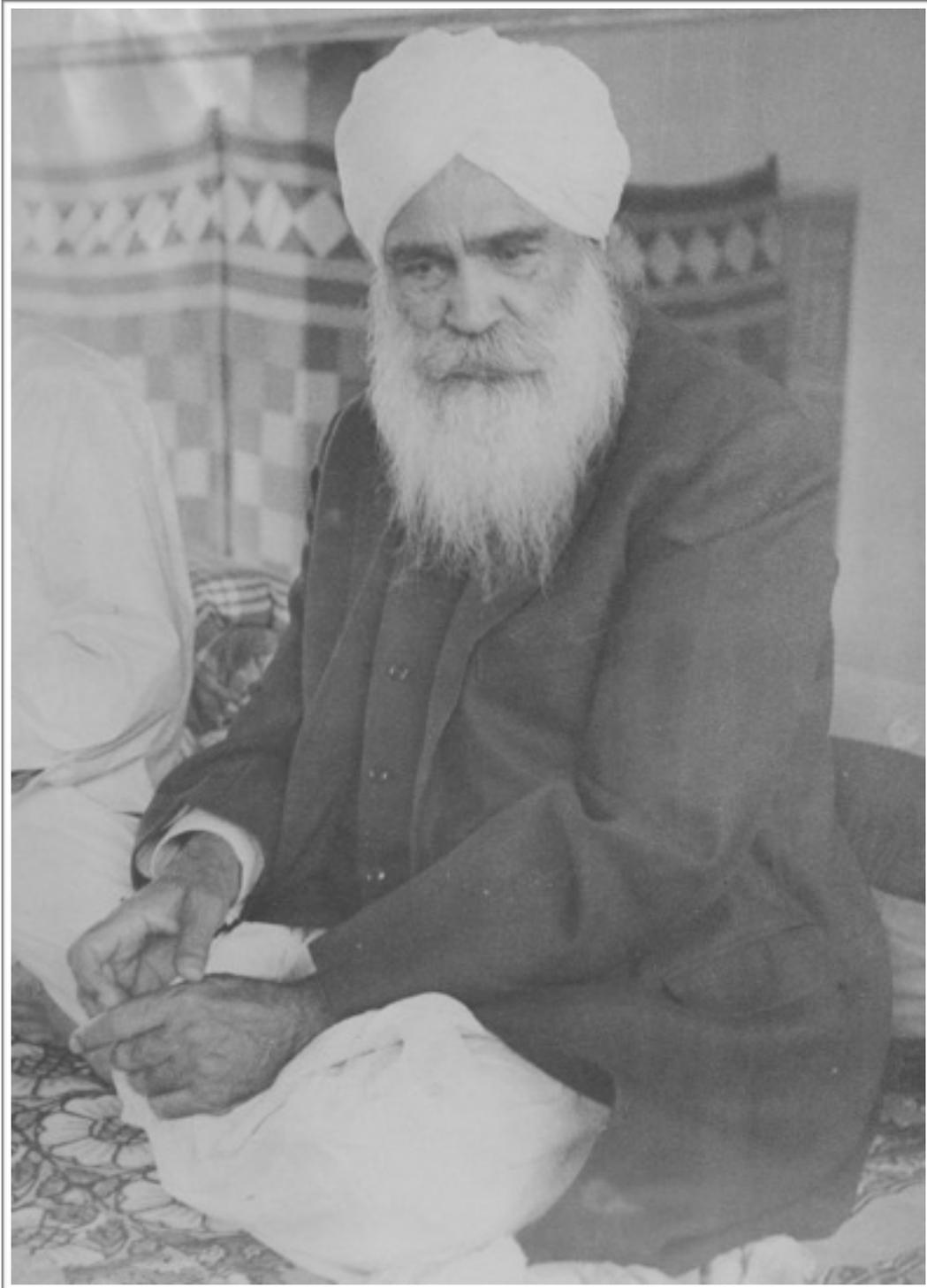
Helen McDaniel was an early initiate of the Master's and when I was living at Mr. Khanna's house I used to go to her place to help her and her husband out. (Turns out who helped who was questionable. She told me stories of the Master, fed me and encouraged me and I “helped out” around the house: When she and her husband went to visit her 90 year old mother in Alabama I weeded her spring garden for her, painted

the inside of their house and did other odd jobs around their house while they were gone. Those weeds I spent a day pulling up were her precious bulbs –daffodils, irises, etc.; I used the wrong kind of paint and it flaked all over her house for the next few months and as she returned from her trip, I moved my car out of her driveway and accidentally ran over her 75 year-old rose bush! So much for the help of an enthusiastic youth!) One day she started talking about President Kennedy. “Master was going to meet him after Dallas, you know. And then Kennedy was shot...I was watching the funeral service,” she continued, “and I couldn’t believe it –there was Master’s car with Master and Tai Ji sitting in it, right in the middle of Kennedy’s funeral procession (Master was physically on the other side of the country at this time.) I am sure of this. I wrote Master telling him about this. You can read the letter. It’s in that drawer.” I went over and got the letter. Of course it didn’t directly deal with her question about seeing Master in the funeral procession. It said, “You need not worry that I did not meet with your dear president. That power is not limited by time or space.” Then the letter went on to a different matter. Like many of us, Helen had her struggles and Master encouraged her not to give up as “courage is nothing but determination.”

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(and from Judy:) Another very interesting meeting that I was told about was during the ‘63 tour. Master had asked to see the sequoia forests in California. At a certain point in those woods, he told the driver to stop. He got out and for the longest time stared at one particular tree. The driver carefully picked out landmarks so he could later return to the same place and check out that tree. After staring at that one tree for some time, Master went back to the car and told the driver they could return now. When the driver asked what that was about, Master hesitated then spoke, “We were brothers in the long ago but he took to the silent way.” When the tour ended the driver went back to that spot but he couldn’t find the tree. He wondered if he was somehow mistaken about the

location of that particular tree and asked a nearby ranger. “It was the strangest thing,” the ranger replied, “That was a perfectly healthy tree and it suddenly died for no reason at all. No one could figure it out.”



## Chapter 5: Third Trip to India

**“Without saying, you knew my pain and sorrows.”**

**Guru Arjan**

In high school, I was the long-distance swimmer on the school’s swim team. I guess I got the job because on my first meet ever, the coach wanted someone to fill the lanes and I was the only one left over. Half way through the race I was already a lap behind the lead swimmer and I came up off my turn so crooked that I ended up in the wrong lane –now even farther behind. Everyone knew who would lose; it was simply a question of whether or not I’d even finish. At that point, I just gutted it out and much to everyone’s shock –my own included- I ended up winning the race. After that I became the team’s go-to long distance swimmer. Somehow, that’s how the story of my life seems to work. I’ve rarely done anything right without first doing it wrong; I’ve rarely done anything *well* without doing it wrong several times. And I’ve always been a slow starter but I always tend to finish.

1972, Manev Kendra. We were sitting with the Master and he began talking about Love: **“Love is an ocean without shores. You have to dive in never to return. This is not a path for cautious people.”** When he said this I knew he was talking to me. I had tried to reduce the Path to a list of rules. It is so much more than that. It is a Path of Love and Surrender.

Here it was, the summer of 1973 and I had just spent the last several months with the Master on tour. All that grace and attention and I was finding myself “in the wrong lane” once again. My “slow-starter” mode was again a reality that I had to deal. Daily I left a long trail of mistakes behind me. I was young, impetuous and in my heart I knew very little about spiritual disciplines –my efforts were sincere but in many ways I never got beyond my good efforts. I had lost faith in a lot of the people I looked up to; I found myself bombarded with negative thoughts and I was rapidly falling prey to a lot of negative thoughts. And then there were the local Satsangs: the group leader tended

to say less and less about the Path and more about what was wrong with certain people. I watched friends stop going to Satsang and leave the Path because of her. Soon I began to feel that a lot of the Satsang was aimed at me, in a negative way. I talked to a friend, telling him how Satsangs were making me feel. I waited for him to tell me that she just talked like that and didn't really mean anything bad. He tended to support her. I hoped he could put my negative feeling to rest. Instead, he looked at me and said, "Yeah, that happens to a lot of people." That didn't help. Still, I got up early to meditate; I enjoyed meditating, but the rest of the day was a struggle. The one thing that kept me going—though sometime barely—was remembering how real the Master is. When I thought of him, all I could remember was how beautiful and loving he always would be. How he never minded all my shortcomings; he only showed love and forgiveness. Never to this day will I understand why. Still, I was in dire straits. This was a difficult struggle that I didn't want to lose. I knew my one hope was to go to see the Master...once again.

In those days, there were no internet or FAX machines. Writing a letter to the Master in India could take months before one would get a reply. You had to telegram him if you wanted any sort of timely answer. To send a telegram, you would call the Western Union office and dictate to an operator what you wanted said. Right away I could tell that my operator was not on the Path. I began, "Beloved Master" and with an edge to his voice asked, "Beloved *who*!?"

"Beloved Master," I replied, "And make sure you capitalize 'Master.'" I continued, "Am desperate for your Darshan."

"You're desperate for *WHAT*!?" Now that edge oozed with cynicism and it was clear he couldn't wait to get off the phone so he could tell his fellow operators what a doozy he got. The conversation continued -mine overdoing the devotional part while the operator's cynicism increased exponentially till the last word of the telegram.

After a few days, I received Master's reply. I took it to my room, closed the door and started reading. And then my heart sunk. It read, "*It is hot here. Westerners are feeling it. Better you come some other time.*" Tears filled my eyes. How would I handle this? On the verge of despair I continued reading. "*Love.....You may come if you want to... Kirpal Singh.*" It took a moment to sink in, but yes! He did say I could come. The patient who was bleeding to death was returning to the doctor. I laughed and danced and it was only a breath later that my plane landed in Delhi and I was in my room in Sawan Ashram. But in that breath I knew this was a special concession. A special Grace. And the more I look back on that trip, the more I know the truth of it. But for now I was safely Home. In a few hours Master would return from Manev Kendra. And when he came, how happy I was! Everything else was forgotten.

After a day or two, I fell into the routine. Get up early to meditate, have a little breakfast and tea and then go and wait on the Porch for the Master.

"LOVE IS THE BRIDGE ON  
WHICH WE CROSS THE  
OCEAN OF LIFE."  
KIRPAL SINGH

Today, as always, Master asked each person how their meditations were going. Each person described his or her experiences and how much meditation was done the day before. Then He came to a quiet sort of person.

"You, please," He asked this man.

"Good, Master."

"'Good' Good means what? Do you see light?"

"Yes, Master."

"Bright light or ordinary light?"

"Bright light."

"Do you see more?"

It seemed that the Master wanted this person to tell what he saw and this person didn't want to say more than the Master wanted him to.

"Yes, Master."

"Well, what do you see, please?"

"I see Your Form."

"Does He talk to you?"

"Yes Master.

"What does He say?"

"He says, *'In the fire of love, you will not burn. Your desires will burn.'*"

Some days passed in the great happiness of Master's presence. "*There are no words to express love,*" Master would often tell us as we sat silently enwrapped in that Blanket of Love. Nothing comes close to the love we learned from Him. But no words can ever tell that story.

\* \* \* \* \*

Often Master was so jolly. Sometimes he had this look of total innocence, like a five-year old boy. But there were of course those days he was serious. One day he told three stories, one after the other. They went something like this:

When Lord Rama asked Hanuman who he was he said, "When I am in the body I am your servant. But when I rise above, I am one with you."

Father Abraham bought a slave. When he brought him home he asked him what he would wear. "I am bought. It is up to you." When he asked him where he would stay, again he said, "I am bought. It is up to you." "What will you eat?" Abraham asked. ". "I am bought. It is up to you." "Oh God," (Abraham replied) "he is a much better servant than I am." And he freed him.

And then Master told his own story: (I don't remember the exact words, but the gist was)

There was a time when I was kept from my Master. I waited outside to see Him. From morn till night I waited, hot sun overhead, burning ground underneath. All day, hot sun overhead, burning ground underneath. And then, at the end of the day Master came out and gave me his glance.

Then Master looked at us all very seriously. "Are you like that?" he asked. "Are you like Hanuman? Are you like Father Abraham?"

And as the days passed, Master, with increasing frequency, paraphrased Christ: "Those who love their families more than me are not worthy of me." How little most of us really understand the blessing we've been given.

\* \* \* \* \*

Being with the Master means being in that great happiness, but when there are lessons to be learned –and I had plenty to learn- it may mean, looking deeply into your heart. This part had become unbearable to me. I so much wanted to talk to the Master privately, to open my heart to Him, but I was afraid to say these things publicly. And then He usually told people who asked to see Him alone, "Whenever you go to a Master, you should go all alone. Don't take anyone along with you, not even your own body," implying that even in a crowd we should be all alone with him. What if He said that to me? I just wouldn't know how to deal with it. All this built up in my heart. I had such a pain there. As I took a shower that morning I couldn't get these thoughts out of my mind and tears filled my eyes. "What am I going to do, Master?" I thought to myself. Later I went to the porch and meditated, waiting for the Master to come to us.

When He came, I had forgotten everything from earlier. I was just happy to see Him. He asked about each person's well-being: "You, please. Are you alive?" He would chuckle.

"Yes, Master."

"Guru Nanak says, 'Only He is alive, Oh Nanak, who sees the Light of God,'" again Master would laugh. Master asked five or six people and then He stopped. "Where's Jon Engle today?" I was shocked. Up until that moment, Master had always referred to me as "You Please." He joked with me a bit and then He looked at me seriously.

"Come up and see Me some time." I remembered my prayer earlier that day. Master went on looking at me, very intently. Suddenly, everything else went away. It was like a tunnel connected us. Everything and everyone else disappeared. I was all alone with the Master. For a moment there was a struggle between my shortcomings and His Grace. But how can a mouse defeat a lion and the great power of love started pouring into my heart. I don't remember what I said, I just remember everything in my heart was open...and it felt so good. I do remember that He said these things wouldn't be if there were love and I told him that I didn't understand love. So sweetly He said, "That's all right, then." I think maybe it's all right only because He does understand love, so, so much! And once again he gave some taste of that wonderful love.

A few days passed. I had left my book in the Porch and later in the morning went back to get it. Since the guard at the gate let me in so readily, I assumed Master was upstairs. I went running in and then stopped. There He was sitting on His chair, talking with a family. As unobtrusively as I could, I walked around the edges of the room and went quietly into the side porch. I picked up my book, and feeling a little like a thief, stood in the doorway to the foyer He was in. I couldn't take my eyes off of Him. When he was done, he folded his hands to the family and got up to walk out. I knew He wouldn't even glance at me as He walked

away; I wasn't supposed to be there. He would just walk past me. I was certain of that. Then He got up and walked straight over to me and looked at me with those eyes that swallow your soul; that sooth your heart and feed it with joy. I was dumbfounded!

(What's new in that department?)

"What's this?" He asked, reaching for my copy of *Prayer*.

"Oh, it's just your book, *Prayer*, Master."

In the most innocent, childlike and sweet kind of way he asked, "May I see it, please?" For the longest time Master thumbed through the book, looking carefully at different sections. I couldn't for the life of me figure out why He was looking at His own book for so long. Finally, He closed it, thanked me and handed it back. I didn't give it anymore thought. My heart had just been uplifted again. I was very, very happy. Though I didn't make the connection till much later, for the rest of that trip, so many times when I struggled; so many times when I had a burning question, there was that book beckoning me to read it. I already had probably read *Prayer* 3 or 4 times (at least) but now each time I picked it up there was something new. Something that lifted my spirit. Over and again, I would read a passage and there was a whole new level of depth and power to it; old words would take on a new, deeper meaning. Other times, I would just cry aloud as I read, "That's incredible. That's just what I was wondering." But most of all, the words became like a food to my soul, a great power, a nectar, almost like being directly in from of Him, but how can I ever describe that?

\* \* \* \* \*

## **DIVINE LAUGHTER**

The joy, the happiness, the laughter that radiated from the Master was infectious. Master had a wonderful sense of laughter and to have heard Him laugh was a great happiness. Just to remember His laughter makes the heart dance!

Sometimes Master teased people in a fun, loving way like the time Tai Ji asked an American couple if everything was okay for them when they first arrived in Sawan Ashram. The couple replied that everything was so wonderful. They couldn't possibly ask for more. Master then turned to Tai Ji, whose English wasn't always so good, and "translated" for them, telling her that they said that everything was horrible -the food was terrible, the accommodations were uncomfortable and so on. Then he laughed and laughed.

**From Don: Master was being introduced by a representative before his talk. The representative was getting a bit wordy but everyone waited patiently until he said, "Now I'd like to take a short hymn of Kabir's," At that point, Master said, under his breath, "Oh my Lord!" -only his microphone was on and so what he said was heard by everyone.**

But more often there was something sweet and subtle about the Master's humor. "Innocent" might not seem like a fitting word for the one who knew so much more about us than we knew about ourselves; who traveled to spiritual heights that most of us can't even imagine, but I can't think of any other appropriate word. That same Master before whose awesome presence world dignitaries were humbled, whose love and power brought thugs and outlaws to tears; that same Master could show all the sweetness, charm and innocence of a small child. And when he laughed at these times we would be touched to the core -like something inside of us being bathed with some of that same sweetness and beauty. Here follow a few examples of his humor.

➤ It was August in Delhi and the weather was very hot. Every day the electricity would go off and each time it went out I could hear a chorus of children shouting and cheering, the sound moving like a long wave rolling down the street. Then the fans would stop and sweat poured down my body. That evening at Darshan the power went off as usual. For a moment it was silent. Then someone asked Master to tell us something about his childhood. "How will that help you? What if I was a naughty boy?" he asked. And then he laughed. "Well, my younger brother, once when the lights went out—he was three or four years old I think—said 'Shhh! Don't talk. The talk will be darkened.'" Then Master laughed in that quiet, wonderfully refreshing way.

➤ One day Khuku stood quietly on the side having His darshan. Her eyes were bulging out of her head and she seemed to have little connection with her body. Master looked at her and chuckled. "Yes please. Who are you?" (Of course he knew quite well who she was.) She seemed to struggle just to speak, "Khuku, Master."

"Where's the proof of that?" he asked.

"Passport, Master."

"That won't do," He told her, laughing as she struggled to reconnect with her body to try to answer him.

Thump, thump, thump. You could hear her hobble with her walking stick around the courtyard of the ashram. She was an older, hunched-over woman. One day We were told about her. She went to the Master saying she couldn't see any light . "Do you keep a diary?" Master asked. "No, but..." she started to reply but Master wouldn't accept excuses and sent her away. Soon she came back to the Master again saying she couldn't see light and again Master sent her away till she started

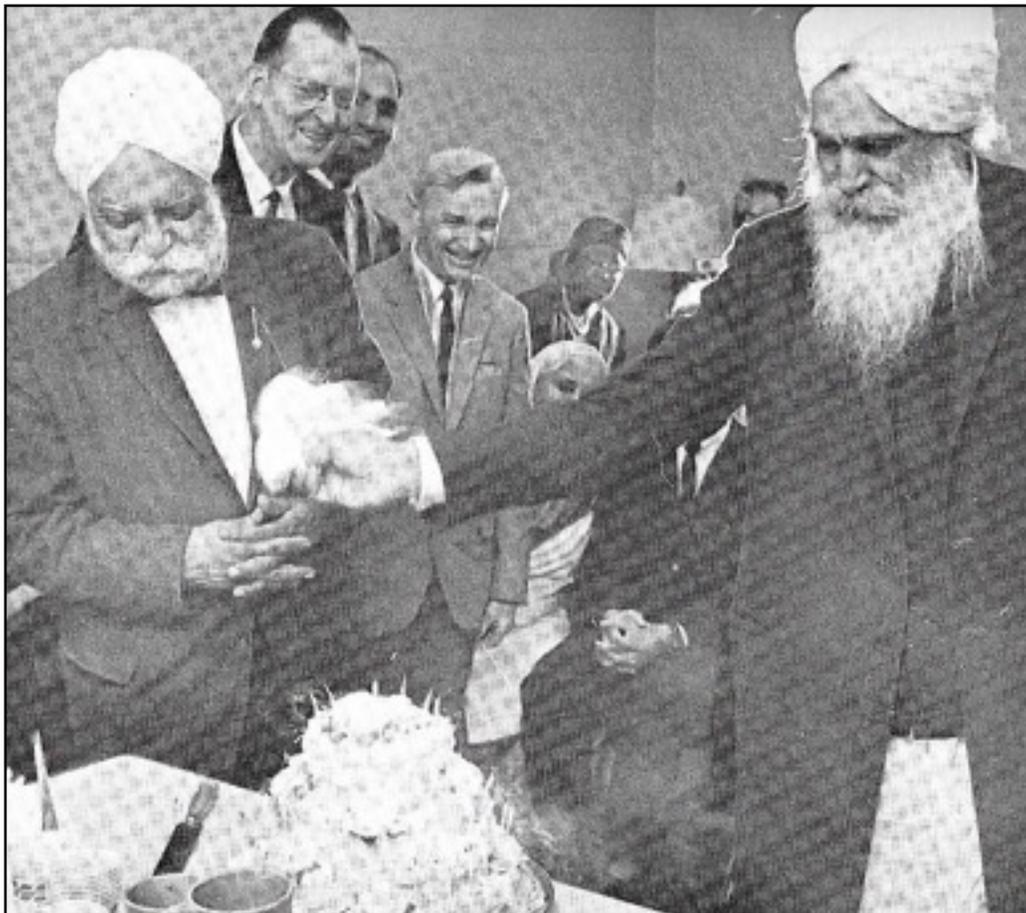
keeping her diary. A third time she came to the Master but this time before he could send her away she blurted out, "But Master, I'm illiterate. I don't know what to do with the diary." Master laughed and laughed and told her to do puja (Hindu prayer) on the diary. Soon she came back to the Master and told him that when she sat for meditation His Radiant Form appeared to her and led her into the higher spiritual planes. He asked what changed. "Maharaji, I put flowers and lit incense on my diary and did puja like you told me to do. After that the inner way opened to me."

- In the mornings, we would go to the Master's porch for darshan at about 7:00 and then we would meditate or read until He came. While there was no set time he usually came sometime between 7:30 and 9:30. Today when He came, it was later than usual. At about 10:30 or 11:00 the Master arrived. "I'm sorry I can't meet with you today. Something has come up." He started to walk out of the room and then turned around with an almost mischievous smile on His face. (Can Masters be impish? Innocently, sweetly impish that is.) For about two minutes He looked around the room, carefully, intently at each person. Then He laughed a little and walked away. I was so happy and light-headed. I felt like a drunken man; like bubbles were flowing up and down inside me. I don't think I could walk--I wasn't about to even try, but I didn't want to say anything. Then others started talking and moving. The room was thick with a frenzy of Love. From every part of the room this is what I heard:

"Wow!" and "Did I ever get zapped!"

"I can't even walk," one person said who tried to get up, wobbled and then went back down. A few people just giggled and the rest sat silently, absorbing a gift of great, great love and intoxication that the Master gave out with a laugh.

Another Helen story: In 1964 Master celebrated his birthday early while still in the US. Helen McDaniel, who would argue with the Master in ways I would never dream of, made the cake and put the candles on it. She then explained the tradition of how one makes a wish and blows them out. "There are 70 candles, Master. One for each year old you are." In India, one calculates one's age differently so Master countered, "I am 71." No, Master, you were born in 1894 so that makes you 70 years old." Master rarely argued small points like this but here he didn't budge. "I am 71." Helen argued some more and then in a bit of a huff she went into the kitchen and grabbed another candle and stuck it on the cake. Everyone sang 'Happy Birthday', told Master to make a wish and blow the candles out. To everyone's surprise Master whipped a handkerchief from his pocket and fanned it once in front of the cake. All the candles blew out. Helen took the cake to another table to remove the candles and slice it. To *her* surprise, all the candles were normal except the 71<sup>st</sup> candle. It had turned all black!



A prayer never goes in vain  
A cry from the heart is always heard and attended to  
But how and in what manner  
depends upon the Will of God.

--Kirpal Singh

Hoping to get the Master's attention, I thought up a question. It wasn't an important one. It was just to get attention. I had a very quiet voice then, like my mother's. I asked my question and Master squinted up his eyes, looked at a man standing next to him, and said, "What? What did he say?" The man repeated my question and Master answered it as if it were that man who had asked it. (Never once looking at me.) A few days later I had a question burning in my heart. I asked it in my barely-above a whisper voice. That same man was there and he started to repeat my question. "I hear him quite well," the Master said impatiently. Staring deeply into my eyes, he carefully answered my question.

Another evening, after spending quite a bit of time with us, Master stood up to leave. He folded his hands and said a few parting words. Just then something in my heart silently called out, "Please don't leave, Master!" Immediately, Master sat back down and sat with us longer.

**One love pouring glance  
from the Master will go  
to the very depths of  
your heart and you will  
remember it all through  
your life; you cannot  
forget it.**

**Kirpal Singh**

It seems to me that there are prayers that we pray and then there are prayers that shoot out of the heart so powerfully without any forethought, that it is more like we are “being prayed.” This latter kind seemed to happen a lot around the Master. Here is another small instance of one:

The crowds began coming to the ashram in preparation for Sawan Singh’s birth anniversary bandhara. It was much larger than the usual monthly Satsang. Estimates were at 5000. And there I was, a dot in a sea of humanity. A speck of dust in an Ocean of Love. Master spoke to the large gathering in Hindi and I sat there sometimes imbibing the Love; sometimes trying not to move around too much. Suddenly my eyes filled with tears as a thought something like this struck my heart: “Master, I forget You all the time but do you forget me?” Immediately Master looked up and in clear, beautiful English said, “The disciple may forget the Master but the Master never forgets the disciple.” And then without missing a beat, went back to speaking in Hindi.

I cannot think of a single time when a prayer like that shot silently out of my heart and the Master didn’t answer it specifically.

**Never for a moment think  
that the God in the Master forgets you.**

**Kirpal Singh**

*His devotees praise Him but never attain full knowledge of the Infinite  
Like streams tumbling into the ocean, they know not the depths therein.  
Even kings and emperors with heaps of wealth and vast dominion  
Compare not with an ant filled with the love of God.*

*Jap Ji of Guru Nanak. (Trans. Kirpal Singh)*

There were rumors that Master would soon be leaving to tour Kashmir; these rumors also sounded like Westerners wouldn't go. That morning as we sat with the Master a Western man came walking into the ashram wearing the long saffron robes of a Hindu yogi. Master just about did a double take. It turned out that he (the yogi guy) was initiated but decided to follow a yogi in Southern India instead. Now he changed his mind and came back to the Master. When he entered the room we were in with the Master, Master graciously welcomed him but said he would soon be leaving for Kashmir. The other Westerners would also be going but he should stay behind and catch up on his meditations. We were overjoyed to learn that we would be going—and were told to pack our bags as we'd be leaving early tomorrow morning.

There were only about 10 or 12 of us there and we were sitting in the room adjacent to where the Master was staying in at Manev Kendra. The closest person wasn't more than three feet away from the Master when he asked, "Would it be ok if we sat closer to the Master?" With a big smile on His face, Master replied, "Yes, it's always good to be near your Master." Everyone scooted forward but Master *jumped* out of his chair, backing away from us. "Have some respect, please," he said indignantly. The person who had asked looked very puzzled, "but you just said it was good to be near you." Now Master looked puzzled for a moment and finally comprehending said, "Oh that. Master is not the body, you know."

## ON THE ROAD WITH THE MASTER

It was summer and the temperatures were HOT! When we stopped, we'd be soaked with sweat. And while we drove, Ram Sarup, our driver, kept us entertained with his singing of Tulsi Das's *Ramayana*. We got occasional translations. "Everywhere that Rama went the Lord put the clouds over his head to protect him from the sun. Just like that Master puts the cloud over Ram Sarup to protect *him* from the sun."

Happily the Cloud of Grace was over all our heads. We'd stop every few hours and stepping out of the car we'd be enveloped in that grace. We simply swam in it. I guess it's the Master's way of telling us that He's watching us. Then we'd admire the landscape, drink whatever we could find (usually a choice between Coca Cola and tea. Both made us even more thirsty an hour later because of all the sugar in them.) and then jump under a pump and rinse off. (It was so hot and dry that even if we drenched ourselves, before we were back in the car we would be completely dry.) Our two "chaperones", Anita and Gunga Ram, would wait patiently only so long for their young Western charges to get back in the car. Finally, Gunga Ram would bark out some orders and we'd hurry back into the car, again sweating and trying to meditate as we drove off for whatever our destination was. Once we dallied so long that we should have missed a border crossing. (The border gate ordinarily closed at 7:00. We didn't get there till 7:30 or 8:00.) When we got there, there was the Master's car with His arm waving us on. He had waited at the border probably for over an hour and asked the border guards to please wait for His tardy disciples. How symbolic of our spiritual lives!

One day when we stopped for food Master joined us nearby. When we came out the Westerners were gathered together but I had been sick and hobbled out late. I was still off to the side when Master came over to them. He was kind and loving to them but I was standing there opposite to them, seeing only Master's back. "Oh Master, just look

my way for one second and I would be the happiest in all the world.” Sometimes when you’re with the Master the thoughts are so strong, they just well up inside of you and shoot straight from your heart. As soon as I thought this, Master turned around and walked over to me. He patted me on the back and started talking and giving Darshan. *Oh Master, what did I do to deserve this love? Thank You. A million times, Thank You, and still that would never be enough.*

A worldly person went to a renunciate and told him, “You are a great renouncer.” The renunciate replied, “You are the great renouncer. I have only given up the world for God. You have given up God for the world.”  
Kirpal Singh

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At Darshan a few nights later someone asked about watching the Master in his private moments. “Sometimes I can see you inside the house and I wonder if it’s all right to stare at you?” he asked. “There are those who are mad with love. They can’t help it,” Master replied, “but I always prayed for respectful love.” Master said more on the subject but repeated how he always prayed for respectful love. That made it clear what was expected. The next day we drove through a town called Mutton. (We all loved that name.) When Master stopped, everyone stood at a respectful distance and watched the Master. Everyone but me. I had already forgotten about “respectful love” I found myself looking down at him from the other side of the hill away from everyone else. Master and Taiji got out of the car to sign their names in a record book of important people who went through the town. Then they went back into the car. Suddenly Master looked at me and called me down to his car. I trotted down to his car and was swallowed up by those deep, loving eyes. “Guru Nanak once visited here,” he said. I tried to talk but my tongue was frozen. “I so wanted to say, ‘You are here today and that’s more than enough for me.’ But instead I just stood there looking stupid. (My usual response!) “Go sign your name in the book,” he said, startling me back to earthly reality. “I should sign my name in the book?” It didn’t make sense to me. I thought this

book was only for important people to sign. Sometimes when Master would say something he said it at one level but you soon knew as soon as he said it, he was talking about something at another level –a spiritual level. So when I asked if I should sign my name He looked at me and said, “Go sign your name in the Book. It will be there for all Eternity.” And I knew then he wanted me - and all his disciples- to put ourselves in the “Book of the Master” –our true home, for all eternity.

Master’s personal accommodations were a small room upstairs in a larger house. One morning when Master asked Steve why didn’t he ever come up and see him, Steve was surprised, thinking, “I just went up to see you yesterday.” But he answered him saying that he’d come up later that day. Up he went but Master looked at him blankly, “Yes please, what do you want?” Again surprised, Steve answered, “You said I should come up and see you.” No sooner had he said these words than it became clear to him that Master didn’t mean up in the house but “up” spiritually and see Him there.

We drove into the beautiful mountains of Kashmir and to the city of Sri Nagar, famous for its gondolas and scenery. Master repeatedly told us that we were with him for one reason only: meditation. But when we came to Kashmir he told us we were there for two reasons: enjoy nature and meditation. He often quoted Swami Ram Tirath: “Blessed are they who don’t read newspapers for they shall see nature; and seeing nature, they shall see God.” Here we stayed with disciples of Sawan Singh. They were the couple who Sawan Singh married in one of the few available movies of him. We would regularly meet with the Master in the mornings upstairs in a room; in the afternoons, outside, in the beautiful weather. Within minutes of Darshan, the wife would leave her body and fall over. Sometimes Master would make jokes about this but clearly there was much Love.

Our hosts were especially gracious, working hard not just with our accommodations, but preparing our meals. Along with a lunch and an evening snack, every morning before darshan, we were given tea and toast. This was at about 6 in the morning and we would go upstairs around 7:30 to meet the Master at 8:00 or 9:00. Master's driver would sometimes share stories with us at this time:

"One morning, Master woke me up at 2:00 in the morning and told me to drive Him to Rajasthan. TaiJi was slow in coming out, so He leaned on the horn until she got in the car. When we got to Rajasthan, Master gave His darshan to someone in full time meditation and then was back where He needed to be in time to give Satsang." He told the story that's in *Life, Love and Light* (page 401) about Parmeshwari, the woman who was so lost in meditation that she didn't come out for over a month. Master had someone kick in the door to her place so he could give her Darshan and see that her needs were attended to in the future. Then someone else told her stories. There were so many. One woman told how she had traveled with the Master into some remote area when the driver turned around and said they were almost out of gas. This was in the middle of nowhere. The closest gas station was several hours away. As if it were the most normal conversation that one could have, Master began praising the qualities of "petrol" and the car drove on, long after it should have run out of gas. Master didn't stop praising petrol until they safely reached a gas station.

Back to our wonderful hosts and morning tea. One morning nothing in their kitchen was working. Those who weren't especially early would have to wait. I was among the latter. I waited and I waited. I smiled and tried to be humble. I waited more. I forgot their hard work and graciousness and thought of my toast and tea. Finally, it approached 7:30. Master might be upstairs in a half hour or so and I thought I'd better meditate before he arrived. I left, thinking of my sacrificed toast. Grumbling to myself, I tread up the stairs and looked for a place to sit and then looked up. There in the front of the room sat the Master! He never came this early, but there He was! Sitting majestically, silently and so much 'the Master.' All those thoughts of toast vanished from my mind. I sat down. Master was looking very stern, but He didn't say anything. Then after a moment He said, "All right now, tea and toast are ready for those who

didn't have any." Usually He offered food with laughter and enjoyment. Now He was very serious, very stern. "Do we have to?" someone asked.

"No, only those who *wanted* toast and tea should get it."

I knew all too well who that referred to. Ahh. My pettiness! Slowly, repentantly, I trudged downstairs. And then, forsaking Nectar, I drank tea.

From Sri Nagar we went to Phalgam, a lovely rural setting deeper in the mountains of Kashmir. Over and again Master spoke of the beauty of Nature. There was a German woman in our group and her English was very weak –in fact she often asked the Master to allow her some time to study English so she could better understand what he said. He would never let her; he repeatedly told her how pleased he was with the progress she was making in her meditation and she shouldn't use the time for anything else. When someone else asked about learning Hindi, Master told him, "It is very good to learn the language of your Master. You may spend an hour a day but not more. You are here for meditation." She of course took this as an opportunity to ask again if she could study English. Master gave a look like he felt trapped and finally said, "All right, ten minutes a day. Not more." Soon after we arrived in Phalgam she told Master how she went for a walk late the previous night and how beautiful it was. Master expressed concern, telling her it wasn't safe to be out at night here. "They are not all saints here," he admonished. Due to her poor English, she thought he was upset with her and the next Darshan session she stayed in her room. After a few minutes, Master asked, "Where is the German woman?". When someone told him her feelings were hurt, he said how pleased he was with her and only cared about her safety. Moments later she came rushing into the room, her face all flushed with happiness. "I am in the great Sound" she said catching her breath, "and the voice says 'Go see Kirpal!'" And then an even bigger smile crossed her face, "AND HE SAYS IN GERMAN!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Often we would meet with the Master outside. One day as we sat around the Master we were told to go to the cars so we could go to a beautiful park. Most people left but I lingered for one more glance. It was hard to draw myself away. Then someone asked if we had to go. "Oh no," He replied. "Those who want to go may go. Those who want to stay may stay." Those who had gone, were already gone. Those who stayed, stayed most happily. Someone started singing bhajans and Master translated them for us.

*A cow that gives no milk is of no use.*

*And what is the use of vegetables that have gone dry?*

*Just like that is human birth without knowing God.*

All eyes filled with tears in the love and remembrance.

A few days later we were driven to a spot beside a river where we picnicked with the Master. After our meal several people sang bhajans and soon Taiji sang from Master's hymns and Master commented.

This is a poem, you see, I have written transcending certain bounds by giving the truth, but You have been giving me (the) promise that You would be with me all along. But I saw in 1927, twenty-one years before He left that He is leaving the body, the physical plane.

This is the promise: He used to say, "I will be with you forever." In 1927 –He left the physical body in 1948—21 years before, I wrote a poem in which I said, "You are going away –leaving us." I saw that vision. The Master (Sawan Singh.) said, "This has become known to him." He just referred to that. He said, "I will be with you forever; never leave you behind."

These are the words in *Gurmat Siddhant*. There it is told of Khaja Mohammed and Zazari Mahatma. When Zazari Mahatma left the body, His disciple came up and simply lay down on the tomb. He said, "Without thee, O Lord, life is nothing." And he died.

The Master asked me to repeat this twice, thrice, four times. He was reminding me that “I will be leaving earth.” This is the thing I referred to before.

He never leaves, of course, but to be in the physical presence of the Master is a great blessing. He’s never away; but there are two aspects in the physical body. So this refers to that. What promise? “I will be with him always.” To be with the physical Master is a great blessing, you see. What you can get in the Living Master’s physical presence, with little difficulty, can be had at a distance only by those who develop receptivity. Still, that is enchanting –what you say—  
intoxicating.

So all through my poems, you won’t find any happiness. From 1927, three years after my initiation physically, I wrote so many poems. Not a single poem is without pathos, without sadness because I have seen every moment that He may be leaving. So please make the best use of the time you are here.

Finishing one hymn, she sang another of Master’s poems which were translated by someone else.

I am a sacrifice to Your glimpses...Your eyes are intoxicated; they are full of simplicity And they have that heavenly light in them. Your countenance is bewitching. That captivates the heart. Whenever I get Your gesture, that gives solace to my heart. (Taiji explained the meaning of this: during Sawan Singh’s illness he gave his Darshan through the window but only when he gave Kirpal a certain gesture implying that things were all right, only then did Kirpal feel at peace. Otherwise he was restless.) Only through Your gesture do I apply that balm to my lacerated heart. I am at Thy threshold and I want You to bless me with Thy Darshan. So he says that although Your words are very sweet, sweeter than honey, yet the promises that You gave me that You would be with me for all times...those promises have not come true and there is a physical separation. (Here Master interrupts the translator: “That Christ Power never leaves. (But)

Physical presence is a great blessing.) Give me the alms of Thy Darshan. I am sitting at Thy threshold. I am not going to leave Your threshold until I get Your glimpses. I pray that for all time to come that house through the windows of which You used to give us the glimpses that should remain intact for all time to come.

**Sweet remembrance of the Master is the sum total of all practices. Do nothing more, you'll become what He is.  
Kirpal Singh**

It was so moving, so wonderful. Finally, Taiji told us that we should go explore and leave the Master alone for some time. We climbed through the woods and played, laughed and remembered the Master. The Love, the joy, the laughter. It was a time never to be forgotten.

\* \* \* \* \*

During these days, Master spoke a lot about his discipleship. “There’s a very strict law. I am very much afraid. God, I pray, really, when Master appointed me to give talks, I prayed Him, ‘Don't give me this job. Give me some other job... Very kind of You, give me some other job.’”

He (Sawan) said, “Why?”

(Kirpal speaking): "Who even looks out of respect to you, that is debited against you. Then how much I have got?"

Then He (Baba Sawan Singh) said, "When my hand is over your head..." (here the tape and my memory are unclear with the exact words but the gist is) ‘When my hand is over your head, then I (Sawan) am responsible.’”

Another time, he mentioned how when Sawan Singh instructed him to carry on the work after him Master said he “never dreamed” of getting this responsibility. And of

course, we all know how Master begged Sawan not to leave this world. How Master would do any work for him if he would just stay.

But there were lighter moments too in his remembrance. Once Sawan Singh asked Master to look over papers regarding his (Sawan's) pension. It stated that the pension was good till Sawan died. After reading it Master told Sawan that he was no longer entitled to his pension. Surprised, Sawan asked why. (Here Master imitated his Master's look, modeling a "little boy look of surprise.") "Because it is only good till you die and you die daily." Master laughed in this moment of light-hearted remembrance.

And then there were the times that Master would give some hints of spiritual joys, like the time we were sitting with him and he was talking about Love for his Master. Then he looked down at his hand and said, "You will forget who you are." Are you you or are you your Master?" The power of love. At times like this he often added, "This same fate awaits each one of you. Why do you delay?"

\* \* \* \* \*

From Kashmir we traveled back to Sawan Ashram and after a few days we went again to Manev Kendra. It's funny how when Master was in those places you kept thinking that you were in the most beautiful place on earth. The dust, the noises, the smells even the air you breathed –there was something more than heavenly about them. We would walk through a cloud of love.

At Manev Kendra there was a pool of water around which people would meditate. One day a woman in our group was meditating there when a small flock of ducks landed on the water. She looked up, "Wow, ducks!" she thought and then went back to

meditation. That evening Master spoke about one-pointed meditation and added not to let anything interrupt your meditations, “not ducks or anything.”

\* \* \* \* \*

After many blissful days with Him, Master became very sick and stopped seeing anyone. This was very rare. He was often sick but would still get up to meet people, be glowing with good health and then go back to being sick when he was done. But now he was very sick and this went on for some time. I couldn't sleep at night during this time (Not that I was up all the 24 hours; I just slept different hours.) and would go and sit by the pool. All throughout the night I could hear the Master coughing, lights going on and sevadars rushing to his side to aid him. One night of this was heart-rending. But this went on for night after night. As painful as this was, when we were finally able to see him the pain was even greater. Khuku came and gave very strict instructions. No one was to ask any questions; no one was to linger in front of the Master. We were just to have his Darshan and walk on in a silent, non-stopping line. We walked in and there was the Master, lying in bed; his face bright, bright red and clearly in pain. And still he thought of us! This may have been one of the very few times that all the Westerners actually did what we were supposed to do. Each day of witnessing what the Master went through was more and more painful. The next day Master came outside.

Supported by people on both sides of him, he stood there and spoke to us:

*You people need to learn to stand on your own two legs. Do you think I want to be here? I want to be with my own Master.*

More than once he said these words. They went right to everyone's heart. Painfully to our hearts.

Sometime after Master's health recovered to some degree, we went back to Sawan Ashram.

How much the Master does for us all is something we'll never understand. Watching his sickness gives some inkling. How he always said that he never wanted the "onerous" job of being a Master; how he is "responsible for this life and the other one too" –these words also gave a small indication of a Master's sacrifice.

There are instances that also give some small hint of the sacrifices that He makes for us. Like the time we sat in morning Darshan with him and the German woman started talking in her broken English: "Master, I see you last night. You are sick." Then she broke into tears. "I don't like it, Master. Give it to me." Master shot up straight in his chair. The look on his face was one I'd never seen on him before or after. I can only describe it as the look of horror a parent might have if its child stepped into rushing traffic. "NO! DON'T!" He said. "DON'T! You don't know what you are asking. You couldn't handle it." I'm sure Master only gave her a small part of what she asked for -and to her credit, she handled it quite bravely- but for the next day or two (maybe more. I don't remember exactly) she couldn't get out of bed.

One day a disciple was complaining about a fever she had. Very rarely did Master speak about himself, but today he sighed and said, "My temperature is never less than 101 degrees."

\* \* \* \* \*

There was a certain person who asked a lot of questions. So many times Master would answer his question in a way that made absolutely no sense at all, at least not to that person. It would be like asking someone how to fix your bicycle and they would start explaining Shakespeare. But almost all those times I had a burning question but was too shy to ask it and Master would answer my question instead –to the minutest details.

\* \* \* \* \*

Things had been going smoothly until an old nemesis, a local group leader, arrived in Delhi. Tension between us built for some days and then we had this huge argument –in Master’s house no less. I felt awful. I had brought the profane into the holy. I wasn’t wholly at fault but I thought it was time to patch things up a bit. I apologized to her and she looked at me disdainfully and said, in so many words, that I was too insignificant to bother her. Love begets love, but so do negative thoughts beget negative thoughts. I took the negative bait and ran with it. And ran and ran. From the outside, everything looked good –I still worked hard at my meditation, but sittings were becoming drier; happiness was in the Master’s direct presence but he noticed me less and I became less and less receptive. I was doing my best but I was losing the battle. One negative thought led to another till there were moments I was flooded with them. How could I be like that in Master’s Ashram. Finally, ashamed of myself I knew I had to tell the Master how negative my thoughts were. I gathered the little courage I had and went to see him alone on the porch.

“Master, I have to talk to you about something,” I began. And then for the next twenty minutes he cut me off with ‘small talk’ –“Your accommodations are all right?” “The food is all right?” ...and so on.

Whenever I could I would say, “Master, I need to tell you something,” and he seemed about to listen for a moment. Then he’d look up and say, “Oh, just a minute,” as he called someone over to talk to them. When he finished with them, the ‘small talk’ began all over.

He had once before kept cutting me off in just the same way but that was when I wanted to boast about something in front of the group. That time I finally blurted out whatever it was I wanted to say and he looked at me like, ‘You poor fool.’ But this time

I kept thinking, “Master, I don’t want to brag about anything. I want to tell you what’s wrong with me.” This wasn’t the easiest thing in the world for me to do. Finally, after almost half an hour of “small talk” and sitting there as Master called other people over, I knew this wasn’t going anywhere. I thanked the Master and left. I was a little disappointed as I wanted so much to be brave and make this confession.

The next day my friend asked his question and Master became earth-shakingly stern. And then it seemed he was talking about every thought –to the minutest detail- I had had that I wanted to talk to him about. This went on and on while I squirmed in my place. Finally, he said something that absolutely floored me: “these are sins for which you can never be forgiven. You might be pardoned, that’s another thing, but you can never be forgiven.” Was this me? Was I really that bad? I just wanted this talk to stop. I just wanted to run out of the room. I wished

he would beat me with a long stick –that wouldn’t have been so painful. At long last the talk ended and I went to my room and cried and cried and cried. I cried until I fell asleep. When I woke up there was a lightness in the air. A weight had been lifted from my shoulders. The doctor performed his operation and his hopeless patient was recovering! (In retrospect, I can’t say what the full implications of what happened were. I can only say that my heart was back with the Master and I had been given a

tremendous amount of Grace.) In the distance, I heard Masterji singing bhajans. I loved hearing him sing bhajans. I had asked him several times if he would sing bhajans for us but he never would. I had the distinct feeling that Master had told him not to mix

Mind that, the realm, the kingdom of the saints is of all forgiveness.

-- Kirpal Singh

On being arrested, a thief said he had heard of a holy man not far out of their way and asked the arresting officer if they could go to have his Darshan. The officer agreed and they trekked to see him, each with his own intent. The holy man happened to be Sawan Singh who stepped onto his verandah as they arrived. The officer asked if the Master would bless his case so the thief could be justly punished, but at the same time, the eyes of the thief locked onto the Great Master’s. *“In the court of the Saints there is only forgiveness,”* the Master replied.

The thief, who was soon released, went straight to the Dera and took initiation from the Master. He changed his former ways and became a devoted disciple.

with the Westerners. But when I went into the room there he was singing. A special gift for the healing patient as he sang bhajan after beautiful bhajan:

*When the Master is merciful there is no more suffering*

*When the Master is merciful the Lord gives his Darshan*

*and the long, long separation comes to an end...*

*Oh Master, I have taken refuge in You, You the All-merciful, the All-forgiving (and)*

*Though my sins are without number, the account of my deeds has now been torn. ...*

*Glory, glory to the Satguru who cures the disease of egotism and reunites the separated ones.*

Then Masterji added his own line:

*Dhan, dhan Baba Sawan... Glory to Baba Sawan, who reunites the separated ones.*

That evening, again my friend asked his question, “Master, you said there were sins that could never be forgiven. They could be pardoned but not forgiven. Could you please explain the difference?” The Master gave him this look like “What in the world are you talking about?!” and then said, “Pardoned, forgiven –what’s the difference? ...Masters are all forgiveness...Where do you think Judas is? He is in the lap of the Christ enjoying divine bliss. Masters are all forgiveness, I tell you.”

Yesterday, I wanted to run out of the room. Today I hoped this talk would go on forever.

### GLORY, GLORY TO MY SATGURU, *KIRPAL!*

I still had to deal with my feelings about that group leader and after a few days I again went to the Master. I wanted to tell him how people were leaving the Path because of her. I wanted to say so many things. I wanted to say how she misled people in so many ways. Like a good lawyer I gathered evidence against her –not the least of which were some of Master’s own words about her. Case in hand, I went to the Master expecting him to sit up straight, totally agree with me and put her in her place. Like most of my expectations of Master’s reactions, I couldn’t have been more wrong. Patiently he listened to me, sometimes almost agreeing with what I had to say. But I remember very

little of what he said because he was telling me something else at a different level –a mental level, telepathic level, whatever you want to call it. This was so strong and clear that I will never forget it. And what he said should have been exactly what I would have expected but truthfully, it was the last thing I expected. “I know everything that you’re telling me,” he said, “and I still love her.”

So many years have passed since then and I can say with absolute certainty that the mistakes I have made on this path are different than hers, but they are no less than hers. But it is because of that outlook, that love of his, that he has been able to love and forgive me. Tell me, who could not be thankful to a Master like that?!

*As Christ said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." He said further: "I give you a new commandment, 'Love one another.' " We say we love God, but we do not love one another. Why? All Masters say, "Love God, love thy neighbor and love all creation." If we love God and do not love our brothers, then what does the Bible say? "You are a liar." Do you see? "If you do not love your brother whom you see, how can you love God whom you do not see?"*

*...There is no higher law than love. And there is no goal beyond love: because Love is God and God is Love.*

Kirpal Singh

Before Master came out for the weekly Sunday Satsang, Master's path, Master Ji, was singing a long bhajan. It sounded so joyful. Everything around seemed to be ringing in that joyfulness. I asked an Indian man what the bhajan meant.

"It's the Anand Sahib. Anand means 'bliss.'"

*That explains the 'joyful' feelings, I thought.*

Then the man went on to translate:

"Oh, my mother, I have found the True Joy, the True Bliss.

I have found the Satguru.

Very easily have I found the Satguru

And the divine music plays within me.

O my soul, be forever with the Lord,

and He will accept you and all sorrow and sufferings will be forgotten.

Says Nanak, O my mind, remain always with the Lord."

And then the True Satguru came out, sat on the podium and gave Satsang.

\* \* \* \* \*

Soon this amazing trip was drawing to a close. I didn't want to leave. Who would? 1:00, the day before departure; 1:00, siesta time, everything is always quiet and I took my yearning self out for a walk. And there He was, out in front of his house talking to a group of Indians. He never talked outside his house at this time, but there he was. I walked to the back of the crowd and for whatever reason he was speaking in English to

these Indians. “While you are here make the best use of you time and when you go, go jolly. Take what you have earned with you.” Maybe not entirely his exact words but this was the theme of what he was saying. I knew he was talking about our time on this earth but I also knew he was talking to me, telling me to go jolly when I left. I knew this because that’s the way he always was. No matter how large the crowd, no matter the circumstances, every word he said went to the heart of any and all hearts that were open to him.

And then the day of my leaving came and we met with Master that morning.

“Is anyone leaving today?” he asked. I raised my hand but he noticed another family. He was always so kind to their son and today also he was again being so kind and loving. I should have been happy for them but instead it only added to my unhappiness of leaving. I thought, “Now he won’t even notice that I’m leaving today.” At once He looked up: “Is anyone else leaving today also?” When I raised my hand, he looked surprised, “*You* are leaving too?” and then so many kind, so many loving words and all my sadness flew away. “All right, we’ll meet later.”

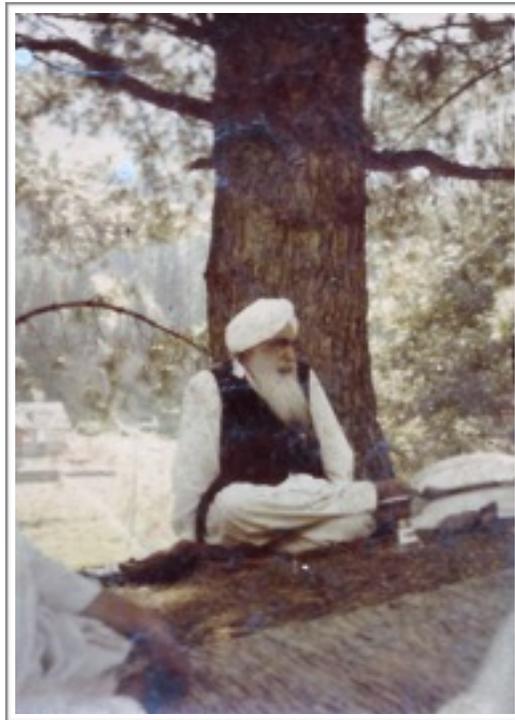
Later that day there was the Sunday Satsang and afterwards Master went into his house with a large group of Indians. I ran up to the gate but the guard gave me a stern look and shook his head, “NO.” I tried to tell him in broken Hindi that I was leaving that day. Maybe he understood me; maybe it was the tears in my eyes but his face softened into a smile and he let me in. I stood in the back of this churning sea of people, happy just to be able to see him in that crowd when suddenly there he was right in front of me with those deep, deep eyes of love. “What! You’re still here?” Then he laughed. “All right, we’ll meet later.” I was so happy when he noticed me but I was even happier when he spoke to me. I thought, “That was the second time he told me we’ll meet. That means that we’ll meet two times today.” The hours passed and as evening drew near I asked Gyaniji (Master’s secretary) when I could meet with the Master. “He

doesn't have time to meet with you. He's meeting with the Defense Minister of India tonight." I couldn't believe it. "But he said we'd meet," I said. Gyaniji looked at me sharply and said, "It doesn't matter. He doesn't have time to meet with you." I was numb. I was in shock as I walked back to my room and sat down in the middle of the floor. Soon I heard someone knocking on my door. "Maharaji will meet with you now." The words were hardly out of his mouth and I was already standing in front of Him. He was busy putting things together but when he saw me, he put everything down and turned his love and attention to me. Even the Defense Minister of India was put aside for a nobody kid because that's just the way Master was. I think that whoever was in front of him, he made that person feel they were the most important, the most special person in the world. He was so universal; so above individuals but so full of love and caring for the most unimportant of us. I never wrote down what he said but I just remember how happy I was looking into those deep joy-filled eyes. Then he stopped and asked, "Have you eaten yet?" "No, Master," I replied. So He told me to come back after I'd eaten. (Two meetings!) I walked slowly, reverently out of his house, then sprinted full blast to my room, looked all around and spotted an opened box of cookies. I grabbed a handful, shoved them into my mouth, swallowed (no time to bother chewing!) and rushed out the door. I was back in front of him in minutes. He looked at me surprised. "You've eaten already?" With a huge smile on my face I answered, "Yes, Master." And then he poured out His love. I was so, so happy and crying and crying at the same time. Who would ever want to leave that place of joy? "Don't cry. Can't you smile?" he asked. Never could I describe the happiness he gave me at that moment. The All-Giver of Joy, of Love. Outwardly, Master gave me a huge bag of rock candy and He gave me a shawl ("For your meditations."). Those things were precious beyond words. But most precious of all was that look of love that He gave. All my self tingled in joy.

If ever I gain a moment with You  
I would trample on both heaven and earth  
I would dance in victory forever.  
O Shamaz Tabriz, I am so drunken with Love  
That except for the wildness of that Love  
I have no other words to speak.

--- *Maulani Rumi*

Some people talk of how peaceful it is in the Master's presence. Peaceful, but also there's that feeling like you just stepped into a hurricane. Not a hurricane of wind and flooding rains; not one of destruction and troubles. Master's hurricane is one of torrential Love and a wild and crazy happiness. And of a deep, deep fulfillment of the soul. I think that's the best story of all.



*Kirpal Singh in Phalgam, Kashmir 1973*

A story from Jim:

(and while I use quotes, I'm really paraphrasing.)

We were traveling with the Master and staying inside a building when a large earthquake struck. The building swayed so much that I thought that it was going to collapse. Of course, it didn't because I'm here to tell this story. Later when we stood outside, I asked one of the sevadars who was in the room with the Master, what Master was like during the quake. She gave me a sheepish look and said, "I was screaming and screaming but Maharaj Ji sat calmly through the whole thing. When it ended, he looked at me and said, 'You must be ready for death at every moment.'"

**They say You have plans to leave. Do not that.  
You whose word is obeyed by both heaven and hell  
You are making heaven like a hell for me. Do not that.  
In your land of sweetness I am safe from all poison.  
You are mixing the sweetness with poison. Do not that.  
The moon itself feels grief when You take away Your  
Glance.**

**Why do You intend to eclipse even the moon? Do not that.  
When You bring a drought my mouth become dry,  
Why are You flooding my face with tears? Do not that.  
Like an outlaw, my eye is a thief of Your Beauty  
Why, Beloved, do You take revenge on my thief-like eyes,  
Do not that.**

**O You, whose existence embraces the eternal  
Right now You chose to pass from existence. Do not that.**

**--- Maulana Rumi**

**And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again**

**And receive you unto myself;**

**That where I am, there ye may be also.**

**John 14:3**

These are selections from God.  
They send the few certain people  
to administer certain things. They  
know when to come and when  
They are going back. They won't  
let you down, mind that.

Kirpal Singh

August 17, 1974

## Epilogue

*I will tell you of one event in my Master's life. I had the privilege to sit by Him one day when He was teaching two grandsons. My privilege; that was His Grace.*

*(Sawan Singh) gave them some exam question to be solved. One grandson solved it correctly, the other incorrectly. I was watching what happened. Everyone has to judge from his own level. He called for the maid servant to bring some fruit. He gave the same fruit to the grandson who had solved the question correctly as to the one who did not solve the problem. Then I said, "Master, there now is hope for us."*

*Now there is hope for us. When you come to the feet of the Master, you have Great Fortune --you do not know what a great fortune you have created. It is a blessing. So I told Him, "There is now hope."*

---Kirpal Singh, *His Grace Lives On*

In *Morning Talks* Master tells a story about Ayaz, the king's minister who was once a slave. (The king orders all his ministers to break an extremely valuable cup and all the ministers refuse except Ayaz. When the king scolds him for breaking one of the wonders of the world, he replies, "Oh king, that cup has no value as compared to the cup of your order.") There is another story of Ayaz where the jealous ministers accuse him of stealing from the king's treasury. The king hides himself in the treasury chambers where he watches what Ayaz does. He sees Ayaz open the vault to the

treasury but instead of taking out any valuables he takes out a bundle of ragged clothes. Dressing in them, he prays in front of a reflecting mirror, “Oh king, when I first came here I was nothing but a lowly slave and you raised me up to a high position. Every day I give thanks. Every day I remind myself that whatever I am, it is only through your grace.”

I once explained to a friend that when I first came onto this Path, I knew only two things about it: that a great saint had taken me under His wings and that He went to a very low place to pick me up. (And the latter I only admitted to myself in rare moments of personal honesty). I have been on this Path for so many years now and still I know only those same two things –but now even the thought of that great saint gives me a happiness beyond words and the thought of how low he has had to go –not once, but over and over again- causes me a deep, deep pain. But because of such a great Master, because there is so much grace, I know there is Hope.

So like Ayaz, may I always remember that whatever I am that is good, whatever I am that is worthwhile, it is only through Your Grace. And may I always remember that Grace. And may I always be thankful.

I sailed from Your Path like dust.

May I become like the dust of Your Path.

-- Rumi (sort of)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“Thank you. What does it mean? You people say thank you when someone picks up a pin for you and when someone gives you a thousand dollars.” --Kirpal Singh

That’s the gist of what he said, anyway. Nonetheless, I am going to say a few thank you’s to people who helped get this writing to the finish line. First of all, Gerard Wiggins, who year after year kept bugging me: “Geez, Jon, would you *please* write these stories down so they don’t get lost.” I finally listened to him. Thank you, Gerard. And thank you for so many kind words. And Thank you Bobbi Wiggins for all your tremendous help editing. Thank you, Bob Pearsall for so much encouragement and also for your help in editing things. (See you on the other side, my very dear friend.) Thank you to the many people who over the years shared their stories about the Master with me. And thank you to A.J. Arberry and Reynolds Nicholson (both now deceased), lovers and translators of Rumi. Though less "hip" than many modern Rumi translators, to my mind they carry more of the essence of his teachings. (I've been told that Master learned Persian just to read Rumi untranslated.)

Thanks to you, Jeronimo Garrigues, for the time and the creative touch that you added. And to my wife, Miriam, who has shown me a patience and forgiveness that could be surpassed only by the saints. I believe that sometimes the saints give worldly blessings. You are the special one given to me.

But “thank you” doesn’t begin to encompass what I owe to our Master, Kirpal Singh.

You are a great king, an Emperor  
But I address You only as an elder.  
Rather than bring You honor,  
I only belittle You.

--Guru Arjan

From Kira:

“No Perfect Saint has ever failed His disciples. Realize fully, this one will not fail you. Think deeply upon this rare privilege. A Divine Dispensation has been granted to you. Master is not the body. He is the Power functioning through the body, and He is using His body to teach and guide man.” (Kirpal Singh)

“Superior One,” Bob worried, “spiritually we are quite undeveloped. Our inner progress is so very small, and we are never up to the mark. We are simply unworthy.”

The Superior One replied, “What are you worried about? You are safe.”

.....

“Goodbye, Master,” Bob spoke with a sorrowful tremor in his voice (as we planned to part).

“I never say goodbye. I am always with you,” the Satguru replied.... “I love you all.”

from *I Never Say Goodbye*

by Kira Redeen, Pages 265 and 272

I know no peace without seeing Thee, for I know the  
deep anguish of my heart.

Over and again I go to the housetops to see if Thou art  
coming; and my eyes have swollen red with weeping...

Thou regained the accursed Ahilya\* from a stone in  
the wilderness.

What complaint is there against Mira — Oh speak to me of  
that...

O Lord of Mira —Gidhar Nagar

Rescue her from the giant wheel of births.

Selections from the writings of Mira Bai  
trans. Kirpal Singh

\*According to Indian legend, Ahilya, the wife of Gautam Rishi, was cursed to turn to stone for her infidelity. Repenting his fit of rage, the rishi could not undo the curse but added a blessing: Lord Rama would step on the “stone” Ahilya and she would be liberated.

How can the love between Thee and me sever!

As the leaf of the lotus abides in the water, so dost Thou  
in Thy servant.

As the night bird chakor gazes at the moon all the  
night o'er,

So do I, my Lord, Thy servant;

From the beginning of time until the ending of time,  
there is love between Thee and me.

How can such love be extinguished?

Kabir therefore says: As the river plunges into the ocean  
So doth my heart in Thee.

--- Kabir

Trans. Kirpal Singh