

Elements of Meditation¹ in Gurbani (3):

To Awaken Divine Within²

Dr. (Bhai) Harbans Lal³

The only purpose of meditation is to achieve the goal of our human life and that goal is to awaken our consciousness to Divinity within us. In the exercise of meditation we pray that the purpose of our human life is fulfilled.

ਤੁਮਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਤੇ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹ ਪਾਈ ਹੈ ਦੇਹੁ ਦਰਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇਆ ॥⁴

It is through your Grace that I am given the human life form. Now it is my prayer that you bestow your presence in my consciousness, O' God.

Our true identity has been, is, and always will be the Divine identity. It has been hidden from sight during this period of mortality in which we are sleeping as human consciousness. The only purpose of meditation is to awaken this Divinity in our consciousness. Thus, when we exercise meditation with the Grace of the Guru and God, its success shows up in an illumination of our mind and consciousness to that Divinity.

ਗੁਰ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਤੇ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਇ ਅਪਾਰ ॥ਮਨ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ ॥⁵

I sing the infinite praises of God through the Guru's Grace so that my mind is Illuminated from within.

Once we are illuminated, we will find this illumination to be very intoxicating. For one thing, we will never have to be concerned about our getting off the path of *Naam Jap*. We will be lost as a human consciousness and, therefore, become new consciousness, the Divine consciousness, forever.

ਦਰਸਨ ਦੇਖਤ ਹੀ ਸੁਧਿ ਕੀ ਨ ਸੁਧਿ ਰਹੀ । ਬੁਧਿ ਕੀ ਨ ਬੁਧਿ ਰਹੀ ਮਤਿ ਮੈ ਨ ਮਤਿ ਹੈ । ਸੁਰਤਿ ਮੈ ਨ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਅਉ ਧਿਆਨ ਮੈ ਨ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਰਹਿਓ । ਗਿਆਨ ਮੈ ਨ ਗਿਆਨ ਰਹਿਓ ਗਤਿ ਮੈ ਨ ਗਤਿ ਹੈ । ਧੀਰਜੁ ਕੇ ਧੀਰਜੁ ਗਰਬ ਕੇ ਗਰਬੁ ਗਇਓ । ਰਤਿ ਮੈ ਨ ਰਤਿ ਰਹੀ ਪਤਿ ਰਤਿ ਪਤਿ ਮੈ ॥ ਅਦਭੁਤ ਪਰਮਦਭੁਤ ਬਿਸਮੈ ਬਿਸਮ । ਅਸਚਰਜੈ ਅਸਚਰਜ ਅਤਿ ਅਤਿ ਮੈ ॥⁶

At first site of Divine I lost all other perceptions, intelligence or wisdoms. Attention to my own consciousness or stillness into my own mind was gone. I lost my own faculty of knowledge. Stillness of stillness or the ego of my ego disappeared. Any love for worldly possessions or things was gone. The Divine vision brings wonders. I am amazed and lost in the wonder of wonders.

Therefore, to be meaningful, the drive for *Meditation* must be directed only to achieve the new consciousness. To achieve this, the motivation for our *Meditation* must be of a spiritual rather than materialistic in its character. Let us remember this very fact that we want to seek the Divine in *Meditation*. Let us measure the quality of our efforts to meditate by the degree of spiritual illumination we are seeking, and from that we shall know as to where we stand on our path to fulfillment. The promise of *Meditation* is fulfillment, but let us be sure that the fulfillment for which we are meditating is a spiritual fulfillment, and then we shall meditate on the Name of the God to accept us in the Divine kingdom where the Divine consciousness only prevails.

ਸਾਚੇ ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਲਾਗੈ ਭੂਖ ॥ ਉਤੁ ਭੂਖੈ ਖਾਇ ਚਲੀਅਹਿ ਦੂਖ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਾਸਹਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਗੁਣ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ]⁷

When we experience an appetite for the True Name our pains will depart according to the intensity such an hunger. True satiation comes from the Holy Name and in the company of the holy we are illuminated with Divine qualities.

Our state of consciousness is not actually separate from God, because we can no more be separated from God than a gold ring can be separated from the gold of which it is made of. Gold is the ring; gold constitutes

¹ The term meditation is used interchangeably for meditation or contemplation and substituted for Naam Jap or Naam Simran terms in Sikh vocabulary. These meanings often may not be the same as prevalent in the Western vocabulary.

² The verses from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib are cited with the author, source, page and line numbers according to the Granth published by Shiromni Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar. Each verse is followed by a brief commentary relating to the subject of this discussion and may be distinct from an exact translation.

³ Send reprint requests and address all correspondence to Dr. Harbans Lal, Ph.D., D.Litt. (Hons), Professor and Chairman, Department of Pharmacology, University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth, 3500 Camp Bowie Blvd. Fort Worth, Texas 76016.

⁴ Dev, Guru Arjan, In *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (1604), p. 207, l. 10.

⁵ Dev, Guru Arjan, In *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (1604), p.123 ,l.17

⁶ Gurdas, Bhai, Kabit 9. In: Onkar Singh, *Kabit Sawayye Bhai Gurdas*, p. 4, Punjabi University, Patial, 1993.

⁷ Das, Guru Ram, In: *Guru Granth Sahib* (1604), p. 10, l. 5.

the ring. There is no possible way to remove the gold from ring without destroying it, because it is no gold plus a ring, but it is only the gold ring.

ਤੋਹੀ ਮੋਹੀ ਮੋਹੀ ਤੋਹੀ ਅੰਤਰੁ ਕੈਸਾ ॥ ਕਨਕ ਕਟਿਕ ਜਲ ਤਰੰਗ ਜੈਸਾ ॥ ⁸

Do gold and gold bracelets differ? Or water and waves differ? Certainly they do not. Similarly Thou art I and I am Thou; where is the difference?

ਜੈਸੇ ਜਲ ਆਪਾ ਖੋਇ ਬਰਨ ਬਰਨ ਮਿਲੈ। ਤੈਸੇ ਹੀ ਬਿਬੇਕੀ ਪਰਮਾਤਮ ਪ੍ਰਵੇਸ ਹੈ। ਪਾਰਸ ਪਰਸਿ ਜੈਸੇ ਕਨਿਕ ਅਨਿਕ ਧਾਤੁ। ਚੰਦਨ ਬਨਾਸਪਤੀ ਬਾਸਨਾ ਅਵੇਸ ਹੈ। ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਪੂਰਮ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਜੋਤਿ ਓਤਿਪੋਤਿ। ਭਾਵਨੀ ਭਗਤਿ ਭਾਇ ਆਦਿ ਕਉ ਅਦੇਸ ਹੈ ॥⁹

Just as water loses its identity and acquires all colors, so does the spiritual person becomes one with God. As many metals become gold upon a touch of the mystic stone and intoxicating smell of perfume resides in sandal wood so does God comes to live in the heart of a devotee.

We cannot be separated from God, because there is no we. Actually, there is no such thing in the entire world as 'you' or 'me'. God is infinite and God is in everything. God constitutes you and me, our life, mind, soul and being, just as gold constitutes the ring. Gold is the substance and the ring is a form. God is the substance and the individual is the form. God is the essence of our being. Scripture illustrates this through many examples.

ਕਾਹੇ ਰੇ ਬਨ ਖੋਜਨ ਜਾਈ ॥ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਸਦਾ ਅਲੇਪਾ ਤੋਹੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਮਾਈ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਪੁਹਪ ਮਧਿ ਜਿਉ ਬਾਸੁ ਬਸਤੁ ਹੈ ਮੁਕਰ ਮਾਹਿ ਜੈਸੇ ਛਾਈ ॥ ਤੈਸੇ ਹੀ ਹਰਿ ਬਸੇ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਘਟ ਹੀ ਖੋਜਹੁ ਭਾਈ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਨਹੁ ਇਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਬਤਾਈ ॥ ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਨੁ ਆਪਾ ਚੀਨੈ ਮਿਟੈ ਨ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਕੀ ਕਾਈ ॥ ¹⁰

Why go out to search for God in the woods? God abides within us all unattached. As fragrance lives in the flower and reflection in the mirror, so also God lives within you: search God within your heart. Know God within and without you; this is the wisdom imparted by the Guru. Says Nanak, "Without Knowing oneself, one is not rid of the smut of Doubt".

It is the nature of the human being to be unaware of God within and to love self-indulgence: riches, desires, animosity, greed, attachment and sensuality. The tendency of self-indulgence operates in our consciousness as agent of the evil to separate us from the Divine consciousness. When beginning on the path of meditation, we must recognize these influences and seek Guru's assistance in over-powering them.

ਕੰਚਨ ਨਾਰੀ ਮਹਿ ਜੀਉ ਲੁਭਤੁ ਹੈ ਮੋਹੁ ਮੀਠਾ ਮਾਇਆ ॥ ਘਰ ਮੰਦਰ ਘੋੜੇ ਖੁਸੀ ਮਨੁ ਅਨ ਰਸਿ ਲਾਇਆ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਕਿਉ ਛੂਟਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇਆ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਮ ਇਹ ਨੀਚ ਕਰਮ ਹਰਿ ਮੇਰੇ ॥ ਗੁਣਵੰਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਇਆਲੁ ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਬਖਸਿ ਅਵਗਣ ਸਭਿ ਮੇਰੇ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਕਿਛੁ ਰੂਪੁ ਨਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਜਾਤਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਵੰਗੁ ਨ ਮੇਰਾ ॥ ਕਿਆ ਮੁਹੁ ਲੈ ਬੋਲਹੁ ਗੁਣ ਬਿਹੂਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿਆ ਨ ਤੇਰਾ ॥ ਹਮ ਪਾਪੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਗੁਰ ਉਬਰੇ ਪੁੰਨੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੇਰਾ ॥ ੨ ॥ ਸਭੁ ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਮੁਖੁ ਨਕੁ ਦੀਆ ਵਰਤਣ ਕਉ ਪਾਣੀ ॥ ਅੰਨੁ ਖਾਣਾ ਕਪੜੁ ਪੈਨਣੁ ਦੀਆ ਰਸ ਅਨਿ ਭੋਗਾਣੀ ॥ ਜਿਨਿ ਦੀਏ ਸੁ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਪਸੂ ਹਉ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਣੀ ॥ ¹¹

Attractive women lure the soul of the man; emotional attachment to Maya is so sweet to him. His mind has become attached to the pleasures of houses, palaces, horses and other enjoyments. The Lord God does not enter his thoughts; how can he be saved, O my Lord? O my Lord, these are my lowly actions, Treasure of Virtue. Merciful Lord, please bless me with your Grace and forgive me for all my mistakes. // Pause // I have no charm, no social status and no manners. How shall I show you my face and speak to you? I have no virtue at all; I have not chanted Your Name. I am a sinner and can be saved only by the Company of the Guru. This will be a boon of the True Guru.

The capacity for thinking of comforts for our pseudo-self is a function of the degree of our sense of separation from Divine. As a matter of fact, this sense of separation is the legacy of humanoid. In *Meditation* we realize that we are not simple human beings, as we seem to be; we are spiritual entities. It is only our human nature that is entertaining a sense of separation from God. We cannot be separated from God, but we can entertain such a sense. By Meditation that sense of separation begins to disappear. A metamorphosis takes

⁸ Ravidas, Bhagat. In: Guru Granth Sahib (1604), p. 93, l. 16.

⁹ Gurdas, Bhai, Kabit 133. In: Onkar Singh, **Kabit Sawayye Bhai Gurdas**, p. 36, Punjabi University, Patial, 1993

¹⁰ Bahadur, Guru Teg, In : Sri Guru Granth Sahib (1604), p.684, l.16

¹¹ Das, Guru Ram, In: Guru Granth Sahib (1604), p. 167, l. 12

place wholly within one's self due to the activity of consciousness. The moment one sets his feet in the direction of the *Meditation*, one has begun a journey on the spiritual path to self-realization.

ਸਚਿ ਮਿਲੇ ਸੇ ਨ ਵਿਛੁੜਹਿ ਤਿਨ ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਵਾਸਾ ਹੋਇ ॥¹²

Those who meet the True Lord are not separated again; they come to dwell in the home of the self deep within.

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮਿਲੀਐ ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ਵਿਛੁਰੈ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬਿਧਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਏ ਜੀਉ ॥¹³

The Gurmukh is united with the Lord, while the manmukh is separated from Him. The Gurmukh reveals the way.

Meditation is meant to take us to the stages of spiritual uplift consisting of heightened awareness, expanded consciousness, and the divine wisdom. We meditate to unfold a vast land of eternal beauty within us. We recognize deep within our souls, an awesome mystery of God of which we are a part. Simran is a journey towards illumination and the joyous existence in the greater space of inner consciousness. It begins here on earth, in our more loosely defined home. Then it expands all over to the Divine energy. This energy extends to the heavens and the stars, who become like friends, with special messages of God's manifestation. The great message is delivered in the simplest spiritual experience that reveal the inter connected truth. We begin to know deep within that a shift is taking place: we are becoming part of divine energy. We have finally learnt the lessons to arrive at the stage where we are enter into the everlasting fold of God. That is the promise of *Meditation* and simran.

Most people who pretend to follow the path of *Meditation* are, in actuality, following their humanoid tendencies guided by the evils in their mind. In contrast to these, a few will stand out, who have an inner light and glory by which they live. This spiritual light is easily detected in them. You see it in their eyes, hear it in their voice, and observe it in their spiritual vitality. You also see and hear the same in guru's Shabad. Although this Presence is invisible, It is within the shabad and with every person; no one in the world is without it. It is available to everyone who has ears to hear and eyes to see, who is receptive to Divine knowledge. The *meditation* is a path to the Inner Light and to experience it is the only reason for *meditation*.

As *meditation* is to enlighten our consciousness, only the mind is the appropriate modality to exercise it. It is the surat or consciousness with which the *meditation* ought to be practiced. Therein lies the secret. How different that is from any mental gymnastic, making wishes or affirming that this or that of this world shall be achieved from *meditation*. The true attitude with which to enter the path of *meditation* is to open our consciousness to the Divine presence and let it fill itself within our consciousness. During *meditation* let the Guru speak His Word to our sub-conscious. We shall find that Word has permeated into our consciousness.

ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਰਿਦ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਜਾਗੀ ਅਮਿਉ ਝੋਲਿ ਝੋਲਿ ਪੀਜਾ ਹੇ ॥¹⁴

My consciousness has awakened to the Word. Now I feed myself upon the Lord's Nectar to my fulfillment.

Meditation does the work of illumination through the Grace of God, not by your or my wish. The true aspirant on the spiritual path has no desire other than the experience of the Divine, the realization of God and the experience of the higher consciousness. The Guru teaches us that there could not possibly remain any unfulfilled need if the Guru's Word is operating in our consciousness. One desire alone is legitimate and that is the realization of *meditation* activity to implant the Divine Word in our consciousness.

The gist of our discussion is to "leave your nests," and to leave your search for more and better humanoid comforts. Instead, strive to open your consciousness to the spiritual realities. Many of the things of this world will come your way, but what comes to you in the outer world, will be a bonus of an inner illumination. A state of inner silence, a state of inner awareness and receptivity will only attain the fulfillment. Therefore, it is necessary for us to prepare ourselves exclusively for the experience of receiving that enlightenment. This is the purpose of *meditation*.

¹² Das, Guru Amar, In: Guru Granth Sahib (1604), p. 27, l. 2.

¹³ Das, Guru Ram, In: Guru Granth Sahib (1604), p. 131, l. 11

¹⁴ Dev, Guru Arjan, In: *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (1604), p. 1074, l. 11.

In brief, we must realize that we have no objective other than the achievement of the Divine consciousness. We have no demonstration to make except that of our spiritual consciousness. This we must do first for our own development and secondly, as a witness to the world that purpose of this life is the Divine Consciousness. And this consciousness may be attained by all those who are ready to give up the world, not by removing themselves to some remote corner, but by giving up their memes¹⁵ which separate you from the Divine.

For true results of *meditation*, set your whole heart, soul and mind on the awakening of God rather than any attainment of any form of goods. As we gain that awakening, we enjoy all the good things of life which come forth, without becoming their slaves or becoming attached to them as well as without fear of losing them. No one can ever lose his wealth, health, or life once a person he has the touch of the Divinity.
