

The Imprisoned Splendor

Talks given from 1/6/80 to 30/6/80
Darshan Diary
29 Chapters

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #1
Chapter title: None

Love needs the greatest courage in life, for the simple reason that the basic requirement for moving into the world of love is dissolving your ego -- and that is the hardest thing to do.

We cling to the ego like anything. We are ready to die for it, but we are not ready to let it die because it defines us, it gives us an identity. It gives us a separate existence. It makes us feel important, significant. But because basically the ego is a false phenomenon all these feelings are rooted in a fallacy; hence deep down we are always aware that the importance that ego gives is bogus, it is phony. We know it and yet we don't want to know it. We are aware of it and yet we don't want to know it. We are aware of it yet we want to be oblivious of it. This is the human dilemma,

To get into love means to get out of this dilemma, to drop the fallacy, to drop the phony and the pseudo and to be simply a non-entity, a nothingness. But out of that nothingness something of immense value arises. life becomes a celebration.

With ego life is a misery, because if you are rooted in something false you cannot celebrate. Only truth can release the energies of celebration in you. Only truth can become a song in your heart. The ego is the greatest lie: all other lies are by-products of it. And because it is a lie it stinks, because it is a lie it creates a thousand and one problems around itself. It hides behind those problems. It creates a great facade of misery, so many clouds of misery that you get involved in misery and you forget everything about the root cause of it all.

The moment ego is dropped -- and it is only a question of your decision, if you want to drop it you can drop it right now, nothing can prevent you from dropping it except yourself -- instantly your life goes through a radical change, it goes through a revolution. Great poetry and great music arises in you.

Just a few moments ago I was reading these lines of Walt Whitman -- I love these lines! He was one of the most significant poets who has ever walked on the earth.

He says:

I celebrate myself, I sing myself.
And what I assume you shall assume.
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

That's the message of all the seers, of all those who have known, and particularly my message is celebration.

Let your whole heart say 'I celebrate myself, I sing myself.' But remember, the self is not the ego, the self is something beyond the ego. The ego is your creation; the self is part of god, the self is part of the supreme self. The self does not make you a separate individual, it does not make an island of you. It keeps you one with the whole; hence the celebration, hence the joy, hence the ecstasy.

Walt Whitman's line defines my sannyas precisely. Remember it.

Love, bliss, celebration, god, truth, freedom -- they are different aspects of the same phenomenon. Ego dropped, you enter into a multi-dimensional reality which contains all these things. But one certainly needs courage, one needs guts. Be courageous enough to live whole-heartedly to live in tune with the infinite, with the eternal.

Truth is beyond all scriptures because it is beyond mind itself. Scriptures are products of the mind. All philosophies, all ideologies, all theorisations, are nothing but fabrications, fictions of the mind.

They can be beautiful fictions, sweet, nice -- but fictions are fictions all the same. A dream can be a nightmare or a dream can be a very beautiful, sweet dream, but a dream is a dream, it is not reality.

Yes, there are beautiful scriptures in the world written by the most beautiful people, but truth cannot be written. It cannot even be expressed, it cannot be communicated, it cannot be transferred from one person to another. Yes, there is a certain communion it is not communication. That communion happens between a master and a disciple in total silence, from heart to heart, not from mind to mind. The master says nothing, the disciple heard nothing, yet everything is said and everything is heard. Nothing is said, nothing is heard yet everything is understood.

This is the most mysterious phenomenon in existence, the master-disciple relationship, mysterious

because it is not intellectually comprehensible. It cannot be proved in a logical way. It is not logical at all. Hence those who become sannyasins out of a logical conviction, who through listening to me, are convinced that what I am saying is true, are only on the periphery. The true disciple has nothing to do with what I am saying, the true disciple has something to do with what I am. The true sannyasin falls in love. It is not a question of conviction. It is something far more, something far more mysterious, something transcendental; hence a real disciple cannot explain to anybody else what has happened. Everybody will think that he has gone mad, that he has been hypnotised, that he is no more in his senses.

And the people who think like that are not at fault at all; the whole fault is the disciple's -- he cannot explain. But what can the disciple do about it? The whole fault lies with reality itself.

There are things which are not explainable. There are things which elude all rationalisation. And in fact, life begins only when you have come in contact with something which is incomprehensible, inexplicable, indefinable, unprovable and yet, somewhere deep down your heart says it is so. It puts aside all the arguments of the mind. It says to the mind, 'Keep quiet. You need not bother. Now I have stumbled into something which is beyond you.' And nothing can be done about it to make it comprehensible. It is a communion.

Sannyas is a true discipleship. It is not belief, it is not conviction, it is not accepting a certain philosophy of life. It is falling totally in love -- and a love too of a very new quality. It has nothing to do with your so-called ordinary love. Just one thing is in common, that the ordinary love also has something incomprehensible in it, but only something a very small particle of the incomprehensible in it -- and that is totally incomprehensible. Hence those who have loved can understand it a little bit.

But very few people have ever loved. Yes, they have known lust and they have called it love, but it is not love. They have known sex and they have called it love, but it is not love. People are very clever at giving beautiful names to ugly things. They have to give beautiful names, otherwise things look so absurd, so ridiculous. Man tries to create at least a beautiful facade; and behind the facade everything ugly can be continued.

The ordinary love contains so much jealousy, so much possessiveness, so much enmity, hatred. Just a little bit of it belongs to the beyond. But those who have known even that little bit say they are able to understand it -- otherwise the phenomenon of discipleship is bound to be ridiculed by those who have never tasted the nectar of it.

The disciple has to be courageous, courageous enough to be called a madman, courageous enough to be called blind, courageous enough to be thought hypnotised. And he has to take these things in a very loving way. He has to understand and he has to be compassionate, kind, sympathetic, because what can others do? They are functioning according to their minds, and this is something not of the mind.

No scripture can be of any help, only a living master can resurrect you, Only a Jesus can call forth Lazarus from the dead. The Bible cannot do it -- you can try it. You can put the Bible on a dead man's chest and try -- the Bible is there and the dead man is there, but Lazarus is not going to be resurrected. The Bible itself is dead, so are all the scriptures. A Jesus is needed, that magic touch of a living master is needed.

The parable is beautiful. That's the state of every disciple, when he comes to a master he is dead, he is almost in his grave. The master calls forth, 'Come out, Lazarus, come out of your grave,' and the disciple has to listen, has to learn how to listen and has to go into the beyond with the master. It is a journey into the uncharted, into the unknown, but without it life is not life. Without it we live in pain, we don't live at all.

Only with something of the transcendental penetrating you do you become alive, you are reborn. Jesus says, 'Unless you are born again, you shall not enter into my kingdom of god.' This is the rebirth he is talking about -- sannyas is a rebirth.

A sannyasin has to learn how to make life a festivity, how to make life a blissful festival. A sannyasin has not to be sad or serious. He has to know how to live, how to love, how to laugh. He has to become more passionate, more alive. He has to go deeper into life, as deep as possible, he has to be as total as possible.

The old idea of sannyas, of monkhood, was of renunciation: renounce life, escape from life, don't live at all, because life is against god. That is absolutely stupid! If life is against god what is god doing? Why does he go on creating life? Why did he create life in the first place?

All the religions of the world, the so-called religions, have been teaching a great contradiction. On one hand they say god created life. On the other hand they say, Renounce life, it is against god, unless you renounce you will not reach god, if you renounce you become beloved of god. The contradiction is so clear, even a child can see the contradiction. It is so ridiculous if god creates life he cannot be against it.

I am not against life, I am all for it. And my sannyasins have to learn not to escape, but to live intensely, to burn their life's torch from both ends simultaneously. Even a single moment of total festivity is enough; you will have tasted eternity and you will have known what god is. Life is the manifest form of god and celebration is his only prayer.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #2

Chapter title: None

Gautam the Buddha introduced the word 'samyako'. His whole vision is based on that single word. Everything can either be right or wrong. There can be right love and wrong love. Before Buddha nobody thought in that way, people used to think love is always right. So it was thought about will, resolution, a man of will is always right. All the cultures up to now have been praising will-power, but Buddha says -- and he is tremendously insightful -- that everything that can be right can be also be wrong, nothing can be absolutely right. Will-power can be wrong if it is used by the ego, then it will enhance the ego. And that's what happens in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred.

It can be right, but one has to be very alert and aware. Will-power can be right only if it is used for surrender. It is very paradoxical phenomenon, because ordinarily we think will and surrender are polar opposites, but there is only one right use of will, and that is: its surrender to the whole -- call it god, nature, tao or whatsoever you like.

Will-power in the service of the person is dangerous, because the very idea of the person is false; personality is illusory. We are not separate t the whole universe is one organic unity. We all exist together. Even a small blade of grass is connected to the far-away star. Everything is interlinked, intertwined. It is like a spider's web if you touch even one thread of it, the whole wave will be felt throughout the pattern. Through even a slight touch the vibration will be felt throughout the web. So is the case with the universe. We are not separate, we only appear separate. Hence if will is in the service of the person it is a wrong kind of will. It will lead you into more and more misery, into more and more conflict, violence.

Right will means in the service of god. But then you are no more. Right will means that the will gathers itself and commits a suicide. But that can be done only by a man of will. Surrender cannot be done by people who don't have any wills, who are always lukewarm, half-hearted, wavering. They cannot surrender.

Surrender needs a certain integrity, a certain resolution, in fact it needs the greatest resolution possible. Unless you are totally in it, it is not going to happen. Even if you are holding back a little bit it is not surrender. And through that which you are holding back, everything will return again; you will be the same. Surrender has to be irrevocable. One has to commit oneself so totally that there is no going back. The bridge is burned, you have thrown the ladder.

Right will mean a will which is capable of committing suicide. It is a very strange phenomenon but that's how life is; it is very paradoxical. First we have to learn how to create an ego and then the ego is ripe, strong enough, then we have to learn how to drop it. One would think it would have been more logical not to develop it at all. But when you would never know the joy of dropping it, the freedom of dropping it. A person who has never been in a gaol has no consciousness about being free; being in a gaol is a prerequisite to know the taste of freedom.

Life consists of contradictions -- that is its dialectics. A poor man never knows that he is poor. He looks poor only to the people who are not poor. He himself does not know that he is poor, he has nothing to compare his poverty with. To be really poor first you have to be rich and then you will know the pain of it, the agony of it. To really be a beggar, first you have to be an emperor, otherwise you will not know what it is to be a beggar.

The ego has to be strengthened only to be dropped. The will has to be sharpened only to be surrendered. Knowledge has to be gathered only to be unlearned. The day you unlearn whatsoever you have learned before, you become a child again, you are twice born. But this is not the same childhood, because the first childhood had no awareness of being knowledgeable; now you know what it means to be knowledgeable. And in dropping it you will feel such a great freedom, such great joy, such ecstasy, in fact you are not attaining anything.

In your childhood, in your first childhood you were the same, but you were completely unaware of it. This whole process is needed to make you aware. Awareness comes through a dialectical process.

So will is good, right, only when you are capable of dropping it, if you cannot drop it, if you cling to it, if it becomes your whole life-pattern you miss the whole point. When it creates only misery and hell. Great will-power is needed to create hell or heaven. If you continue in it, it creates hell, if you jump out of it, it creates heaven.

The only evolution worth calling evolution is the evolution of bliss. If bliss is not growing you are not evolving. If bliss is not growing the society is not evolving. In fact, what people generally understand by evolution and progress is sheer nonsense.

A more and more complicated technology does not mean evolution. It is so superficial. You can have more gadgets, you can have big machines, better aeroplanes, better trains, better houses, but you are the same person. You can reach the moon or even the stars one day, but what you are doing on the earth you will do on the moon. If you have been smoking cigarettes here you will smoke them there. If you have been playing cards here you will play cards there. If you have been drinking beer here you will carry beer to the moon. What else will you do there?

If man remains the same, there is no evolution. Then we go on living in a false kind of evolution, a substitute evolution which gives the fallacious appearance that man is evolving. But for centuries man has not evolved. Only a few individuals here and there have evolved. You can come across a Buddha or a Jesus or a Zarathustra or a Lao Tzu, a Francis, a Kabir, a Bahauddin; there are very few people. Those who have really tasted the nectar of bliss are evolved human beings.

Evolution has happened only to a few people. Just getting down from the trees and instead of walking on fours, walking on two, does not make you an evolved animal. It just makes you erect, vertical, that's all. If you look inside man's mind, he is still a monkey. One need not go very far, one can simply close one's eyes and see the mind and you will find all kinds of monkeyish things going on. So what evolution has happened? What nonsense is Darwin talking about?

The only difference is that monkeys have a few things more that man has lost; the monkeys have tails, and beautiful tails, very alive! Monkeys must be laughing at human beings, "What kind of monkeys are they? What happened to their tails?"

And man has become weaker. You cannot fight bare-handed with a monkey -- impossible. Even a Mohammed Ali will be defeated! No tactics of boxing will help; a monkey is enough to kill any man!

And one can feel jealous; monkeys jumping from one tree to another tree... just see their aliveness -- and try to do it... you will have multi-fractures! You will wake up after three days in a hospital! What kind of evolution is this? This is not real evolution.

Real evolution can only be judged by blissfulness. And blissfulness grows with consciousness. They grow together, simultaneously; they are two aspects of the same coin. Either grow consciousness and you become more blissful or grow more blissful and you become more conscious. Start from anywhere -- consciousness or bliss -- and you will be growing.

There are only two kinds of paths; a few paths are of consciousness, for example, Zen, and a few paths of bliss, for example, Sufis. Sufis live blissfully, and consciousness grows side by side. And Zen people grow consciousness, and bliss grows side by side. They are inseparable, so if you grow one, the other grows of its own accord. You need not bother about the two together.

Unless one becomes a buddha, a christ, one has missed the great opportunity of evolving. All other progress is false, pseudo, remember it.

Sannyas is an effort in the right direction. It really releases your potential -- and man has infinite potential.

Man can reach to the ultimate peaks of joy.

Wisdom does not come from knowledge, it comes from love. Wisdom has nothing to do with logic but it has everything to do with love. Knowledge depends on logic and knowledge can give you a false notion of being, because knowledge is imitative. You can repeat beautiful saying of Jesus, the beatitude, and if you go on repeating them long enough you will start believing, you will auto-hypnotise yourself by constant repetition. You will start thinking, as if you know, and you don't know at all.

Jesus is talking from the heart and you are learning from the head -- and the difference is vast. The difference is almost unbridgeable, it is so vast.

Knowledge is cheap, easily available. One can just go on sitting in a library and go on collecting knowledge. Man has so great a memory that it is said a single man's memory system can contain all the libraries of the world. No computer has been yet evolved which can really compete with man's memory system. It is almost unlimited and it can create such a great illusion of being wise.

Wisdom is a totally different phenomenon. It comes through love, it grows in the heart, it is a heart flower. And the ways of the heart are totally different from the ways of the head.

Sannyas is a search for wisdom. I am not interested in imparting knowledge to you here. I am not a teacher. A teacher imparts knowledge, a master imparts being. A master does not teach you, on the contrary, he helps you unlearn, he helps you to unburden, he helps you to come from the head to the heart. And once you are centred in the heart your life pulsates with a totally new energy. That energy is love. It is not that you become more loving, you become love itself. It is not a question of being in a love relationship, it is a question of being in a state of love. One is constantly in a state of love -- waking, sleeping, with people or alone, with people or with rocks -- it makes no difference, one goes on pulsating, radiating love energy. It becomes one's natural perfume. That perfume is the first proof of god and then more and more proofs go on coming.

There is no other proof for god except love. Logic is impotent, it cannot prove, it cannot disprove. It has nothing to do with love, hence theology is the most stupid idea. It means logic about god, theology. There is no logic about god. There have been lovers of god; but logicians are just befooling themselves and others.

If a logician is honest and sincere he is bound to be an atheist. He *has* to be an atheist, that is inevitable. If a logician says that he is a theist he is dishonest; hence all theologians are dishonest. Christian, Hindu, Mohammedan -- it doesn't matter to what sect and cult they belong.

Jesus is not a theologian, he is a lover of god. Jalaluddin is not a logician, he is a lover of god. and these lovers have really proved the existence of god, not by giving an argument but by their presence, by their very being, by their transformed existence, by their luminous life, by their radiant love.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #3

Chapter title: None

Truth can't be reached by thinking. Thinking can only arrive at a theory, at a hypothesis, it cannot know the truth itself. The truth can be known only when thinking ceases, when one becomes absolutely silent -- in a state of utter awareness, but of utter thoughtlessness too. That's why very few people have arrived at the ultimate truth. Many have strived, many have struggled, many have desired, but they were all working through the mind. The mind can spin and weave beautiful fictions but it cannot give you that which is. Mind is made of the stuff dreams are made of.

Dreams and thoughts are not different. Dreams are pictorial thoughts, dreaming is a primitive way of thinking. That's the way children think. That's why in children's books you have to have many many pictures, colourful illustrations, because they are less interested in the text and more interested in the pictures, Slowly slowly as they grow up, pictures become less and less, by the time they reach their post-graduation in the university pictures disappear; now they are not needed. They have moved from pictures to words.

Thinking is a more sophisticated way of dreaming, a more evolved way of dreaming, more eccentric, more mathematical, more philosophical. But deep down it is the same process. Whether you think in pictures or words makes no difference.

There are ancient languages like Chinese which are pictograms; they don't have any alphabet. They are the most ancient languages, they must be the first languages ever developed. Still they carry that ancient primitive mind.

For example, I have heard that if you have to write 'war' in Chinese you have to make a pictogram: a roof with two women sitting underneath -- that means one man and two wives. That is war, when one is enough -- two is too much!

Thinking has its own limitations, and the greatest limitation is: it can always go round and round in circles but it can never reach to the centre of things. And the truth is that which is. You are not to fabricate it, you are not to think about it. It is already there -- you have just to look at it. And if you are thinking you cannot look, you are occupied with it. You need an unoccupied consciousness. That's the whole process of meditation, becoming an unoccupied consciousness -- no dreams, no thoughts, just a silent awareness, nothing to hinder and disturb, nothing to interpret, interfere. Then you see that which is. And that is satyam, the ultimate truth.

Andreas means literally courageous. Truth is only for the courageous. The greatest courage is to drop your own mind because that is the most precious thing we think. We don't know anything higher than that.

Our whole education teaches us to be more and more refined minds; it is a process of refining our mental processes. We devote almost one third of our life to the universities and all that we do in that one third of our life -- the most precious time, because you will never be that young again. you will never be that fresh again, you will never be that intelligent again, you will never have that much energy, strength again... The most precious time of life is devoted single-heartedly to a simple purpose, single purpose: the refinement of the mind. Then one day when somebody says 'Drop it,' it seems impossible. We have acquired it through such hard effort, all those years of training and those examinations and all the nightmares that one goes through in those examinations. Just think of all that. And then you come to a master and he says, 'Drop it.' He says, 'It is all rubbish. It is just junk.' *It is junk!*

The whole function of the master is to help you get rid of your own mind. Great courage is needed to efface all those twenty-five years and the training and the achievements, and all your degrees, Ph.D's and D.Lit.'s. Just to close that whole chapter certainly great courage is needed. It is becoming ignorant again, it is becoming innocent again. Losing that grip of knowledge, losing all that you have learned means you will

be in a state of not-knowing again. But that's what is required for knowing the truth. The state of not-knowing is the basic requirement for knowing the truth because only the innocent ones can know it; the knowledgeable ones are going to miss it,

One thing more to remind you of -- Andreas was the first disciple called by Jesus. It may have been just a coincidence that it happened that the man's name was Andreas, but not it has become significant. Such coincidences become significant. Now the significance is that only a man like Andreas, a man with great courage can be called by a master like Jesus to be his first disciple, because courage *will* be needed.

Andreas never looked back. He did not even ask, 'Where are you leading me?' -- he just threw his net into the lake. He was a fisherman. It was early morning, the sun was just rising on the horizon. Jesus came, put his hand on Andreas's shoulders and Andreas looked back at him. There is a moment of silence, a moment of communion, a moment of a great heart-to-heart meeting. Something transpired.

Jesus said, 'What are you doing? How long are you going to go on catching fish? Come with me. I will teach you how to catch man.' He threw his net without uttering a single word, not even asking 'Who are you? And what do you mean?' He was so enchanted with the man and his presence that no question was needed, no answer was needed. He had looked into those two beautiful eyes -- they were far deeper than the lake.

This is the way of the disciple, not to ask why. But this certainly needs courage. The man must have been courageous. The name may have been just a coincidence but the man was really courageous. Otherwise one thinks a thousand and one times before following such a madman like Jesus.

And what a crazy thing he said, 'How long are, you going to catch fish? Come with me and I will teach you how to catch men.' And in fact that very moment he taught him the first lesson because Jesus has caught Andreas. Andreas followed him and never he asked anything and never ha looked back.

Remember this beautiful incident. It is one of the most beautiful incidents in Jesus' life, in the lives of his disciples.

Bliss is possible only through great intelligence. Misery needs no intelligence; any stupid person is capable of being miserable. That's why there are so any miserable people in the world -- because there are so many stupid people in the world.

People have asked me again and again, 'Why don't we see many blissful people?' For the simple reason that very few people allow their intelligence to function in their life. They live in stupidity. Stupidity pays in certain ways, it is a good investment.

Intelligence has always been a trouble. If you are intelligent you will constantly be in trouble because you will be surrounded by unintelligent people, there will be no communication between you and them. And they are in the majority -- you will be all alone. They can crush you, they can kill you. They can force their ideas upon you, they can manage to torture you in a thousand and one ways. They don't allow individuality. The more the crowd wants you to be part of the crowd. It wants you to surrender your intelligence to the crowd.

Whatsoever the crowd believes in -- Communism or Christianity, Hinduism or Mohammedanism -- it wants you, to follow that. It wants you simply to be a believer -- and belief is one of the poisons that kills intelligence. The crowd wants you to become a yea-sayer to all kinds of nonsense, superstitions, rotten ideas which have no meaning, no significance, which are so ridiculous and absurd that any person who thinks twice will immediately see the point, what he is believing in.

For example, Christians go on believing that Jesus is born out of a virgin mother. Now it is sheer nonsense, there cannot be anything more absurd. But millions of people go on believing it. In fact if you take their belief in the virginity of Mary, the whole of their Christianity topples down, It is based on that foolish idea.

Millions of people go on believing in such things that if you just ponder over them a little bit you will laugh, how is it possible that so many people go on believing in them? It is because of fear -- the fear of the crowd, the rear of the violence that the crowd can do to you.

The crowd wants you to conform. That's the root cause of peoples' intelligence being destroyed. And when intelligence is destroyed you cannot know what bliss is.

Every child is born with intelligence and almost every child is poisoned. Before he can even understand what he has brought with him he is paralysed, crippled under beautiful names. They may call it baptism, circumcision. Now they are utterly foolish ideas. Mm? A fool is just sprinkling water on you and you become a Christian. The child is crying because the water is cold and the child cannot understand what is

happening. But he has become Christian without his consent., without his even knowing what is happening to him.

Now he will be conditioned and all kinds of things will be forced upon him. By the time he is a grown-up man he has lost all his intelligence on the way somewhere, he has become stupid. And he is going to remain miserable.

The religions exploit your misery, first they make you stupid -- that creates misery, then they exploit your misery. They say, 'If you are miserable that is because you don't believe in god, because you have sinned in your past lives, because you are not virtuous. If you are miserable then confess, if you are miserable then pray. If you are miserable then come to the church regularly, then become more religious, become a monk or a nun, so that you can be forgiven by god. And again these things have certain appeal because people want to get rid of misery so they are ready to follow any idea.

But a stupid person cannot understand what he is doing, why he is doing it, where he is going. The first thing that is needed is release of his imprisoned intelligence, then bliss is very simple; it is a by-product. Once you know your intelligence you immediately start feeling a showering of bliss.

Eckhard is made of two words. 'Eck' means the edge of the sword and 'hard' comes from hearty, which means victorious spirit.

Intelligence is certainly like the edge, the sharp edge of the sword. It is a sword; it cuts out all the problems of life like a sword, in a single blow. It is the only way to attain victory, to become victorious.

And Eckhard is also beautiful because that is the only man Germany has produced who can be called a Buddha -- the only man. Germany has produced many other geniuses, great men of letters, great mathematicians, great scholars, great scientists, great poets, great painters and many great musicians, great dancers -- geniuses in all fields. But as far as enlightened people are concerned, Eckhard seems to be the only one. That too makes the name significant.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #4

Chapter title: None

Bliss is a by-product of becoming totally conscious. Enlightenment is another name for total consciousness. It simply means becoming full of light.

Light represents awareness, darkness represents unawareness. Ordinarily we are a dark night -- inside all is dark and it has been so for many lives; the sun has not risen there at all. Outside there is much light, inside there is only darkness.

That's why very few people go inwards. They are afraid of darkness and they don't see the point of why

they should go into this darkness, into the dark tunnel of one's being. For what? They listen to the Buddhas saying 'Go within,' 'Know thyself,' but they feel puzzled, confused, because whenever *they* look within they don't find anything like what the Buddhas say.

The Buddhas say 'Inside you will find light,' but they don't find it there, instead they find darkness. The Buddhas say 'Inside you will find immortality,' but they don't find anything of it, they simply find themselves surrounded by death, inside there seems to be no life but only death. In darkness they can feel death becoming almost tangible. The Buddhas say 'Inside you will find bliss,' but they don't find any bliss, they find only suffering -- nightmares and nightmares. There seems to be no silence, all is turmoil, chaos.

That's why all over the world, in all ages, in all the countries, people have decided that 'the Buddhas belonged to a different category: maybe they have found light inside because they are not human beings, they are divine. But we are human beings, ordinary human beings.'

They cannot say they are wrong. It is impossible to deny those people because what they say you can feel in their life. People have seen Jesus, Gautam Buddha, Zarathustra, Lao Tzu, and they have seen their bliss and their luminousness and they have heard their song... It is impossible to deny it. They have seen Jesus full of compassion and love even for the crowd. Even for all of those who are killing him he has only a prayer -- a prayer that they should all be forgiven because they know not what they are doing, they are unconscious people. So what they are doing is almost expected, it is not unexpected. They cannot do otherwise, they are not at fault.

The last words of Jesus are a prayer to god that all these people should be forgiven, they should not be punished because it is unfair to punish people who are behaving in a state of drunkenness, unconsciousness, they can't be held responsible for what they are doing.

So it is impossible to deny the Buddhas. Then the only logical way is to create a category, a separate category for such people. Hence Christians say Jesus is the only begotten son of god. We are ordinary human beings, he is not an ordinary human being; he comes from above, he is superhuman. and the same is the case with all the religions: Mohammed is a prophet of god, the *only* prophet of god. He is exceptional, extraordinary, hence we cannot hope to achieve the same as him. He carried different qualities of being. We are just seeds and he is a rosebud. How can we grow roses? -- we are just weeds. We can bow down to the roses, we can respect the roses, but we cannot expect that we can become roses.

This is just a logical way to console oneself that this is natural. This is *not* natural. This whole division is absolutely ridiculous. They belong to us, they have been as ordinary as we are. One day they were ordinary, one day they became extraordinary. Something happened -- that something can happen to everyone. They were ordinary when they were just seeds. When they became aware of their potential, when they started transforming their potential into the actual they became luminous beings, beings who appeared to come from the beyond. They became a bridge between this world and that, between this shore and the farther shore. Everyone is entitled to the same, everyone is carrying a seed of Buddhahood in himself.

So never for a moment think that there are categories. Yes, there is a difference because they are awakened, but the difference is only of that between somebody who is asleep and somebody who is awakened. But the one who is asleep can become awakened. The very phenomenon of sleep proves that he has the capacity to come out of it. Unless one can become awake, one cannot fall asleep either, They are two sides of the same coin.

Entering into sannyas means recognising the potential in you, pouring your attention, your efforts, in search of your inner treasure. Right now you will find darkness, but if you go on searching, soon you will stumble upon an infinite source of light.

First you will find only just thoughts, imagination, dreams, memories, but if you go on digging they all disappear. Ultimately only pure consciousness remains, and in that moment one becomes a Bodhichitta -- the consciousness of enlightenment. And in that very moment bliss starts showering on you.

If we are unaware we have fallen into something unnatural. It is as if somebody is standing on his head: it is unnatural. One can stand on one's head, but the head is not supposed to be for that. And that's how people are -- upside-down, their whole life is upside-down. They are doing things they should not be doing and they are not doing things that they should be doing. They are interested in things which are futile, meaningless, and they are absolutely uninterested in things which are really significant.

People live accidentally. They don't have any sense of direction, they don't have an inner discipline for growing, they don't have a certain target. They simply go on, not knowing why. Maybe just because they are restless they go on doing this and that. Restlessness needs some kind of occupation, any kind of occupation

will do. But any kind of occupation is not going to help you to grow. Growth needs a very selective life.

Life is short, time is very short, but people are so stupid that they will be playing cards and chess and if you ask them "What are you doing?", they say they are killing time -- as if they have too much time with them. Time is killing *you*!

Each moment you are less and less and less. Each moment you have died a little more, each moment death is coming closer. Time is not something to be killed, time is something to be used. Time is a great opportunity -- it has not to be wasted. But if you look at people you will be surprised: ninety-nine point nine per cent of people are wasting their time for the simple reason that they have never given a second thought to what they are doing and why. Others may be doing it so they are just imitating. People are almost living the life of sleepwalkers.

I have heard: two drunkards were sitting in a car and the car was going as far as it could. One drunkard said to the other, 'Now from the next cross-road you have to turn left and then you have to turn right.' And the other said, 'Why do you go on telling these things to me -- *you* are driving!'

But nobody is conscious, nobody knows who is driving, who is not driving and why people are going in a certain direction. Why is everybody interested in money? -- because all others are interested. Why is everybody interested in fame? -- because all other fools are interested. And you have to be in tune with the fools because you are surrounded by them.

An intelligent person moves consciously moment to moment. Whatsoever he is doing he is doing for a certain reason. He has an intrinsic value system. He lives according to a certain inner discipline -- not imposed by others but by his own awareness.

In the beginning it is groping, but soon one becomes more and more clear. Soon one goes astray less and less. Soon things settle and one starts following the right path towards inner growth. And then one thing becomes clear, that as you are moving closer to your nature, as things are less and less chaotic in your life and they start becoming harmonious, you will feel more and more bliss, more and more peace. That is a clear-cut indication that you are on the right track.

If you are feeling miserable in life that means you are going astray. Misery is an indicator, so is bliss. They are *real* indicators: if people are miserable that simply shows they are upside-down; if they are blissful that (few words missing) into an organic unity. They are no more a crowd. They have created a certain integration. They now have a centre, they are rooted, grounded... And then bliss starts happening, naturally, simply. It does not come from anywhere else, it simply arises out of your own inner being in an accord.

It is just like a beautiful car's engine humming. An alert driver knows exactly... if something goes wrong he immediately becomes aware because the engine is no more humming the same way; some disturbing note is there. Nobody else sitting in the car will be aware, but the driver will become aware, immediately alert: something is wrong, something has gone astray, something is not functioning well, something is not in tune.

And that's how a conscious person is: he immediately comes to know that something has gone wrong and he puts it right.

Ordinarily people are not at all aware. They go on thinking that others are making them miserable. That is a strategy of the mind to remain unconscious; then what can they do? It is the wife who makes you miserable, it is the children who make you miserable, it is the neighbours who make you miserable.

Jesus has two statements. One is: Love your enemy as yourself, and the second: Love your neighbour as yourself. I have always been puzzled about these two statements. There is no need to make two statements because neighbours and enemies are the same people! Just to say 'Love your neighbours as yourself,' is enough; enemies are included in the neighbours.

But we go on throwing the responsibility onto anybody. If we cannot find anybody then fate, kismet, karma, god, palmistry, astrology. People have found so many beautiful excuses. They will go to Tarot card readers. They will not look within, they will ask some foolish person to read Tarot cards and tell them what is wrong with them. Can you think of a more ridiculous thing? They will consult the I-Ching. These books are written for stupid people.

The simple fact is: if you are miserable, *you* are responsible, nobody else. And if you are blissful it is a reward of your being alert, aware, watchful.

Bliss is a gift, a gift of nature... for those who live consciously. It can be given only to those people who live consciously because only they will be able to appreciate it, only they will be able to understand it. It cannot be given to fools -- they will throw it away. You can't give precious diamonds to children. They will

not make any distinction between the precious diamonds and coloured stones. To understand a precious stone you need a jeweller.

As one becomes more and more conscious, one starts understanding the great gift of bliss that nature is always keeping ready for you. Whenever you are ripe, whenever you are ready, it is yours.

Anand is also the name of one of the most significant of Gautam Buddha's disciples, one of the most intimate and closest disciple. For forty-two years he served Buddha like a shadow. Nobody has served any master in that way for so long. He served Buddha in such a silent way, as if he were absolutely absent. Nobody would feel his presence: he would come silently, he would move silently, he would do the work silently. But by serving Buddha, just by serving him, he became more and more silent and peaceful. He became more and more graceful. Just by being in that close intimate relationship, remaining constantly under his energy, in his Buddhafield, he became imbued with his spirit. He completely forgot about himself, so much so that he even forgot that he had to become enlightened.

Buddha used to remind him again and again, 'Anand, it is good to serve the master, I am immensely pleased with you, but don't forget that you have to become enlightened.' Anand would laugh and he would say, 'To serve you is enough. Who cares about enlightenment?'

Anand became enlightened only when Buddha died, and he became enlightened within twenty-four hours. His sacrifice was immense. Such self -- sacrifice is so rare that in fact there is no other record in the whole history of humanity. To sacrifice even one's enlightenment....

In fact, many times anand had said to Buddha, 'Please don't insist on my enlightenment, because when you order something I *have* to do it -- and this is one thing that I cannot do for the simple reason that if I become enlightened you will send me away. You will tell me "Now go to the masses, help others to become awakened, spread my message." So let me remain ignorant, but let me be with you. Enlightenment can happen later on -- what is the hurry? I am fully contented just to be with you.

Many times he had seen that whenever a disciple became enlightened he was sent away because now he was ready to carry the message, to become the vehicle. Sariputra was sent away, Modgalayayan was sent away, Manjusri was sent away, and so many other disciples. The moment they would become enlightened, Buddha would say, "Now, you are ready -- go to the farthest corner of the world to help people who are fast asleep. Wake them up!"

Every night before anand would go to sleep he would pray, and he would pray in such a way that Buddha could hear it, because they were sleeping in the same room. He would pray to Buddha: "My lord, help me to remain unenlightened, because I don't want to go away from you."

And when just before Buddha died he declared "Today is my last day," Anand started crying and weeping. Buddha said, "Don't cry and weep, Anand. Only my death can make you enlightened, otherwise you will never become enlightened. When I am gone there will be nothing left for you to cling to. I am grateful you have served me so long."

And it happened that way, within twenty-four hours Anand became enlightened. The moment Buddha died, Anand closed his eyes and didn't open his eyes until he became enlightened. People asked him, "Why are you not opening your eyes?" He said, "I have seen the most beautiful man of the world -- now what is there left for me to see? Now I can afford enlightenment. My only attachment was with Buddha -- that too is broken." He said, "It may be that he has died only for me, to help me become enlightened."

This is a beautiful story for master and disciple.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #5

Chapter title: None

Prayer has nothing to do with language, with words, with thoughts, with mind itself. It is a state of no-mind. What goes on in the name of prayer is not prayer, it is just a pseudo ritual. But all religions are caught in rituals because the ordinary unconscious human being does not really want to be transformed. He wants everything, but without any change in his being. Because of this foolish desire he gets caught by the priests, he is being exploited. He himself is responsible.

If he is really interested in going through a change no priest can exploit him, no ritual can satisfy him, and all that will just look like rubbish. Then he will seek a real master -- not a teacher who has some philosophy to teach, but a master who has attained, who has tasted of truth. Then he will not be interested in superficial things. His interest will be in getting totally transformed, whatsoever the cost. Even if he has to die, he will be ready to die for a new birth. In fact nobody can be born again unless they are ready to die. The seed has to die before it can become a sprout.

Before you can attain to consciousness you will have to die as an unconscious being. And the whole process of this death and resurrection is the process of shifting your energy from mind to no-mind.

Shunya means a state of no-mind, no-thought, no-feeling, just pure silence, utter silence. But in that very silence you come into communion with the divine, with the whole. That is prayer.

To be in communion with the whole is prayer. Nothing is said, nothing is heard, but everything is understood. It is not a communication. It is not that you have to kneel down and you have to say certain words, certain cliches to god almighty. Mm? -- there is no god as a person. There is godliness -- the whole existence is full of the stuff called godliness -- but there is nobody to hear what you are saying. If you stop saying everything, if not only words on your lips but words in your mind disappear, you fall out of language absolutely, out of thought. You remain alert and aware, watchful, witnessing. In that witnessing the individual melts into the universal. That melting is prayer, that reunion is prayer.

Satys means in truth and Christiane means a Christian... but in truth, not just an ordinary Christian who is Christian by an accident, the accident of birth. One can be born in a Hindu family and will be a Hindu, one can be born in a Mohammedan family and will be a Mohammedan, or one can be born in a Christian family and will be a Christian. But these are accidental things.

Christ was born a Jew but he never belonged to that tradition. A real Christian can never belong to any tradition, not even the tradition called Christian.

A real Christian has to be a rebel, just like Jesus. A real Christian cannot be a blind follower, a believer. He is a seeker and he is ready to risk all. Jesus risked all, he risked his very life. He died on the cross when he was only thirty-three. He was too young -- but his intensity for truth, his love for truth, his passion was tremendous. He was ready to die but he was not ready to compromise.

Hence Friedrich Nietzsche is right when he says that the first and the last Christian died on the cross. And that happened two thousand years ago. Since then there have been only believers, followers. These people are not Christians. If they are in a Communist country they will be Communists. The whole of Russia is Christian before the revolution, and after the revolution, within ten years, the whole country -- and it is a vast country -- turned atheistic. What kind of Christians were these people? And they were really the most orthodox Christians in the whole world, Their church was called the Orthodox church, it was the most orthodox church amongst all the churches. But it simply disappeared, withered away, because the people who were believing in it had not risked anything to find it. It was just a given thing. Their parents had conditioned them. In fact they felt good when they became free of all conditioning.

A true Christian cannot be a Catholic or a Protestant, In fact a true Christian cannot be a Christian in the

ordinary sense at all. A true Christian can only be a Christ. For that one has to go through a certain inner crucifixion. One has to die as a mind and one has to be reborn as a consciousness. And that is the whole process of sannyas.

Knowledge is a conclusion, knowing is a process. knowledge has the false attitude that one has arrived, one already knows. Knowing is a pilgrimage, one is always learning, moving, progressing, evolving. Knowledge means now there is nothing left for you to know, you have come to a full stop. It creates a kind of stagnancy. knowing is dynamic, it is riverlike, it is always flowing.

A true seeker is not after knowledge, he is after knowing. He wants to learn the very process of learning. He is not interested in arriving at conclusions, he is not interested in goals in fact, he is more interested in the journey itself. The journey is also beautiful, each moment of it is so delicious -- who cares about the goal?

The very idea of a goal is created by the lazy mind so that you can rest; once it is achieved you -- are finished. So one tries to find a short-cut. The people who are interested in goals are always interested in short-cuts. naturally. Why go by a long route? The people who are interested in goals are prone to believe as soon as possible so that they can be finished with it. They became more interested in scriptures than in truth itself. They became more and more possessed by words because words give a false idea of knowledge, they make you knowledgeable .

The people who are lazy cannot be true seekers. A true seeker has no desire, no ambition to have a goal . He is interested in the moment, this moment, now and here. His whole being is involved in living. And if you go deeper into any experience you will be surprised: life does not consist of nouns, it consists of verbs. But man's mind is so cunning that it has become more and more attached to nouns. It changes every verb into a noun.

For example, there is nothing in life as love. There is loving but there is no love. In fact there is no life as such but only loving. And the same is true about everything -- the whole of life, the whole of existence consists of verbs.

Knowledge comes through memory and knowing comes through awareness. Knowledge is mechanical; hence a computer can be very knowledgeable, more knowledgeable than human minds because it has a memory system. You can simply go on feeding; it and it will accumulate all kinds of knowledge and you can retrieve any kind of knowledge whenever you want.

Our brain is nothing but a biocomputer. It has taken millions of years for nature to evolve the brain. What we have done by creating the computer is that we have simply made a brain outside the body, a mechanical brain. Of course, computers will go on growing more and more, they will become bigger and bigger, and they will be capable of doing miracles. Even great geniuses like Albert Einstein will look like pygmies beside computers *very* soon, for the simple reason: How much can you remember? -- the computer can be made to remember any amount of knowledge.

Memory is a mechanical phenomenon but awareness is non-mechanical, hence no computer can ever learn to be aware, no computer can ever be meditative. That is impossible. The computer can have knowledge but it cannot be in a state of knowing. You have to feed it dead knowledge, it can accumulate. And that's what our so-called scholars, pundits, have been doing for centuries. We have respected them very much, and they nothing but computers. Machines have been worshipped, and we are still doing that, our universities are factories where we create machines out of men.

My work here consists in doing just the opposite, in de-automatising you, in de-conditioning you, in helping you to become aware. When you become more aware you are more open to existence, to all that is happening all around. All your windows and doors are open; existence can pass through you. You can be more and more sensitive as you become more and more aware.

But a man of awareness never accumulates it. He goes on refining his process of knowing; there is no limit to it. He goes on sharpening his sword. But he is not interested in information, his interest is transformation. And through awareness, through knowing, transformation happens. You become a new man.

Through knowledge you remain the same old person with more knowledge added to you. But you are not new, you are the same old person, with new acquisitions, that's all. With awareness you are new, and you are new in such a way that you know how to go on renewing yourself every moment so you are never old, never dull, never insensitive.

That's the way of sannyas, awareness, meditation, knowing, loving, These are the key words, And they

are not just to be remembered, you have to experience them, then only do you know. Otherwise you can remember them, you can start repeating them -- and again you have missed the point, again you have transformed knowing into knowledge. Beware of that pitfall. Almost everybody falls into it.

Love is bliss, but very few people in the world are loving people, that's why there is so much misery. Everybody wants to be loving, everybody wants to be loved, but nobody learns the art of loving. It is a great art. You are born only with the potential, but the potential has to be transformed into the actual, it has to be made into reality. And the first requirement is to become more alert,

People are unconscious, hence they want love, they want to love, but because they are unconscious whatsoever they do is just the opposite. They destroy their own love, they destroy all the possibilities of love, and then they are miserable. And they blame fate, god -- they blame everything, *except* themselves. The alert person will always blame himself because he will become aware of the fact that his desires and his actions are opposite to each other, they contradict each other.

Once you become more and more watchful of your inner workings things become simple. Then a few things have to be dropped. One has not to be jealous if one wants to be loving. It becomes so clear that there is no question about it; one can simply see the point that if you are jealous, love is impossible. Jealousy is bound to create misery. Jealousy is part of ego, the shadow of the ego, the shadow of a shadow -- and love needs egolessness. They can't go together, they can't co-exist.

If one chooses ego knowingly, the one drops the whole project of love and once accepts the misery. But then there is no question of being miserable about your misery. That is your doing, this is your choice. There is no point in making any fuss about it. Either you drop the ego and all its companions -- jealousy, domination, possessiveness -- and then love flows and there is bliss -- or, you cling to the ego. Then love disappears, bliss disappears, god disappears, and your life is nothing but hell.

The basic requirement is to be aware -- that's what you have to learn here. The art of awareness becomes the art of love, becomes the art of bliss. It is the whole of religion.

Bliss happens in a profound silence. Bliss is not a not a state of excitement, it is not feverish. Pleasure is feverish, happiness too -- not as much as pleasure, a little milder, but it too has its own excitement. Bliss is absolutely cool -- not cold but cool, utterly silent. And to receive it one has to be very silent, because we can be in communion only with that which we are creating in ourselves.

A madman can be in communication only with other madmen. A Buddha can commune only with other Buddhas; otherwise the gap is so big, unbridgeable. You can commune with bliss only when you are in a total silent state, when everything in you has become still, as if all has disappeared, as if there is nobody inside. When your temple is absolutely empty bliss comes dancing. It fills you and it fulfils you.

Being here learn to be more and more silent, learn to be more and more still. Enjoy silence and stillness. Those are the basic preparations for the ultimate guest. When you are in a profound silence you are capable of becoming the host to god.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #6

Chapter title: None

People take life for granted, hence there is no gratitude in them. And without gratitude there is no growth, without gratitude there is no religion, without gratitude there is no prayer. Religion begins in gratitude and ends in gratitude. It is a journey from gratitude to gratitude. In the beginning it is a seed, in the end it becomes a flower. But the most fundamental fact is that life should not be taken for granted. We have not earned it, it is a gift. It is such a simple and obvious fact. Maybe because it is so obvious people tend to forget about it.

Religion does not begin in the belief that god exists; it begins in this awareness, that life is a gift. We don't know from whom -- that has to be enquired into -- but one thing is certain, that it is a gift. Some unknown force, some mysterious force has given you the most valuable thing. And once this feeling becomes crystallised in you then the enquiry starts. God is not very far away from gratitude.

Every child is born with great brilliance, with great intelligence, but we destroy his intelligence. Our whole structure is such that we can allow only mediocre people to survive. Our society, our state, our church, are all afraid of the intelligent person because intelligence is basically rebellious. So at the very beginning we start paralysing the intelligence of the child. By the time he is grown-up he will be mediocre -- educated, maybe well-educated, with university degrees, with a Ph.D. and D.Lit., but deep down no more rebellious, no more intelligent. Now he will function like a computer -- and society needs computers, machines, slaves.

We have not been able yet to create a society which can allow intelligence to grow to its peaks. We are still living under a primitive fear, we are still living with a thousand and one taboos and superstitions.

Meditation means getting rid of all this nonsense that society imposes upon you, meditation means freedom from all structures imposed by others on you.. And then again the mirror is clean, again you can reflect that which is. And god is another name for that which is -- nothing else. Once the layers of dust that have been put upon your mirror are removed, you are capable of reflecting reality. And once reality is reflected as it is you start responding to it, you become responsible for the first time.

Meditation brings peace naturally. Peace has not to be cultivated, it is a by-product. If you go deep into meditation peace comes of its own accord and then it has a beauty of its own. But if you cultivate peace then it is simply a facade. Deep down you are boiling, deep down you are ready to be violent to others or to yourself. Deep down you are constantly ready to destroy. Deep down you are destructive, you are bound to be destructive.

If you cannot be destructive to others because of the facade that you have created, then you will be destructive to yourself. Either you will be a sadist or you will be a masochist, either you will be an Adolf Hitler or you will be a Mahatma Gandhi. But both are pathological, both are destructive and violent. One destroys others, the other destroys himself. And for thousands of years we have worshipped people who are suicidal, self-destructive. We have called them great saints, mahatmas, sages -- and that is sheer nonsense. They are not sane people.

And why did they become so masochistic, self-destructive? The simple reason is they created a false peace around themselves. Now they cannot show their real faces outside. They cannot be angry to others so they become angry with themselves. Either this is going to happen or they become hypocrites: in public they show one face, in private they have another face.

The political leaders are all hypocrites. In public you will see them smiling and looking so graceful, and in their private lives they are simply ugly and they can do any harm to anybody; they create all the wars in the world. They have double personalities, they are split people. They say one thing and they do something else, and of course they have to continuously hide, so deep down they become deceptive, dishonest.

My sannyasins have to drop that whole idea of becoming peaceful through cultivation. Peace has to come of its own accord. You have to go deep into meditation, you have to become more and more alert,

aware, watchful -- that's going to be your work. And if it succeeds peace will be coming. Peace becomes a criterion. If you achieve peace through your meditation it shows that meditation is moving in the right direction. If you achieve peace that means you are doing something worthwhile; if you don't, then you have to look again. Somewhere you have missed the point, you have gone astray. In the name of meditation you are doing something else.

So peace is a by-product, but it can also function as a criterion of whether you are moving in the right direction or not. If you are moving in the right direction you are bound to be peaceful because you are coming closer and closer to god. That very closeness to god becomes peace. And when you have entered into god you become absolutely peaceful.

Meditation is human, it is your work. Peace is divine, it is god's gift. And god is very fair: if you are going into meditation earnestly, sincerely, you will be rewarded. There is no question about it, it has always happened that way. But this thing has to be remembered: peace is god's gift. We cannot do anything about it directly but we can create the right situation in which it descends from above.

It is like flowers: you cannot do anything directly about the flowers but you can prepare the ground, you can sow the seeds, you can help the plant to grow, you can sow the seeds, you can help the plant to grow, and wait. In the right season, at the right moment the flowers will come; your effort will be rewarded. But you cannot pull flowers out of a seed, neither can you pull flowers out of a tree; you have to allow them to happen. They come from some unknown source, some mysterious source, but they always come. One has to be patient enough. One has simply to do one's work and trust that whenever the time is ripe the flowers will come.

They have always come. They came to Jesus, to Buddha, to Mohammed; they are going to come to you too. God has no favorites, he is neither for somebody nor against somebody. God simply means the ultimate law of nature. Just fulfill your task and nature immediately responds.

Knowledge can be acquired, wisdom cannot be acquired. There are many ways to acquire knowledge . you can acquire it through books, through experienced people, through universities, through teachers, It is a question of collecting information and memorising it, But it is not possible to acquire wisdom at all, neither from books nor from universities nor from teachers.

Wisdom is an inner growth -- it does not come from the outside. For knowledge you have to look for outside sources, from where to get it. For wisdom you have to look within, to dig within. When you have reached your very centre it explodes. It is already there, just waiting for you to come.

Meditation is only a method of digging withinwards. Meditation is absolutely scientific. It does not require belief, it does not require that you be a Christian or a Mohammedan or a Hindu; it does not even require that you be a theist. You can be an atheist, you can be a Communist, you can be anybody. It does not ask anything to change from the beginning. It simply asks you to be open, to enquire, to be ready to go d n. Only that readiness is needed, and an open mind, unprejudiced. And then it is a very simple process.

It can be reduced to a very simple maxim: to watch your thoughts is meditation, because through your watching your thoughts, they start disappearing, evaporating. When your watchfulness becomes really intense, thoughts disappear, and in that thoughtless consciousness you hit upon your innermost core... and the explosion.

That explosion is wisdom. That explosion makes one a Christ or a Buddha. And my whole effort here is not to make you a Christian but a Christ, not to make you a Buddhist but a Buddha. Why become a Christian? -- because that is knowledge. Why not become Christ? -- that is wisdom. Why become a Buddhist? -- that is knowledge. Become a Buddha -- that is wisdom. Why settle for secondary things? Why not go to the primary source which is within yourself? Why settle for borrowed things, old and rotten? Why not go in and get in tune with truth freshly, here and now.

Moksha means ultimate freedom, freedom from all limitations -- the limitations of the body and the limitations of the mind. Your consciousness has no limitations, it is unbounded, but we have become identified with the body, which is limited. Because of that identification, think this is all that we are. We are far more, immensely more. And we have become identified with the mind too.

These are small things and we are as vast as the sky. To experience that vastness is moksha. That is real freedom. And the only way is meditation, because meditation destroys all identifications. It makes you aware that you are not the body, you are not the mind I you are neither this nor that. Finally you are only the

witness.

When this pure witness is experienced you have reached the ultimate peak. There is nothing beyond it. At that peak you know freedom, you know bliss, you know love -- you know all that is worth knowing. And not only do you know it, you *are* it.

The message of sannyas is love. That's the first and the most important thing to understand about sannyas. I am not much interested in god, in heaven, but I am absolutely interested in love, because the person who knows what love is, is bound to know what god is, but not vice versa. One may go on believing in god -- one will not come to know what love is. In fact the believers in god have created so much hatred on the earth, nobody else has done so much mischief. Christians, Mohammedans, Hindus -- they are all participants in a great conspiracy.

They talk about god, about peace, about love and all that they do is make bloodshed and nothing else. And for centuries that has been going on. In fact no sinners have done so much sin as your so-called saints. They may not have done it directly but they have provoked people to do such things.

Your bad people have been so bad; your so-called good people have really proved more dangerous culprits. or course they talk about beautiful things, but you have to look behind the beautiful things. They talk about god, but then they have to fight for god, then they have to kill people for god. Both the parties are fighting for god and both the parties are killing each other for god.

Now when man becomes a little more alert and aware this whole thing will seem so ridiculous, so primitive, and so stupid. And this has been done in the name of religion.

Hence my emphasis is on love, because if love happens then everything else happens. There is no question about it. A loving person cannot avoid encountering god for long. Even if he wants to escape he cannot escape; he will find god, he is bound to find him, it is inevitable.

But to know love needs one thing, and that is readiness to dissolve your ego. If you are not ready to dissolve yourself you can never know what love is. The dewdrop slipping into the ocean knows what love is. And that is the way of sannyas: be a dewdrop and slip into the ocean. Forget that you are somebody, from this moment you are a nobody, a non-entity, a nothingness.

In that nothingness the very kingdom of god happens. That nothingness opens the door to all the mysteries of life. It makes you aware of the infinite treasures of your being. Suddenly you are in tune with existence. It is the ego that is a jarring note. It never allows you to commune with existence, it always hinders. It is not a bridge, it is a wall -- it has to be dropped.

The only thing to be renounced in my sannyas is the ego. And the only thing to be experienced in my sannyas is love. And they are two sides of the same coin: dissolve the ego and you are capable, immediately capable, of entering into the world of love.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #7

Chapter title: None

[NOTE: This is an unedited tape transcript of an unpublished darshan diary, which has been scanned and cleaned up. It is for reference purposes only.]

Bliss is a by-product of being consecrated to god. One cannot achieve it directly -- the way to bliss is via god. One has to surrender to god. In that very surrender bliss happens.

Misery is separation from god, bliss is reunion. And by god I don't mean some person; by god I simply mean the whole, the existence, all that is.

Man lives in isolation. He tries to create a subtle wall around himself so that he can feel that he is somebody special. That wall, that subtle invisible wall is what is called the ego, and it is the root cause of misery.

It is as if a tree is trying to separate itself from the earth, from the sky, from the sun, from the air, from the stars, from the moon -- from everything that surrounds it. The tree will start dying because it has to be nourished by the earth, it has to remain rooted in the earth, it has to be nourished by the sun rays, It has to understand that it is not separate and it cannot be separate, that it is absolutely intrinsically part of the organic unity of existence.

But no tree is as foolish as man is, no animal either is as foolish as man is. Man is the only idiotic animal on the earth, but that idiocy can also be transformed into a great blessing, because only man can understand what is separation and what is union.

The trees, the birds, the animals, are one with existence -- but unaware. They are blissful but they have no idea of what bliss is, they are not conscious of it. And a bliss which is unconscious is not of much value. You may have a treasure, but if you are not aware of it what is the point of having it?

This distant call of the cuckoo is beautiful to us, but not to the cuckoo itself. The cuckoo has no idea of what beauty is, what music is, what poetry is. It is unaware -- blissful, but unaware.

Man is not aware but miserable. But this misery can be dropped. Awareness has to be increased a little more and man has to drop it consciously and has to achieve a reunion -- I call it a reunion. The tree and the cuckoo and the other birds and the animals are in a state of union. Man has to reclaim it; he has lost contact with it.

Only man can be a Buddha or a Christ. Hence that foolishness is not just a curse, it can also be a blessing. It all depends on us, on what we do about our misery. We can go on nursing it and we can go on creating more hell for ourselves. We can drop it and can move towards the whole for the ultimate merger. We can melt ourselves into the ocean of existence. And then bliss arises. And when man becomes blissful, his bliss has tremendous value. The cuckoo is blissful but its bliss has no value.

To be consecrated to god means to be ready to merge and melt into the whole -- then bliss comes of its own accord.

Sannyas is an offering to god out of love, not out of fear, The so-called religious person is religious because he is afraid. His whole religiousness is rooted in fear, is oriented in fear; hence his religiousness is not true, authentic religiousness, it is pseudo, He creates the idea of god out of fear, He believes in god, he knows nothing of god. Only ignorant people believe, the knowing ones need not believe because they know. If you know, there is no need to believe or disbelieve. If you don't know then the question arises of whether to believe or not to believe, So ignorant people are divided into two camps: the believers and the disbelievers. But both are ignorant, They may be Catholics or communists, it makes no difference. The knowers simply know they have experienced, they have tasted, But that needs a totally different kind of orientation.

Your religion has to be not out of fear, but out of love. Don't be afraid of hell -- there is no hell, there never has been. It is a fiction created by the priests to exploit humanity, and they have exploited humanity for centuries. And there is no heaven either. It is the other side of hell; the other side of the fiction, That is to exploit your greed,

Greed and fear are not different phenomena but two sides of the same coin; the fearful person is always greedy, the greedy person is always fearful. In fact they are not two energies at all but two poles of the same energy. Just like negative and positive poles of electricity, inseparably together. There is no heaven either. Yes, there is a certain kind of hell and heaven, but that is psychological, within you. It has nothing to do with my place somewhere, below the earth or above, in the sky. It is not geographical.

Drop the whole idea of heaven and hell -- religion has nothing to do with all that nonsense. Drop the

idea of god as a person. To call god the father is simply to provoke your fear, because each child has been afraid of the father from the very beginning. And that fear remains for your whole life. Even if you go through years of primal therapy, it remains and lingers somewhere, it becomes so ingrained that it goes to your bones, to your very marrow. To call god 'the father' is simply to create a childish fear in you and a childish dependence in you.

There is no god as a person and there is no super-father in heaven. God simply means the whole existence, it is another name for life.

Love life, be devoted to life, live life as totally as possible. That's what I mean by offering. offer yourself to life totally without holding anything back and then great bliss arises, a bliss that has a beginning but not end.

The only revolution worth calling revolution happens through meditation. The political revolutions are not revolutions but at the most, reforms, and in fact almost useless reforms because the man remains the same, you only change the structure. If you change the structure and the man remains the same, nothing in fact changes. Even in the new structure he will behave in the old ways, in the same old ways.

For example, in Russia, the revolution, the political revolution happened. The Capitalists disappeared and the old division of the poor and the rich disappeared. A new division has arisen, the people who are in power and the people who are not in power. It is the same game. Now to be a member of the Communist party is to be powerful, and to be in the government is to be rich, far richer than the old kind of capitalists. They were not as powerful and not so rich either. In fact no czar in Russia has been as powerful as Josef Stalin. The structure has changed, but because the mind is the same the mind creates its old games again.

It is as if we take a whole load of people to the moon: everything will be different. The scenery will be different, there will be no trees, no mountains, no rivers. But these people will continue to do the same things on the moon. The husband and the wife will go on fighting in the same old way. It will not make any difference that they are on the moon, that now it is not right to fight in the old ways. The thief will remain a thief there. He will go on stealing things from people. Everything will continue in the same way, although everything on the outside is different.

It is only through meditation that your inner world changes because meditation means going beyond the mind, getting rid of the mind. And mind contains all the games and the numbers and the trips. Once the mind is dropped, you have a totally new perspective, a new vision, a new way of seeing and being. That's what sannyas is all about: it is a revolution through meditation.

The whole art of being blissful is the art of remaining relaxed, relaxed in all kinds of activities of life. I am not teaching my people to renounce life but I am certainly teaching them to renounce tensions, tense states of mind. Go on doing the same thing that you have been doing but now do it relaxedly. Action is not important, how you do it is important.

In the old days, for centuries the idea has persisted, has been very dominant, that you have to drop out of the world, that you have to leave the world and move into a monastery or into the Himalayas and go to Tibet -- only then can you realise god. That is sheer stupidity, That is not the way to realise god, because god is as much here in the marketplace as he is in the mountains. If you cannot find him here you will not find him in the mountains either.

So the real thing is to live in a relaxed way, to act relaxedly. Go on doing the same things but with a new quality. with a new grace, a new beauty, a new silence, a new meditateness, new awareness and with no tensions in the mind. Don't be an achiever, don't be ambitious. Just live in the moment, and live in the moment as if this is the first and the last moment. So live totally, intensely. yet relaxed, utterly relaxed. And then bliss will follow you like a shadow.

All my meditations here are to help you in some way or other to become more and more relaxed. Relaxation is the key, the golden key that opens the door to god.

God is the full-stop. There is nothing higher than that. God is the ultimate goal. If a person makes god only one of the items on his shopping list he will never be able to taste that experience. God has to be your only goal, all other items or your shopping list have to disappear. Then all your desires become one deep intense longing for god. Then it happens instantly.

We are divided because of our desires. One desire is pulling you towards the north, the other is pulling you towards the south. There are thousands of fragments. They have created a crowd in you, they don't allow you to be a single individual. They are very noisy and they are continuously fighting with each other,

trying to dominate; each desire wants to dominate. There is a constant civil war.

Millions of people become interested in god but that is only one of their interests, that's why they miss. God has to be the only interest, then you cannot miss. And god contains all: it contains bliss, it contains peace, it contains truth, it contains consciousness, it contains love, it contains compassion. It contains all that is worth having, so there is no need for any other desire. It covers all that is beautiful and valuable, and all that is left out is worthless.

That is the meaning of your name, Deva Viramo -- let it become the meaning of your life too. And now the time has come for you to make a concentrated effort to put all your desires into one stream, not into many events, otherwise energy gets dissipated. Just pour yourself into one prayer. Let your whole being become just one thirst, one longing; the longing for god. And whenever it is total, it is immediately fulfilled, not even a single moment is lost. If you have to wait that simply means your longing is still divided.

So whatsoever you are doing, now make it a point that it is all a means towards god. Eating, walking, sleeping -- whatsoever you are doing, all the arrows have to point towards god. Not even a single fragment of your being should be pointing towards something else. And the day it happens, the moment it happens -- that your total being is athirst, afire -- that very moment... the miracle.

Yes, it can only be called the miracle. It transforms you. It takes you from time to eternity. It takes you beyond the body and the mind to your ultimate home. Then there is no coming back. One is dissolved into the universal -- and that is our real home.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #8

Chapter title: None

There is no heaven and no hell outside. Both are within, and we create them. If we live unconsciously we go on creating misery for ourselves. But the strategy of the unconscious mind is that it always throws the responsibility on others; that's its protection. Then it goes on working from behind.

A sannyasin has to take the total responsibility upon himself. It is hard in the beginning because our habit is to throw it on others. It seems convenient and comfortable that others are making you miserable. But nobody can make you miserable; it is always your own work. Maybe you are not aware of how you are doing it you may be completely oblivious of it; you may never have looked into the mechanism of the mind which creates misery,

That's the first thing a sannyasin has to do: he has to become more and more alert about the functioning of his mind. Then the truth strikes home, 'I am the creator of my misery, of my hell.' And immediately another insight opens up: 'If it is so, then I can also create my own paradise.' The energy that becomes misery is the same energy that becomes bliss. When your energy is not flowing in tune with existence it

creates misery. When it is attuned with existence it creates bliss. Hence this is my definition of paradise: to be in deep harmony with existence, to be so totally in tune with existence that you disappear, that you are no more a separate entity, that you are just nothingness and the existence is allowed to flow through you without any interference on your part. Then great joy arises. Then you are as blissful as the flowers and the stars. Then you are as silent and as full of songs as existence itself. This is what I mean by god-realisation.

Meditation is not something external, it is not something that has to be added to you from the outside. It is not extrinsic, it is intrinsic. It is your own nature functioning in deep inner harmony. One can function as a chaos, one can also function as a cosmos. One can function as a crowd, as a marketplace -- full of noise. One can function as tremendously beautiful music, as a silent shrine in the mountains. It all depends on how you enter into your being.

If you enter through the gate of the mind you will find only chaos. Mind functions like a prism, it divides. A ray passing through a prism becomes divided into seven colours. Before entering the prism it was white, it was pure white. As it enters and passes through the prism it is no more one, it is seven. That's how the rainbow is created and that's how the whole world is created. It is the prism of the mind that creates the illusion of many-ness, otherwise we are all one. But if you enter through the prism you cannot find ss anywhere.

There is another door, a secret door. That door is called meditation. It simply means a state of no-mind.

You can enter into your being from a state of no-mind. Mind means thoughts, no-mind means thoughtless consciousness. Mind means many things; memories, imagination, desires, dreams, projections, past and the future. No-mind means no desire, no imagination, no dreams, no projection, no past, no future, only the present, just the present, just this moment, here and now. And then suddenly, you will find your self-nature. That is godliness and that is bliss, that is peace, that is love, that is going beyond time and entering into eternity.

If you live in the mind, you live in the fear of death. If you start moving through meditation all fear of death disappears. Suddenly you are aware that you have never been born and you can never die. You have always been here and now and you will always be here and now. The bodies change -- those are just forms. Sometimes you may be in a body and sometimes you may not be in a body. And to be in a body is not such a great thing; in fact it is a confinement.

Hence the whole mystic approach towards life is how to go beyond body and mind, how to know that which is infinite in you -- the vast, the unbounded, the oceanic. It brings freedom.

The ultimate state of consciousness is not a serious phenomenon. It is not sombre, it is not sad. It is full of joy, full of laughter, full of celebration, full of song and dance, because it is a fulfillment: you have come to the ultimate peak of your being. And then flowering happens and your perfume is released to the winds. It can't be serious and sad.

All your saints look miserable. They don't seem to have even touched on what I am talking about. They are ascetic people, and asceticism is a kind of masochism, it is self-torture. And when you torture yourself you cannot be joyous -- it is against nature. Nobody can be joyous against nature. The more natural you are, the more joyous; the less natural, the less joyous.

Christians say Jesus never laughed. I cannot believe it. I know Jesus directly -- I have a direct line with him! What these fools are saying is absolute nonsense. If Jesus never laughed then nobody can never laugh. If I had to write the gospels, the last thing that I would write would be that he laughed loudly on the cross. He must have had the last laugh!

That's exactly what happened in the case of Al-Hillaj Mansoor -- a Sufi who was killed by the Mohammedans. The last thing he did was to laugh loudly. For a moment even his enemies were shocked. They could not believe their eyes: had he gone mad or something? -- because this was not the moment to laugh. If he had wept, cried, prayed, it would have been understandable, but this laughter was absolutely incomprehensible.

Somebody asked, "Why are you laughing, Al-Hillaj? Have you gone mad?" He said, "I am laughing because I am not the one that you are killing -- you are killing somebody else. I am laughing at the whole absurdity of it. You cannot kill me, I am beyond death. You are killing somebody else, some poor fellow who has nothing to do with me.

"And I am also laughing at God -- I am telling him through my laughter, 'You can't deceive me. You can

play all kinds of tricks on me but you cannot take my laughter away.' This is his last test. He is trying his last trick on me. He wants to see now if my laughter is real or unreal. If I can laugh through death, that means my laughter was real, was authentic."

He died laughing.

The true mystic is not an ascetic, is not self-torturing. He loves life, he enjoys life, because life is nothing but God manifest. A true mystic is full of songs. Each of his words is a song. Rightly understood, each of his movements is a dance; rightly understood, each of his gestures is a celebration.

This happens only because of the ultimate state of consciousness. When you have touched the highest peak, when there is no more beyond, when you have gone beyond the beyond... when everything is left behind, the body far far away, down in the valley, mind also somewhere on the way, and you are just a pure consciousness, just a pure mirror reflecting nothing, no content, just pure consciousness, no object, just pure subjectivity -- that's called samadhi. And then thousands of songs will start arising out of your being, thousands of flowers will bloom. And unless that happens no man is fulfilled, no man can ever be contented; no man should ever be contented before this happens.

One should carry a divine discontent within one's heart. One should go on carrying the divine discontent for this ultimate goal. One should become an intense longing to achieve samadhi, to achieve superconsciousness. It is possible, because it has happened to other human beings; to Jesus, to Buddha, to Zarathustra, to Lao Tzu. It can happen to you, it can happen to everybody. It is everybody's birthright, we just have to claim it.

To be a sannyasin means the beginning of the claim, the beginning of the pilgrimage.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #9

Chapter title: None

(To Ulrike) This is your name: Ma Anand Ulrike. Anand means bliss.

The mystic approach towards life is the search for the ultimate bliss. It has no concern with god as such, directly. Of course, god comes into the experience of the mystic, but his search is for bliss. When he finds bliss, he finds god too, as the other side of the coin. Hence mysticism has no ideology of atheism or theism, It does not have any beliefs; it is simply an enquiry into truth, into the very truth of existence. Anybody can be a mystic -- no belief is required.

Buddha is a mystic without any belief in god, without even any belief in the soul. If one looks from the outside, Buddha is one of the most atheistic persons who has ever walked on the earth. But if one looks from within his being, then he is the greatest theist ever. That is the mystery of mysticism.

Ordinary religion believes -- the mystic experiences. And about bliss there can be no quarrel, no

argumentation everybody is seeking it. The theist, the atheist, the Christian, the Hindu, the Mohammedan, the Catholic, the communist -- everybody is seeking it. And only man, animals, birds, trees -- all that is, is moving towards bliss, knowingly, unknowingly. The mystic moves knowingly -- that's where the difference comes in, the difference that really makes a difference, because if you are moving unknowingly it is almost impossible to achieve it. It is only through deep deep consciousness that one can attain to the ultimate peak of bliss.

Ulrike (her name) is beautiful. It means wolf. It represents three things. The wolf is one of the most wild animals. The person who wants really to be blissful has to get rid of the so-called civilisation. He has to be wild, wild, like a wolf. He has to drop all the conditionings that culture has imposed upon him, culture means conditioning; civilisation means creating something artificial in you, against nature.

Jesus says 'Unless you are a child again, you will not enter into my kingdom of god.' It would have been far more true if he had said, 'Unless you are an animal again...' because an animal is far more innocent than a child. It is really difficult to find a child who is really a child, absolutely innocent, because even with the first breath we start conditioning him. The moment he opens his eyes the conditioning begins. In fact, the conditioning begins even in the womb.

Now they have found that a child can be taught many things while he is in the womb. And they are working on it, particularly in Soviet Russia. They are developing the whole technology of how to condition the child while he is in the womb so he is a born communist; communism comes in his blood and bones and in his marrow. It is possible, it is not difficult -- it can be done. And in fact for centuries we have been doing it in certain unconscious ways.

For example, whatsoever the mother goes through while the child is in the womb becomes part of the child's mind. If she continuously prays, then that attitude becomes part of the child's inner structure. If she is argumentative, quarrelsome, always fighting, nagging, if she is mean, full of anger, jealousy, then those things are bound to enter into the child because the child functions almost as part of the mother for nine months. Whatsoever happens to the mother is happening deep down in the being of the child too. He is very vulnerable, absolutely vulnerable, very delicate.

The wolf represents the wild state, and man has to be wild again. D.H. Lawrence proposed one thing -- I absolutely support it -- that for one hundred years all educational systems should be closed: all schools, colleges, universities should be closed for one hundred years so that man can become uncivilised again. That will release the natural in man. We have become so suppressed, burdened, by the unnatural, and the unnatural is quantitatively so much that we have started thinking that that is our nature.

Now our habits appear to be our nature and our nature seems to be just a second habit, something secondary. Our values have turned upside-down.

Traditionally the wolf also represents two other things: one is courage, the other is loyalty, And both are essential for a sannyasin. One has to be courageous, courageous to drop all traditions, all the conventions, all the nonsense that centuries have imposed upon us. One has to drop out of history -- that's what courage is. And loyalty,.. not loyalty to an Adolf Hitler, not loyalty to Pope Paul not loyalty to Ayatollah Khomeiniac (sic), but loyalty to existence itself -- not to anybody in particular, not to any dogma, not to any church, but to existence itself. Loyalty to the flowers, loyalty to the trees, to the rivers, to the mountains, a deep trust in whatsoever is -- that's what makes the inner-most core of a sannyasin.

These three things have to be remembered, then bliss is not far away, it is just by the corner. If one can manage to be natural, loyal, courageous, if one is capable of trust and surrender to nature, then bliss happens of its own accord. It starts showering on you -- it pours dogs and cats! One cannot contain it. And I am saying dogs and cats because a wolf can understand that language!

How long will you be here?

Two months.

That's good. You will meet many dogs and many cats -- beware!

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #10

Chapter title: None

Love is the most healing force in the world, nothing goes deeper than love. It heals not only the body, not only the mind, but also the soul. If one can love then all one's wounds disappear. Then one becomes whole -- and to be whole is to be holy.

Unless one is whole one is not holy. The physical health is a superficial phenomenon. It can happen through medicine, it can happen through science. But the innermost core of one's being can be healed only through love. Those who know the secret of love know the greatest secret of life. Then there is no misery for them, no old age, no death. Of course the body will become old and the body will die but love reveals to you the truth that you are not the body. you are pure consciousness, you have no birth, no death. And to live in that pure consciousness is to live in tune with god. Bliss is a by-product of living in tune with god. Move deeper into the phenomenon of love, in the mystery of love.

Ordinarily people are afraid of love for the simple reason that they cannot fulfil the basic requirement. The basic requirement becomes a great hindrance for them. The basic requirement is dropping of the ego . And that's what sannyas is all about: it is surrendering the ego.

The moment you surrender the ego, love starts growing in you because the hindrance is removed. You start becoming more and more loving, and ultimately one becomes love itself. Then all bliss and all truth is yours.

Dance is one of the deepest meditations possible, for the simple reason that when dance reaches to its climax the dancer disappears. There is only dance -- there is nobody dancing. If the dancer remains then the peak has not yet been achieved, the moment you achieve the peak you are no more there -- that's the paradox of dance. Hence dance has been used for centuries in the secret ceremonies of all mystery schools.

Sufis have developed it almost into a science, because if one goes on dancing, at a certain moment the body is transcended. But the mind remains. If one still goes on dancing, at a certain other moment the mind is transcended. But the idea of 'I am' the soul as a separate entity, still persists. If one continues to dance, at a certain moment even the soul is transcended. Then all identities of the ego are dissolved. The dance is there and for the first time it is perfect, it is total.

In those moments one catches a glimpse for the first time that existence is full of god, that god is not a person but a quality. It is like a fragrance that surrounds the whole existence. But it happens only when you disappear.

It is said that Jalaluddin Rumi, one of the greatest Sufi mystics, became enlightened after thirty-six hours of continuous dancing; he danced and danced and danced. He forgot everything. People thought he had gone mad. He was not even conscious of the passage of time. The day turned into night, the night turned into day, again the day turned into night. Thirty-six hours... and then a moment came, the doors opened. Suddenly he was transported to another realm and another dimension of being.

That's how the whirling dervishes were born. Jalaluddin Rumi is the founder of the school. They still go on dancing, but now it is simply a ritual. That's one of the greatest misfortunes that always happens.

Buddha became enlightened after seven days sitting silently, doing nothing, not moving at all. It is just

the other pole of dancing -- dancing means movement. Hence Sufism is one pole and Zen another. They are diametrically opposite but leading to the same point. After seven days of continuous sitting he also forgot about time, the passage of time, and then he evaporated, Now Buddhist monks still go on sitting, but now it is a ritual. They go on looking at the time. And that is the basic requirement -- that you should forget time because time means mind.

Once a Buddhist monk, bhikshu Jagdish Kashyap, a very famous Buddhist, came to see me and he said that now he would have to leave because it was time for his meditation. I said, 'Time? Has time anything to do with meditation?' He said, 'Yes, every day I meditate for one hour.' I asked him, 'How do you manage to know that the one hour has passed?' He said, 'I have to look at the watch two or three times.' I said, 'You are simply fooling yourself. For seven days Buddha was not even aware of when the sun rose, when the sun set, when it was day and it was night. He became completely oblivious of everything, then he attained. You are simply waiting your time. Do something else; if you want to be so attached to time, then better you do something else.'

Meditation has nothing to do with time. You cannot meditate for a time being; it has to become a quality that spreads all over your life. Otherwise everything, becomes a ritual.

My message to my sannyasins is: let dance be your very quality of life, or let silence, inactivity, be your very quality of life. Even walking you are still, calm and quiet.

There are two types of people: one who will reach through action, and one who will reach through inaction. As I see it, it will be the right process for you to move through the door of dance, action, movement, creativity. You will find it easier, in tune with your being. But it has to become your life, and then one day it happens. Without any notification, without any message to you that it is going to happen now, it suddenly happens. You are taken aback, you are in for a surprise when it happens. It always happens like a miracle.

Bliss brings many songs to your being, it brings much celebration. Just as spring brings many flowers to the trees, bliss brings many songs to you. And when they come out of bliss they have a certain quality which can only be described as sacred. It is not of this world, it belongs to the beyond. It is something unearthly.

If bliss does not bring many songs to your being then your bliss is imaginary. Then you have imagined that the spring has come but the proof will be the trees, the proof will be the songs that will start arising in your heart. Great poetry explodes... it is a poetic explosion - even for people who are very unpoetic, who have never thought of poetry.

Mohammed was never a poet and he had never thought of poetry, but when it happened, he burst out singing. That's how the Koran was born, and it contains some of the most beautiful poems. He was uneducated, hence the Koran does not have the flavor of a cultured treatise, it is not a book written by a scholar. He was not even a poet in the ordinary sense; hence it has not followed any rules of poetry - any rhythm, any meter - but still, there is nothing comparable to it. It carries something of his bliss. Those words are transmuted. They have passed through his heart, they still beat with his heartbeat.

One should not read the Koran, one should only listen to it, recite it. It is not language, it is not grammar; it is not philosophy, it is not theology. If one looks for theology it is a very poor thing. If one looks for philosophy it looks very ordinary. But if one simply listens to the Koran recited, one can be overwhelmed. Without understanding a single word of the Arabic, it will touch and move your heart because then it will penetrate as pure music.

This has to be the criterion: if bliss really happens it is bound to bring many songs to you.

Your so-called saints look so sad that I cannot believe that they have experienced God; they must have imagined it. They are not dancing, they are not singing, they are not celebrating. They look almost dead, dull; they don't have any joy. They don't seem to have any life; they seem to live a posthumous type of existence. They look ghostly. Maybe the holy ghost has visited them, but not God. And the holy ghost does not seem to be very holy either! Ghosts are not known to be holy; they are unholy people. One should keep oneself out of their way.

Your saints look ghostly, dead, utterly dead. They cannot laugh, they cannot love, they cannot dance, they cannot sing. What kind of religion is that? And this has happened all over the world. It has happened to Christian saints, it has happened to Hindu saints, it has happened to Buddhist saints. It seems to be something almost universal. But Buddha was not like that, neither was Jesus like that, nor was Mohammed like that.

The really religious people were full of juice, full of tremendous life. They were really alive. The

ordinary people are not alive compared to them.

So remember this is a criterion: meditation succeeds only if it brings bliss. And bliss is true only if great celebration explodes in you that goes on and on, that knows no end. It knows only the beginning.

Sannyas is the art of divine acting. You have to live in the world but you have to think of the world only as a big drama. I am against renouncing the world. You have not to escape from the world, you have to live in it, but in a totally different way. Don't take it seriously, take it very light-heartedly, take it as a cosmic joke. It is a cosmic joke. In the East we call it god's play. If it is god's play then we are just actors in it, and nobody takes acting seriously.

You can be a king in a drama, but you don't take it seriously. As the curtain falls you forget all about your being a king; it does not go to your head. That's how a sannyasin has to take the whole of life. If you are rich, don't let it go to your head, or if you are poor, don't take it seriously. We are all playing roles: play them as beautifully as possible but continuously remember, that it is all a game. And when death comes the final curtain drops. Then all actors disappear. They all disappear into one universal energy.

If one can live in the world remembering this, one is totally freed from all misery. Misery is a by-product of taking things seriously and bliss is a by-product of taking things lightly. Take life as fun; rejoice in it.

Bliss is the god of gods. The real search of every being is bliss. Sannyas is not interested in god directly because that creates unnecessary complexities. There are believers and there are non-believers -- and even the believers differ. There are three hundred religions on the earth and almost three thousand sects within those religions. That means there are three thousand concepts about god. If one wants to enquire into god one gets into an unnecessary puzzle and one cannot sort it out. It is impossible.

My own experience is a search for bliss and you will also find god. But then it will not be a belief, it will be your experience. In fact god will be another name for bliss and nothing more.

So here, everybody is welcome, because my concern is scientific. Meditation does not require *any* belief in fact it requires an open mind, unprejudiced. A Christian can meditate, a Buddhist can meditate, a Hindu can meditate, a Catholic can meditate, a communist can meditate -- there is no problem about it, because it is only going inwards, within your own being. It is the art of becoming silent. Even the atheist cannot deny that there are moments when he is more silent. He has to concede that much because he knows it is there are moments when he is in a turmoil and there are moments when he is absolutely calm.

Meditation is nothing but a deepening process of your inner calm. Once your inner silence has become total, suddenly you become aware of the phenomenon which is called god.

Seek bliss and you will find god. Try to find god and you will simply find more and more conflicting philosophies. You will get more and more confused. Rather than getting silence and peace, you will be getting more and more mad.

So let this be clear from the very beginning: our concern is not religious, our concern is scientific. Of course it leads to religion, but that is another thing. It happens of its own accord.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #11

Chapter title: None

There is nothing more noble than meditation. There is nothing more divine either. Meditation is the bridge between the earth and the sky, between the dust and the divine, between the base metal and gold.

Meditation is the process of rebirth. It is giving birth to yourself. It is a process -- magical in the sense that it is incomprehensible to the intellect, also magical in the sense that it is something which is not measurable by any scientific method. It is something beyond science.

The historians think that magic preceded science, that before science came there was magic. My own understanding is totally different. Science will be succeeded by magic, it is not preceded by magic. When science has fulfilled all the ordinary needs of humanity, then only can magic arrive on the scene -- because magic is something higher than science, it is not lower. The lower can precede, the higher succeeds it. But magic has not been understood up till now.

By magic I don't mean that what the ordinary magicians go on doing in the name of magic. Those are all tricks, tricks to befool people -- games, entertainment. It is not true magic.

True magic is known only by the Buddhas. They are not known as magicians because their magic is something which is not at all concerned with entertainment, it is concerned with transformation. It is only for the chosen few, not for the crowds.

When science has fulfilled every ordinary need then suddenly there will be a great hunger, a great thirst felt all around the earth. It is already being felt by affluent societies, by rich societies, by rich people everywhere, because when ordinary needs are fulfilled, extraordinary needs arise.

A man who is hungry cannot think of meditation; it is impossible. He thinks of bread and butter. A man who has no shelter thinks of shelter, of a house. A man who is naked thinks of clothes. It is natural. But when all these needs are fulfilled, suddenly one becomes aware that there is something more to life than all the comforts and conveniences which science can provide, which money can purchase; there is something which cannot be possessed. Which cannot be got from the outside, which has to be grown in the inner consciousness.

For the first time one becomes interested in meditation. For the first time one feels life is meaningless unless some transcendental meaning is touched, becomes available. Unless the doors of something unknowable and mysterious are opened to you, unless some splendor descends on you and fills you and all your emptiness disappears, one feels on the verge of committing suicide. That's why in rich societies more people commit suicide, more people go insane than in poor societies. The poor societies cannot afford insanity; they are so poor, they cannot afford suicide. They don't even have means to live, how can they afford suicide? They don't have any feeling for inner meaning. Their outer life is constantly taking all their attention. Hence I say, magic is not something that preceded science but something that succeeds science. And the days of magic are on the way.

My sannyasins have to become magicians in the sense that they have to be meditators and they have to learn the inner art of giving birth to themselves.

The first birth is through the parents -- it is biological. The second birth is spiritual. It is by you. through you, to you; nobody else is involved in it at all. Even the matter can only indicate the way, then you have to go all alone.

And by meditation I mean a state of thoughtless awareness. Slowly slowly one has to become so alert, watchful of the whole process of thought that not a single thought passes by unnoticed. I am not telling you to fight with the thoughts, I am not telling you to push them, throw them out, I am not telling you to repress them. Those are not the ways to transcend. Just become alert -- nothing else has to be done, nothing at all. Just watchfulness is enough.... And the magic, and the miracle.

As your watchfulness grows your thoughts are reduced, automatically. If your watchfulness is one per cent your thoughts are ninety-nine per cent. If your watchfulness is ninety-nine per cent, your thoughts are only one per cent. If your watchfulness is one hundred per cent then there are no thoughts any more, then the mirror is utterly empty. And only in that mirror is god reflected, only in that mirror do you encounter

reality. And that encounter transforms, gives you a new birth, for the first time makes your life significant, meaningful.

Life is a divine celebration. For centuries religion has been against life. Because of that it could attract only the pathological people, the ill people, the people who were not really intelligent, healthy, loving. It attracted all kinds of third-rate minds, for the simple reason that only a stupid person can be against life. An intelligent person is bound to feel that life is divine, that life is god. It is impossible for intelligence *not* to feel it. It is absolutely inevitable for an intelligent person to see the beauty of existence, to feel the music that surrounds nature, to feel the stars, the flowers, the mountains, the rivers, the people. So many expressions of the divine, so many forms of the formless -- the intelligent person is bound to become aware of it. Nobody has to tell him.

Intelligence means sensitivity. All your sense are functioning at the maximum. Your eyes see totally, then naturally you will become aware of beauty. Only a blind man is not aware of beauty. Your ears are able to hear totally, then how can you avoid the music of the wind passing through the pines? If your body is alive, vibrant, how can you remain closed to the wind, to the sun, to the rain? These are all the ways god comes to you, these are all the ways of his approach towards you. That's how he comes in disguise. But only the intelligent person can understand. The stupid will not be able to see. He will only see the veil and he will not see the veiled one.

And it is easier for the stupid to renounce because escaping from anything needs no intelligence, it needs no genius. I have seen thousands of monks -- Hindu, Christian, Jaina, Buddhist -- and I was struck by the fact that almost all of them were stupid people.

When I became aware of the fact I was really surprised because I thought that I would be coming across the most intelligent people of the world. But the more I came in contact with the so-called saints -- and India is full of them, no country has as many saints as India... Hindus alone have five thousand monks, and then there are Mohammedans, and then there are Christians and then there are Jainas and Buddhists and then there are other small sects. The whole country is full of our so-called mahatmas, and I have come in contact with almost all kinds of saints.

Slowly slowly I had to come to the conclusion that something is basically wrong, because why are only stupid people attracted towards religion? The intelligent person avoids religion. If he is courageous he denies religion, he becomes against religion, he becomes atheistic. If he is not courageous he only pays formal homage to religion -- but just formal, so that nobody takes note of the fact that he is not part of the crowd. He does not want to disturb his ordinary life. He wants the crowd to know that he is with them. But his belief in god is formal, his going to the temple and the church is formal. he goes because others go. He goes because it is helpful, convenient, otherwise you fall apart from the crowd, and you have to manage to be with the crowd. So there is nothing wrong if for one hour every Sunday you go to the church to listen to some stupid sermon. It is worth it, because it gives your life a kind of formal attunement with the crowd.

Those who are courageous become rebels. But both are against religion, deep down. For formal person is also against religion. He believes because he has to believe, otherwise he has no love for it. The cause is somewhere in religion itself because he (some words missing) it has been life-negative.

I am proposing a totally new approach towards religion. Religion has to be life-affirmative. It has to enhance your life, it has to make it more beautiful; it has to be creative, not escapist. It has not to dull your senses but to make them more sensitive. To me there is no god other than life itself, and there is no temple other than existence itself. Then everything becomes a divine celebration. And when I say everything, I mean everything: life is a celebration, death is celebration; meeting is celebration, departing is celebration; childhood is celebration, youth is celebration, old age celebration -- different kinds of celebration. And my sannyasins have to learn to celebrate everything.

If you start celebrating everything you become a real worshiper. And you need not believe in anything; you need not go to any church or temple. Wherever you are, whatsoever you are doing becomes your prayer, becomes your meditation, becomes your sadhana, your discipline.

To me a sannyasin should become more and more aware of all that surrounds him, all that is within and without. And the more you are aware, the more you will be ready to dance out of sheer joy, out of sheer gratitude, out of thankfulness to the whole.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #12

Chapter title: None

Truth is not achieved through thinking. It is not a conclusion of thought -- just the contrary: it is the experience of a thoughtless awareness. Hence philosophy cannot help, it has never helped anybody. It goes round and round in circles. It cannot penetrate to the centre, it remains on the circumference. It is a peripheral activity for the simple reason that mind itself is peripheral. Hence anything out of mind is going to remain peripheral, it can never be central.

Mind is not something intrinsic to us. We come into the world without a mind. The mind is slowly created by the society, by the state, by the parents, by the surroundings, by the climate -- a thousand and one things are involved in it. But you don't bring it with you.

By mind I simply mean all that is given to you by others and which becomes part of your memory. The memory system is within you, but whatsoever is fed to that system comes from the outside, and that becomes your mind. Mind cannot know the unknown. It can only go round and round within the world of the known. It is just like a computer: whatsoever you feed to a computer you can get out of it.

But truth is something that is intrinsic to our being. We bring it with us. Nobody gives us truth, nobody can give it to us, it is untransferable. But it is our very being. We have to die for it within our own selves. And the art of digging for it is meditation. Meditation simply means making an effort to transcend mind, to transcend all that has been given to you by others so that you can be totally your own nature. Then you are simply yourself you have found the truth. When there is no trace of anything, no impact of anything, no impression left on you from the outside, when you are just a tabula rasa, a total emptiness as far as outside impressions are concerned, you have discovered... you have come home.

Everybody has the truth within his own being but very few people penetrate to the centre, they go on running around the circumference. The circumferential activity is philosophy, and the jump from the circumference to the centre is what I call religion.

Religion cannot be many. Philosophies can be many. There are as many philosophies as there are people, because there are as many philosophies as there are minds; each person has his own philosophy. But truth is the same. Your innermost being and my innermost being are not two separate things; at the centre we all meet and we are one. Only on the surface are we different.

It is just like the waves of the ocean: on the surface each wave is separate from the other waves, but deep down there is only one ocean, there are no more any waves. That oceanic experience, that experience of oneness is truth.

And the beauty is that you have not to go anywhere in search of it; one has to stop going, one has to start sitting. Hence one of the most meditative traditions in the world, Zen, says that just sitting is enough. If one can simply sit, doing nothing -- no action of the body, no action of the mind -- Just sitting in silence, one

achieves truth. The word 'zen' comes from the same root as 'dhyana'; it is a Japanese form of the Sanskrit word 'dhyana'. The meaning is the same: truth is within you.

In Jesus' words: The kingdom of god is within you. That is only a difference of language, that is his way of saying the same thing. That has to be remembered: you cannot get it from anyone, you cannot get it from any scripture; you cannot get it even from your own mind, but it is already there. You just have to dig to the very innermost core of your being. The moment you touch your centre you have arrived.

And truth liberates. Truth liberates you from all misery, from all anguish, from death, from fear, from greed; truth simply liberates you from all kinds of problems. It solves everything. It simply makes your life a moment-to-moment celebration.

One can be consecrated to god only in deep love; not in fear, not in greed. And the so-called religious people are religious out of fear, out of greed ... which are not different things but two aspects of the same coin. Fear and greed are two polarities of the same energy.

The fearful person is always greedy, remember; the greedy person is always fearful. If you find one you will always find the other. It may not be apparent, but if you just look a little deeper you are bound to find it. If one disappears the other disappears. It is just like the negative and positive poles of electricity: only both together can create electricity.

That's why all the religions have created hell and heaven: they are projections of fear and greed. Fear has created hell, greed has created heaven. And the people who assemble in the churches, in the temples, in the mosques, are there not for love; they are afraid -- afraid of death, afraid of life, afraid of love, afraid of everything. They want god as a protector. They want god as a security, as a guarantee. God is a kind of supernatural insurance for them.

Hence if fear disappears their god will disappear. Their god is false. Or they are there for greed; they are so greedy that they are always asking for more and more. Not only here, but even after death they want more and more. They want the same pleasures of life on a far grander scale in heaven, but it is the same greed, no difference at all. If their greed disappears their god will disappear.

Hence many religions have not risen above human psychology. That's why I love these two people, Lao Tzu and Buddha: they are the only persons in the whole history of humanity who have talked in terms of maturity.

Buddha has said that fearlessness is a prerequisite for a real religion; greedlessness has to be the foundation of a true and authentic religious life. But one can be fearless and greedless only if one is full of love. It is the same energy that becomes fear, that becomes greed, that becomes love. We don't have many energies -- remember it as a fundamental of life. One of the most important secrets of life is that we have a single energy source. You can make anything out of it. It is like gold: you can make any kind of ornament out of it, but all ornaments are made of the same gold. Exactly is the case with our energy: it is one energy but if you invest it in fear and greed then of course it is not available for love.

And the love of the people who are full of greed and fear is also nothing but fear and greed. Everything will be contaminated by their fear and greed. They will do everything out of fear. And we are taught the same. Parents teach children to love them and they create fear in them: 'If you don't love, you will be punished. If you love, you will be rewarded.' So they are made to clearly understand that if you want punishment then don't love your parents, don't respect your parents. But who wants punishment? If you want rewards then love your parents. But this is not true love.

So the very source is corrupted; from the very beginning a child is corrupted. Then he will pretend to love his wife or husband just out of fear and greed. It may be either greed fear -- one will be on the surface, the other will be hidden deep down behind it.

There are people like Dale Carnegie who are very influential in America. It is said that Dale Carnegie's books have been sold more than anybody else's books -- next only to the Bible. So he seems to be the most important philosopher of the American approach to life. And what does he say? -- he says, if you cannot love, at least pretend. Say to your wife as many times as possible "I love you." Say to your husband "I love you." Say it in as many ways as possible: bring flowers, write letters, bring presents. Don't forget her birthday -- that will make her happy. And this is all rubbish! How can pretensions make anybody happy? But this is what is being taught to people. And the same is true about god.

The Talmud says: Be afraid of god, because he is very jealous. Don't love anybody else and don't respect anybody else. Pour all your respect and love towards god because god himself has said 'I am a very jealous god.'

Now god jealous? -- that is absolutely contradictory, that is impossible to conceive. Buddha would have laughed. Lao Tzu would have burned the Talmud immediately for the simple reason that this is just creating fear in people.

The Talmud says: God is not nice, he is not your uncle; be afraid of him. That's why he is called father, because each child is afraid of the father. No child is afraid of the uncle -- remember. Every child loves the uncle and every uncle is nice to children. But 'father' means you have to be afraid: he is the authority and he shows his authority in many ways. He does not miss any opportunity to show you who he is, to cut you down to size. That's why god is called father, not uncle... because if you call god uncle then there are possibilities to persuade him 'Uncle, let us go to the movie tonight,' or you can chitchat with him or you can gossip or you can sit in his lap and pull his beard. But with 'father' you have to be alert, watchful, respectful.

My own experience is that it is because of fear and greed that all religions have become corrupted -- but the priest lives on those two things.

The *real* master has to help his disciples to be free of fear and greed. He has to help you to be full of love, and then, out of love a totally different vision of god arises -- not as a person, not at all. Then the whole existence starts feeling godlier, divine. Then there is *real* surrender, then one can be consecrated to god -- but that comes out of love. One can die joyously for love because love is far more important than anything else; even life is secondary. One can sacrifice one's life if love is there.

So I don't teach god, I teach love, because I know love slowly opens the door of the divine and brings the divine into your life without any effort, without any imposition from the outside.

And my kind of approach cannot be exploited by priests; it is impossible.

Lao Tzu has not been exploited by the priests -- there are no churches and no priesthods. Jesus has been very exploited, Krishna has been exploited, Mohammed has been exploited for the simple reason that they did not make it absolutely clear that basically man has to be fearless and greedless; only then can he be religious.

A sannyasin has to be blissful, a sannyasin has to be a poet, a singer, a dancer, a musician; in short, a sannyasin has to be creative.

Creativity means love. Without love there is no creativity. And creativity also means that you would like to share, that you are not miserly, that you would like to pour yourself into existence. That is the only true prayer, that is the only true worship. When the dancer disappears in the dance there is prayer, when the musician disappears in the music there is prayer.

And I am using dance and music and singing and poetry as metaphors. Whatsoever you are doing has to be a dance, has to be a song, has to be a celebration - whatsoever you are doing. It does not matter what it is.

One of the great Indian mystics, Kabir, was a weaver and he continued to weave even after he became enlightened. He would sing songs while he was weaving and making clothes. And his disciples would say, "You can stop it now - whatsoever you need, we are ready to fulfill."

But he would say, "That is not the point. I am a weaver, I know only one art, and that is my way of praying, that's my way of dancing - I don't know any other dance. When I am weaving clothes I dissolve myself into existence. And when somebody comes to purchase, I know it is god himself who has come, because there is nobody else except him. Only he exists."

Another great mystic, Gora, was a potter, and he remained a potter his whole life, even after his enlightenment. He had thousands of followers but he continued to make pots, he insisted on it; even to the very last day of his life he was making pots. And while he would be making his pot - mixing, preparing, working on the wheel - he would be singing. He said, "This is my way to contribute something to existence. God has given me so much. I am a poor man - I cannot give anything else. This is all that I can give: just a little thankfulness, that's all. And life is short, I will soon be gone. Meanwhile I should share whatsoever I can."

So whatsoever you are doing, that has to become your dance. Religion should not be a separate activity, it should not be apart from life, it should become your very life. And that's what my whole effort here is in my commune. Every sannyasin is working, but with a different flavor, a different quality. Whatsoever one is doing - cooking, washing clothes, or gardening - it is all prayer, it is all meditation, it is all celebration. Everybody is contributing in his own way, the way he knows to contribute.

And as the commune grows, more and more sannyasins will be participating, more and more activities will become available, so all kinds of people can contribute in their own small ways. But a sannyasin should not be an escapist. When religion becomes something apart from life it creates escapism. When religion

means life then it becomes creativity. And my sannyasins have to be blissful, cheerful, because god is : hence rejoice! There is no need to be sad, to be serious. Take life as lightly as possible.

The more lightly you take it, the closer you will be to enlightenment. The more lightly you take it, the more you will become full of light.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #13

Chapter title: None

The only way to help others is first to become awakened. If those who are not awakened yet try to help ... their intentions are good but the results are going to be just the opposite. Their wishes are good but they cannot be fulfilled; they are not capable of fulfilling them. They have not even been able to help themselves.

That's where all the religions have failed. They create missionaries; they create the idea in peoples' mind that service is the way to god. It is true: service *is* the way to god. But the sleepy person cannot serve, cannot love. It is impossible. We can try, but he will only create more mess.

The so-called servants of humanity have proved more mischievous than anybody else. They have been the cause of much misery, for the simple reason that nobody told them you cannot give to others what you yourself have not got in the first place. If you want to share love you have to be full of love. If you want to share bliss you have to be overflowing with bliss. If you want people to move towards god you have to be radiating god. Just words won't help, even acts won't help, because they will be just superficial.

Hence my approach is totally different, I say religion is basically selfish. First it teaches you to become blissful. That is utter selfishness, there cannot be anything more selfish than that. But out of that selfishness altruism is born. Out of that selfishness service is born. Out of that selfishness you can become a great help. And people are in need of help, in need of light, in need of guidance; they are groping in the dark. But a person who himself is asleep cannot wake others; first he has to wake up himself -- that is my fundamental -- and then everything follows of its own accord. Hence I never talk about service; there is no need.

I talk only about the rosebush, how to take care of the rosebush. The flowers will come of their own accord, you will be full of roses. If the right care is being taken care of the rosebush, roses are bound to come -- it is just a natural law. Hence I never talk about the consequences. And consequences cannot be put before the causes, the effects cannot precede the causes.

The first thing a sannyasin has to do is to help himself. For the time being forget the whole worlds all its misery, oppression, the darkness that is becoming darker and darker every day, the impending third world war which can happen any day. Forget all about that because you cannot do anything about it right now. But you can do something about yourself right now and that will trigger a process in you which may prove of immense help to the whole humanity, to the whole future of humanity.

Meditation is a kind of farming -- inner farming. We have the seeds but we have never bothered to do anything about them . We have the soil but we have never prepared it. Seasons come and go and our inner landscape remains barren for the simple reason that we never look inwards we are focussed on the outside.

Sannyas means a turning in, and then all that you need is already provided for, you have brought it with you. It is intrinsic, it is born with you. It cannot be taken away from you. It is part of your nature, it is inseparably part of your being. But something has to be done about it -- it is only potential. It has to be transformed into the actual. It is only seeds. Those seeds contain millions of flowers.

The soil is there, the seeds are there, the sun rises, the seasons come, the clouds come. God goes on providing a thousand and one opportunities, but the farmer is obsessed with his own being. He never looks within his own being.

All that is needed is a one-hundred-and-eighty degree turn and you are immediately transported into another world -- Jesus calls it the kingdom of god. Gautam the Buddha has actually called himself a farmer for a simple reason that it is a kind of farming. It transforms you, it brings you to the peak of your possibilities. And when all your possibilities are actualised there is tremendous joy, there is contentment, fulfillment, there is celebration.

Love is the greatest gift of God, but it is given only as a potential; you have to actualize it. It is given only as a possibility; if one does not pay attention to it one may ever know one's own treasures. It is there waiting for you, but you are never at the center of your being, you are running on the circumference. That's what everybody is doing.

Our mind is the circumference of our being, and to go on thinking is what I call running around the circumference. One thought leads to another thought, and so on, so forth; it is an unending process. You have to jump out of it to find the center of your being. You cannot find the center by running faster around the circumference, because it does not exist there. So it is not a question of speed: one has to jump out of the circumference. It is a quantum leap. That's what I call meditation. It is a jump from mind to no-mind, from thought to no-thought, from desire to no-desire. And immediately you are standing at the Golden Gate. That's what we have been searching, for lives. And it has never been far away; it has always been within us, it has never left us even for a single moment. But one can go on missing the opportunity.

In fact missing the opportunity has become our habit. We have become so accustomed to thinking that it seems the hardest thing in the world not to think - even for a single moment. But it is not as difficult as we think. One just has to try and one has to be a little patient, because habits die hard.

If one can be patient and go on watching the mind without doing anything about it, slowly slowly one slips out of the mind. Suddenly one day the mind is no more there. And the first glimpse of no-mind is such a revelation that one is never the same again. One is reborn.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Unless you are born again, you shall not enter into my kingdom of god." He is talking about this rebirth.

My path is the path of bliss. It is not of sadness, it is not of seriousness. Sadness and seriousness are pathological. The so-called saints who appear very serious, are really ill people. They are not whole. They have become incapable of laughter, they have become incapable of cheerfulness -- and to be incapable of cheerfulness and laughter is really to commit suicide. They *have* committed suicide. But we have worshipped these people for centuries because we are worshippers of death, not of life. And we worship a person who becomes dead even while he is alive, who starts living a kind of post-humous existence. He becomes a mahatma, a sage, a saint.

As far as I am concerned, what he needs is just psychological treatment. Maybe ordinary psychoanalysis will not help him, he may need electroshocks. Nothing will bring him to his senses unless he is given really great shocks of electricity. That may revive him.

Sometimes it happens... Just the other day I was reading in the newspapers, one man had gone blind for ten years and the doctors had declared that his blindness was incurable, nothing could be done about it.

He was sitting outside his home in the garden and there was great thunder and lightning. The lightning struck his home, it destroyed his home, but the shock was such that he started seeing. Something inside his brain changed its tracks. Some nuts and bolts may have gone loose became tight, or maybe they had become tight and now they became loose ... and he started seeing!

Doctors are puzzled -- how did it happen? The shock did something.

Sometimes it happens that a shock can cure a person Or a certain illness. And to me, the serious and sad kind of religion is one of the most serious sicknesses. It is far more dangerous than cancer. One can survive cancer but one cannot survive this so-called spirituality. The cancer can destroy only your body but this so-called spirituality destroys even your soul.

My vision of religion is totally different, diametrically opposite to what has been taught to people for centuries. I believe in life and I don't believe in anything else. To me life is god and to me to live totally is the only religion and to live blissfully is the only prayer.

That has to be the path of my sannyasins. Rejoice, be cheerful. Drop all kinds of seriousness lurking anywhere in your mind. Simply throw them out, cleanse yourself completely. And once you start living cheerfully, joyfully, once you know the taste of a dancing life, of a singing life, no other proof of god is needed - that is the only proof that god is, Only bliss gives you the proof. It is not a question of arguments, it is a question of experiencing.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #14

Chapter title: None

The coward can not cross the boundaries of misery, it is impossible. Although he wants to, he has no courage to drop the known. Misery is all that he knows. He clings to it, he clings to his wounds, to his hurts. He lives in a contradiction. The contradiction is that he does not want to be miserable... But it is not only a question of not wanting, it is a question of taking the courageous step of going beyond the boundaries of the known. That courage is missing; hence he goes on hoping that something, some miracle will happen. But no miracle ever happens in the life of a coward. It cannot happen, he prevents its happening.

Miracles abound when you have courage. They happen each moment, because each moment the courageous man goes on dropping the known. That's what real courage is. Whatsoever is known has to be dropped. You have lived it, you have experienced it; there is no need to cling to it. Clinging to it will prevent the new from happening. The new needs space; if the old is occupying the space, then where can it happen? The courageous man goes on dropping the past, the old, the known, and is always ready to go into the unknown. It needs guts, because one never knows what is going to happen in the next moment. It is unpredictable. The familiar is predictable. Even if it is miserable you are familiar with it and you have become accustomed to it.

Bliss is only for the courageous. Bliss is really the constant dropping of the past. Bliss is dying to the past, being born anew each moment. That's what bliss is.

Except for meditation there is no deliverance. Nobody else can deliver you from your misery, from your

ignorance, from your bondage, it is only you who can save yourself. But people always want somebody else to do the work for them, hence they go on waiting for the messiah to come. That is impossible.

Christians think that Jesus delivered them, Jesus only delivers himself and he helped those who were ready to go into deep meditation with him. He has not delivered humanity from its pain, limitations, misery. And those fools are again waiting for another coming of Christ, Jews have been waiting for three thousand years. And the same is the case with the Hindus: they are waiting for god's incarnation again. They can't learn a simple lesson, that the past incarnations have been of no use.

Buddha is the only person in the whole history of humanity who told the truth exactly as it is, He said, Be a light unto yourself; nobody else can do it for you.

Of course, Buddhas can point the way, but everything else *you* have to do. It is totally up to you to be miserable or to be blissful, to live in ignorance or to be full of light. And there is no other way to become full of light than meditation.

Pour your whole energy into meditation.

Bliss is the ultimate truth, hence only those who know how to be blissful can know the truth. The miserable and the sad and the serious cannot find it. The first step towards truth is cheerfulness, a deep inner dance.

One has to drop all that prevents that dance, one has to drop all that prevents one's life becoming a celebration. And we are all carrying many conditionings which are against blissfulness. In fact, religion has become almost synonymous with seriousness. Religious people look so sad, as if it is a sin to laugh. They cannot sing, they cannot dance, they cannot enjoy anything. They are against life. That is not the way to find the truth.

Love life, love the small things of life, the very small things. Eating, walking, sleeping -- just the ordinary activities of life have to be transformed into delight. They have to be done with such joy that they all become a dance. Then truth is not far away, then each moment it becomes closer and closer. In the very moment your bliss is total, truth descends in you -- and truth liberates.

Meditation has to be a joyous activity, it has to be a song. One has not to do it as a duty, one has to enjoy it as fun, as play. If you do meditation as a duty you will miss the whole point. Then it cannot happen to you. It can happen only in a very light mood, in a very non-serious mood. Seriousness is heavy, and anything heavy drags you downwards. You have to be as light as a small child playing on the beach, collecting seashells, colored stones, running here and there, almost part of the wind and the sea and the sand and the sun. When that lightness is there you have wings, you can fly upwards. And meditation means an upward movement of your energies.

Science has discovered gravitation - that is the downwards movement of things. Long before the discovery of gravitation religion discovered a totally different law; I call it the law of grace. To make it appear more scientific you can call it the law of levitation. It uplifts you, it takes you upwards. But for that you have to lose weight, and the serious mind cannot lose weight. That's why I don't think your so-called saints have ever tasted what meditation is; they are only pretending. Out of a hundred so-called saints, ninety-nine are pretenders.

And remember the exception only proves the rule. That one may be pretending seriousness, that's all; deep down he must be laughing and enjoying. He may be just pretending seriousness - sometimes that has to be done.

The great German mystic, Meister Eckhart, had to do it because of the stupid Christian priesthood and the pope and the church. They were so foolish a people... in fact only foolish people become priests and popes. Now they cannot find anybody else - they have found a Polack to become a pope. This is a great discovery!

Meister Eckhart was a man of great joy, but he pretended on the outside that he was just an ordinary conventional saint. Only when he died were his writings discovered. His writings are tremendously beautiful. If they had been known before he died he would have been killed like Jesus, crucified by the Christians. The same is true about Saint Francis: he was a very light-hearted man. Just think, he used to talk to the trees and to the fish and even to his donkey; he would say to him "Brother Donkey, how are you?" When he died he thanked his disciples; he also thanked his donkey, and he said to him, "You have served me with such love that I am immensely thankful to you." Now, such a man cannot be serious, but he had to pretend seriousness, otherwise those fools would simply kill him - and that would not help anybody.

Real saints have always been men of love and laughter. Jesus says again and again to his disciples, "Rejoice, rejoice. I say again and again, rejoice!" That's my whole message. And it is only in rejoicing that you will come to know what meditation is, because when you are really rejoicing, mind disappears, and the disappearance of mind is meditation. You suddenly fall into a state of no-mind.

There is nothing more meditative than celebration. And the whole art of religion is how to transform your life into a constant celebration, into an unending celebration. Celebrate everything, then meditation comes of its own accord, it follows you like a shadow.

Love is a purifying process; it purifies you so totally that after the purification you are no more the same person. But because of that many people avoid love. They don't want to change so radically, they want to remain as they are. They want love also but they want love as they are; they don't want to go through a radical change. But that is impossible.

Love is an alchemical revolution; hence very few people gather courage to go into love. The first problem arises with the ego because that is the most ugly thing. Love demands that you surrender it. That is the beginning of the purification, that is entering into fire. And if you can drop the ego then naturally you will be able to drop many more things. That becomes a test. Then you will be able to drop possessiveness, you will be able to drop jealousies, you will be able to drop all efforts, gross and subtle, of dominating. You will be able to drop all politics... because people go on playing all kinds of politics in their relationships.

What they call love is only one per cent love and ninety-nine per cent politics. Unless one is ready to drop all that politics, love cannot happen. To allow love one has to be able to pass through the fire of love. But it is not harmful, Yes, in the beginning it is painful, because many things that we have lived with for so long start being burned by the fire. But finally it is realised that those were the things which were the cause of all our misery -- now there is no more misery.

Once ego, possessiveness, jealousies, dominating games are gone, nobody can make you miserable. Even if the whole world wants you to become miserable it is impossible, you cannot be made miserable: bliss is yours. It is indestructable.

Love brings you to something eternal. Call it god, call it truth, call it freedom, call it your real self -- whatsoever name one chooses, one *can* choose -- but one has to be ready to pass through the fire.

That's why I have chosen the colour of fire for my sannyasins. It is symbolic that you are entering into fire, which in the beginning will be painful but in the end is going to give you the greatest ecstasy possible. It will give you the greatest dance. It will explode into thousands of songs in your heart. It will open up something in you which Buddha calls the inner lotus. It will release your fragrance, and that very release fulfils, one feels one has come home.

Meditation is a very strange phenomenon on the one hand it makes you more and more aware; on the other hand, simultaneously, it makes you more and more drunk. Hence it is incomprehensible to the mind, because mind can think only in logical ways, and meditation is a paradox, it is a mystery. Not only is it a mystery, it is the door to all other mysteries too. It is the very key that opens the doors of a thousand and one mysteries in your life.

The paradoxical thing is that you are aware, more aware than ever, and yet more drunk than ever too -- drunk in the sense that your life becomes ecstatic, aware in the sense that you are not unconscious, you are fully aware of your ecstasy. You are witnessing it, you know it is there. You have not fallen asleep.

It is because of this phenomenon that many people, even very intelligent people like Aldous Huxley, became deceived by drugs, because drugs can give half of it. They can give you the ecstatic feeling, the euphoria, but they don't make you aware. They make you very joyous, but there is no witness to the joy. And when the witness does come, the joy is only a memory. You can only remember how joyous it was later on, but not at the moment when it was happening.

Huxley thought that LSD does the same as meditation. He was a sincere man, but *because* of his sincerity, authenticity, he created a misguidance for thousands of young people. The whole drug scene was created because of his impact. When such a prominent intellectual of the age is supporting drugs, then there must be something in it, then others followed. And of course, it gives you half of it, and the half can create the deception. And it is not new: the East has known it for centuries.

In the East the pseudo mystics have always taken drugs, it is a five-thousand-year-old story at least. They were all deceived by the fact that they went into the same ecstasy as the meditator. From the outside they look almost the same, they both look stoned, they both look somewhere far away, into the beyond, they

both look as if they have entered into some other space, into some other dimension. Their joy seems to be unbounded. There is a difference, but that difference is inner. That can be known only from the inside nobody can observe it from the outside.

The real meditator is ecstatic, but deep down there is a flame of awareness, and the person who is under the impact of drugs has no awareness at all. Because of this similarity all great religions have been against using drugs: it can create a deception in peoples' mind; it can give them a cheap kind of mysticism.

Remember that the first thing is meditation, dhyana; and the second thing is drunkenness. It should come out of meditation, not out of any chemical, It should come out of watching, witnessing your own mind processes. Then it becomes something which is not a momentary phenomenon because it is not dependent on anything outside. You can carry it with you everywhere, in every situation; even in death you can carry it. Even dying the mystic remains alert, aware, totally aware. He can see death happening. And because he can see death happening he knows 'I am not dying, because I am the seer, I am the witness, I am the knower. Death is happening in the body -- I am totally aloof, untouched.'

To know this is to know the most fundamental truth of life -- that we are not the body nor the mind but pure awareness.

The real virtue arises out of meditation, the pseudo virtue is cultivated. The pseudo virtue is part of character, the real virtue is part of consciousness. All societies live on pseudo virtue because it is easier to impose on children; it is difficult to make them meditators. That's what people have thought up to now. It is not true: children can be taught to be meditative, and more easily than older people.

But for centuries the idea has persisted that they are children -- how can they meditate? Of course they cannot sit still like an old man, but there is no need to sit like an old man. Meditations can be devised especially for them: they can dance and jump and jog and run, and yet meditation can happen. Their meditation has to be very active, it cannot be inactive.

If children are introduced to meditation from the very beginning they will have a totally different kind of virtue. Then you need not tell them what is right and what is wrong; they will know it on their own.

And that's my effort here: to help you to know on your own what is right and what is wrong, I never say what is right and what is wrong, I have no commandments, no shoulds, no should-nots. I simply want you to be able to see, to be clear like a mirror so that you can reflect reality. Any action out of that clarity is virtuous.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #15

Chapter title: None

That god protects you is a blessing, but the blessing is possible only if you are blissful. This is one of the fundamental laws of life: if you have you will get more, if you don't have you will lose even that which you have. It is a very strange law but one has to understand it. Nothing can be done about it, one has to follow it: it is so.

It is so in the ordinary world, it is so in the inner world. The rich man gets richer because money attracts more money; the poor man gets poorer. The same is true in the inner world too: the blissful person becomes more blissful; all god's blessings shower on him. The miserable person becomes more miserable. You get only that which you have because that which you have becomes a magnetic forces it attracts something similar to it. It is as if a drunk comes to the city, soon he will find other drunkards. If a gambler comes into the city, soon he will become acquainted with other gamblers. If a thief comes to the city he will find thieves. If a seeker of truth comes to the city he will find other seekers. Whatsoever we create in us becomes a magnetic centre, it creates a certain field of energy. And in that field of energy things start happening.

So if one wants god's blessings one should create whatsoever blissfulness one is capable of, one should do one's utmost, and then a thousandfold bliss will be yours. The more you have, the more will be coming. Once this secret is understood, one goes on becoming richer and richer inwardly, deeper and deeper is one's joy. And there is no end to ecstasy -- one just has to begin in th right direction.

The feeling of being a stranger has to be transcended because this feeling is basically wrong. We are part of existence, we are not strangers. We are waves of the ocean, we are not strangers to the ocean. How can we be strangers to the ocean? -- we arise from it, we live in it, one day we disappear in it. We are part of it. This existence is our home. We are not outsiders; even if we want we cannot be outsiders, we are insiders. There is nowhere to go, we cannot go out of existence -- everything is in. There is no boundary where existence ends and we can jump out of it. The fish can come out of the ocean but we cannot come out of existence, it is impossible. Wherever we are, we are rooted in existence.

This is the fundamental religious feeling. The irreligious person feels that he is a foreigner, a stranger, an outsider. That feeling has grown very much in this century. All over the world all the intelligent people are suffering from a strange kind of disease -- the disease can be called the feeling of being outsiders, that we don't belong to existence, that existence does not belong to us, that we are just accidents, that we are not fulfilling any purpose, that we are not needed, that things will go on perfectly well without us, that we are dispensable. All this is utterly wrong, absolutely wrong.

Even a small grass leaf is intrinsic, not accidental. It is as significant as the biggest star. Without it the existence will not be the same, something will be missed, there will be n gap left. It is not dispensable, nothing is dispensable. Once this is understood all fear disappears, a great relaxation comes naturally. One becomes capable of resting, because then this is our home.

To feel existence as our home, to feel that it is our mother, it is our father, that the trees and the mountains and the stars are our family, is exactly the meaning of the word 'god'.

God is sweet -- in fact, the sweetest phenomenon, the most delicious phenomenon is god. Those who have tasted god have tasted the nectar. They become immortals, they know nothing of birth and death. For them time becomes irrelevant, they start living in eternity.

As one goes deep in meditation, one's life becomes more and more sweet, full of many songs, music, joy. A thousand and one flowers bloom and all year round it is spring. And everything becomes fragrant with god, because everything is full of god. All that we need is the way to see it - and meditation is the way.

My sannyasins have to live a life of bliss -- that is their meditation. They have to drop all seriousness, they have to become more playful. They have to look at life not as a problem but as a mystery. If you look at it as a problem you become serious because then a great temptation arises to solve it -- and it is insoluble. It will lead you into more and more seriousness and into frustration and into sadness.

You can never come to a conclusion. Yes, you may find many answers but each answer will create more questions than it will solve. That's why philosophers become very serious, theologians become very serious. They lose all playfulness They forget what it means to be light -- and if you forget what it means to be light you will forget what it means to be delight-full, because they are two aspects of the same phenomenon. To be light is a basic requirement for delight to happen.

Delight happens only in light moods. Don't take life as a problem -- it is not a problem at all. It is a mystery to be lived, not to be solved -- enjoyed, danced, loved, sung, but not to be solved. It is not a riddle, it is not a challenge to solve it. It is a challenge to explore it, with wonder, with awe, just like a small child.

For my sannyasins bliss is meditation, and the more blissful you become, the more meditative you become. So learn to be cheerful; take things as fun. Everything has to be taken as fun -- even death has to be taken as fun.

If you can live life as if it is just a role you are playing in a drama, then you have become a sannyasin.

Bliss is god. There is no other god: to be blissful is to be divine. But for centuries god has been worshipped out of fear, out of greed. Only the cowards and the greedy have gathered in the temples and the churches and the mosques. If analysed, all their prayers can be reduced to two things: either fear or greed. And fear and greed are two aspects of the same coin.

The fearful person is always greedy. In fact it is because of fear that one becomes greedy. The fear of tomorrow creates greed: accumulate more money, because who knows? -- tomorrow there will be difficulty. In your old age nobody may support you, your friends may desert you, your children may not look after you. It is fear. So make every arrangement for every possibility. Hope for the best and expect the worst -- that is peoples' logic, the greedy peoples' logic. It is out of fear.

But greed cannot destroy fear. In fact because it comes out of fear it nourishes its source; it becomes a vicious circle. Fear creates greed, the greedy person becomes more afraid, afraid that he may lose whatsoever he has gained. Hence the more money people have, the more miserly they become. It is strange, poor people are not so miserly. They are capable of sharing, they can easily share, they can easily give, they are not so afraid. But the richer people are very greedy.

There is a Sufi story... A poor Sufi mystic lives in a small hut. It is enough for him and his wife. One night, in the middle of the night, somebody knocks on the door. The Sufi says to the wife, 'Open the door -- because it is raining, it is dark, it seems somebody has lost his way. And the village is far away.' But the wife says, 'We don't have enough space for three persons to sleep.' The Sufi says, 'You will never understand. Yes, I know, we don't have enough space for three persons to sleep but we have space enough for three persons to sit. So we will sit and we will gossip and we will tell stories and we will joke and we will laugh or we will sing or I can play on my instrument!'

Unwillingly the wife opens the door. The stranger standing outside has heard everything; he comes inside. He is the king of the country but for the first time he feels that he is poorer than this man. He has a vast palace, but he would not have allowed anybody in, even in the middle of the night, even if it were raining. And he looks around: really, the wife is right. He is in disguise, so the Sufi and his wife don't know who he is, but he is treated like a king. He is afraid that somehow the mystic has detected who he is, so he asks, 'Have you come to know who I am?... because you are treating me as if I am the king.'

He says, 'No. I don't know who you are, but we treat everybody as a king because every guest is divine. We are waiting for the ultimate guest and preparing for him. We are waiting for god to knock on the door one day. This is the way we are preparing. He sends people so that we can get ready. That's why we are treating you like this. Whatsoever we have, eat, drink, and I will play on my instrument because we don't have enough space to sleep.'

So, the king eats, drinks and the Sufi plays beautiful music on the instrument. The king has never heard such music although he has great musicians in his court. But they are nothing compared to this man because this man has something inner, some bliss to share. Those musicians are just technicians -- this is a real musician, almost a Buddha or just on the last rung of the ladder: one step more and he will be enlightened.

While they are listening to the music somebody else knocks on the door. The mystic says to his wife, 'Open the door.' But there is not enough space for the wife to move even. She says, 'What are you saying? I cannot move. I cannot even go to the door because the guest is sitting there, just close to the door.' So the mystic says, 'Excuse me sir, will you be kind enough to open the door -- somebody else has come. Maybe somebody has forgotten his way, just like you.'

Now the king has completely forgotten that just a few hours ago he was in the same situation. He says, 'What are you talking about? Have you gone mad? There is no space. Only three persons can sit here.' The mystic says 'I know that, that only three persons can sit here, but four can stand: we will stand up. And I really love playing on my instrument standing up! And you will enjoy it -- don't be worried!'

The king insists 'This is stupid! I don't understand.' And the man says 'You are just a guest -- I am the host! You have completely forgotten. I am telling you "Please open the door."'

The king *has* to open the door. Now he remembers that what he is saying is not right -- who is he? He opens the door; a beggar enters in; the king is very angry. The beggar says 'I have forgotten the way to the town.'

He is drenched, completely wet, and the mystic gives him clothes. They all stand up and the king says 'This is stupid -- I have never seen such a man!'

The wife is very angry, even the beggar cannot understand this man, because anybody in his situation would have rejected him. The Sufi starts playing on the instrument.

Then somebody else again... Now the beggar is very close to the door, his back is just touching the door. The mystic says, 'Open the door -- somebody else has come.' But the beggar says, 'Are you mad? Where is he going to stand? We don't even have space to stand.' He said, 'Yes, we will not be able to stand comfortably, but we can stand, with a little discomfort.'

The beggar says, 'I don't understand you. Are you mad or something?' The king also said, 'This is too much, this is going too far.' And the mystic said, 'Please open the door. I am the host, you are just guests. You don't possess this hut. I possess this hut, I am the owner. Open the door!'

They open the door: it is not a man but a donkey! And the mystic says, 'Come in, sir!' The king says, 'What are you doing?' The mystic says, 'To me it is all the same, it is all divine. He is in the same situation as you were. For me it makes no difference who you are. I never asked you who you were. I never asked this other man who he is. Why should I ask this gentleman "Who are you?" Whosoever he is, he is in the same difficulty. Look at him.'

He dries the donkey, gives him food, and says 'He will also listen to the music. Now there is going to be a little more difficulty in standing but that is nothing, the morning is very close. And if it becomes too difficult I will go out. You can all enjoy. I will play from the outside. In fact I enjoy playing while it is raining!'

In fact a poor man can share because he has nothing to cling to in the first place. The richer one is, the more difficult does the sharing become.

Fear leads to greed, greed leads to fear. It is a vicious circle, it goes round and round -- unless one jumps out of it. And god is neither for the afraid nor for the greedy. God is for the fearless and for the greedless. God is for the blissful ones. This mystic must have been a blissful person.

To me, those people who have become religious because of some fear or some greed are not really religious. Their religion is pseudo, it is plastic. Real religion comes out of blissfulness. Real religion is a real rose flower, it is not a plastic flower.

If you can learn that you will have entered into the temple of god. Forget about god, remember bliss. If you can be blissful god is yours. Whether you remember god or not does not matter: if you are blissful god is bound to remember you.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #16

Chapter title: None

Dhyan means meditation. Pia is a Latin word. It has two meanings: one is god-fearing, the other is pious, holy, virtuous.

In the past both these meanings have been thought to be synonymous: the god-fearing person has always been thought to be pious, and vice versa. But in *my* approach towards life they are diametrically opposite. If you are god-fearing, you cannot be pious; if you are pious you cannot be god-fearing. So I will accept the meaning pious and drop the meaning god-fearing.

Fear can never be pious. It does not matter what the object of fear is -- fear *is* fear. One should be god-loving, not god-fearing. Piousness comes out of love. If one is god-fearing deep down one will hate god. That is natural and psychological. We hate the person we fear, obviously. How can we love the person who creates fear in us? Fear cripples, paralyses; fear destroys. Fear reduces us to indignity; it is insulting, it is humiliating. Hence the god-fearing person is not pious, is not holy -- cannot be. He can pretend; yes, he can have a mask of piousness, but if you take off the mask you will find tremendous hatred.

It is because of two thousand years of conditioning that one should be afraid of god, that finally Friedrich Nietzsche asserted, 'God is dead and I declare that man is free. Now there is no need to fear.'

It is not Friedrich Nietzsche speaking, he is the conscience of the whole humanity. He has said something really truthful, very authentic. Of course he himself was shocked, so much so that he went mad, because his own upbringing, his own conditioning was that of a god-fearing person; he belonged to a family of priests. But it seems as if the whole collective consciousness of humanity spoke through this man. He himself was shocked, he himself went through an earthquake; he was not ready for it. He was utterly surprised at what he was saying, but he had said something. He has made the most important statement of this age. In these last hundred years no other statement has been so significant.

But really the cause of it is Judaism and Christianity. It is the Judeo-Christian tradition of making people afraid of god, it is man's spirit longing for freedom. And man could only be free, Nietzsche felt, if god were dead. As long as god was alive man could not be free, he had to be afraid of god. The only way to be free would be if somehow god died.

But Buddha and Mahavira were far more clear about the whole thing. They never said god was dead because they said god never existed in the first place. There was no question of his death -- there had been no birth. But it was Buddha's own insight, hence he was not disturbed by it. In fact nobody has been so graceful, so beautiful, so calm. And quiet, so godly, so divine as Buddha.

Nietzsche was not prepared -- he was just a philosopher. Somehow the whole unconscious of humanity erupted through him. It happens. He must have been a very sensitive person.

Now psychologists say that if one person in a family goes mad that simply shows that he is the most sensitive person in the family. The whole family is driving each other crazy -- he is the most sensitive, hence he becomes the first victim. And he cannot be cured unless the whole family and its way of life is changed. So now from individual therapy, psychology has moved to family therapy. But that also is not going to help much, because the family is only a single unit in a community, and the whole community is driving the family mad. Maybe this family is the most sensitive; others are thick, they are not so sensitive. Unless the whole community is changed we may not be able to change *this* family.

But if one stretches this logic to its very end -- that means unless the whole humanity changes -- not even a single individual has any chance of transformation. In a way this is true because we are interlinked.

Nietzsche must have been the most sensitive person of those days, hence he became the voice of the age, he became the revolt. But his statement is significant. It ends one era, it ends one chapter of human history. But the other chapter has not yet started. That's my effort here: to start another chapter, to create people who are god-loving. And when I say god-loving I mean life-loving, because to me life is god and when you love life, out of that love you start becoming pious, because love cannot be destructive. Love cannot harm, it is impossible for love to harm anybody; it can only help. It is a nourishment.

The loving person creates a nourishing climate around himself. He carries Spring around himself wherever he goes. People start blooming in his climate.

So I would like to insist that Pia means pious -- through love, pious through meditation, but not out of fear, not out of any conditioning by the priests.

Meditation takes you beyond all conditionings, it is a process of unconditioning. And when you are completely unconditioned, all the springs of love in you start flowing.

That growth of love is pious. Out of that whatsoever happens is good, is right, is holy.

It is only through meditation that nobility arises because it is only through meditation that you become graceful, that you become sensitive, that you become compassionate, that you become loving. And these are the real religious qualities.

One is not born noble, it is an achievement. One can be born in an aristocratic family, in a royal family that does not make anybody noble. That is a false kind of nobility, only of mannerism, of etiquette, of education. It is a formal kind of nobility; deep down you are the same ugly human being carrying all kinds of nonsense, violence, destructiveness, hatred, anger, greed, fear, lust, ego.

Nobility arises only when ego disappears and with it *all* the disciples anger and ambition and possessiveness and jealousy. They are all disciples of the ego. If you kill the master all the disciples are killed automatically; they can only exist with the ego. And meditation is a blow on the ego, it cuts off the head of the ego in a single blow. Hence only very courageous people can move into meditation. It is not for the cowards.

Be courageous! And the greatest courage is to drop the ego. It is really the ultimate courage; because if you can manage that, then miracles start happening in your life. Each moment becomes so exquisitely beautiful, such a joy, such a celebration that it is impossible right now even to imagine. One knows it only when one knows it.

It is bliss that makes you the beloved of the whole existence. A blissful person is loved not only by people but even by animals, birds, trees, rocks. Bliss is the language that is understood by the whole existence. Once you know what bliss is you can commune with all that surrounds us, with the clouds and the stars and the moon, because they don't understand any other language. Misery they are absolutely unaware of, misery they have not known. Misery is an absolutely human phenomenon, it is man's creation, his great invention.

Trees don't know what misery is. Yes, sometimes they know pain, but there is a great difference between pain and misery. Pain is spontaneous. If you cut a tree there is pain. But misery is not spontaneous. It is playing with your past wounds, it is going into the past history of your hurts again and again. It is going into all that has been somehow agonising you in the past. It is not only thinking of the past, but thinking of the future in terms of the past, being constantly afraid of tomorrow, that it may bring some wound again, some misery.

Misery belongs to the past and the future -- it is non-existential. Pain is a *real* phenomenon if you have a headache it is pain. But you had a headache twenty years before, now brooding over it is misery, or being afraid that it may come again some day is misery. Between these two miseries the small moment of the present will be crushed. And both miseries are now non -- existential. One is memory, another is imagination, one is no more, one is not yet and between the two that which is, is missed.

Yes, animals, birds, they all know pain but they don't know anything of misery, pain is something existential, misery is psychological. Because they don't know bliss miserable people cannot communicate with existence. And these are the people who go to the temples and to the mosques and to the churches, and they pray to god and they try to commune with god -- it is impossible. God cannot understand their language.

God only understands joy. God means this whole existence; there is no other god except this whole. God simply means the totality of existence, this organic unity of existence.

If you want to commune with it -- and the communion is tremendously beautiful -- then you have to learn the language: bliss is the language. And once you start being cheerful, singing, dancing, celebrating, once you know the festive dimension of consciousness, immediately the whole existence becomes an open secret. Then there is no need to read the Bible and the Koran and the Vedas; then they all look superficial. You can read the book god himself has written. It is in the flowers, it is in the stars, it is in this rain... this sound of rain on the roof.

My sannyasins have to learn the language of bliss. And once you know it, you become beloved of the whole existence. Existence starts pouring; its bliss over you, so much that you cannot contain it.

One cannot cultivate love because a cultivated love is not love at all. And we have all been told to cultivate it that's where things have gone wrong. The father says 'Love me -- I am your father. You *have* to love me. This is your duty.' The mother says the same. The child starts fulfilling his duty, he has to because he is helpless. He depends on these people and they are very demanding about love. Very unconsciously they are forcing the child to do something which he cannot do. If it happens it happens, if it does not happen

it does not happen.

In a more conscious world we will leave children to themselves. We will create all possible situations in which a child *can* love you. You can play with the child, you can run on the sea beach with the child, you can collect sea-shells with him, you can make sandcastles with him; you can create the situation in which love grows naturally, spontaneously. But never say to a child, 'Love me, you have to love me -- this is your duty,' because once he starts thinking of love as duty you have contaminated his mind, you have corrupted his natural sources, you have distracted his energy, diverted his energy. Then one day the wife says, 'Love me' the husband says 'Love me -- I am your husband' or 'I am your wife, you have to love, this is your duty.' Even children start saying to their parents, 'Love us! You don't love us enough.'

Everybody is demanding and nobody understands the simple fact that if love is supplied because of your demand it is going to be false. That's why the world is full of false love. It satisfies no one, but we go on repeating the same pattern.

Man lives so mechanically that he goes on repeating the same pattern for centuries, unless a Buddha, an awakened person tries to wake a few people, to shake a few people and say 'What are you doing? It is just stupid.' And more stupidities have been done concerning love than anything else. It has been completely killed.

My sannyasins have to know one thing: drop the idea of love as a duty, drop the idea that you *have* to love. It is not a should is not a commandment, it is not a demand.

When you drop all kinds of imposed nonsense about love then suddenly you will see something growing in you naturally. That will be love, and that is immensely fulfilling. But people are afraid of it, because one never knows whether it will be in support of the status quo or not, whether it will support the vested interests or not. It is unpredictable; one cannot say anything about it. Only one thing can be said: it will fulfil you, it will bring your life to a flowering, it will make your life meaningful and significant.

And is everybody's life is meaningful and significant then there is no need to bother about the status quo. If it disappears, let it disappear! We don't exist for the status quo, it exists for us. We don't exist for any vested interests; if they want to exist they have to serve us. We don't exist for any nation, state, church, they are our servants. If they want to exist they have to exist for us. They are the means -- we are the end.

There is no need to go to any temple, any church, any mosque, because they are all false. They are substitutes created by cunning people to befool the-gullible. There is only one true temple -- that is you. You have to go withinwards: when you reach your innermost core you have penetrated into the temple. And the method to find your centre is meditation. Meditation leads you to your inner shrine, You will find god there, nowhere else.

Jesus says the kingdom of god is within you he is absolutely right. You are the most sacred place, you are the Kaaba. There is nothing more sacred than your own being.

It happened: a Sufi mystic, Bayazid, was going on a pilgrimage to Kaaba. Kaaba is the most sacred temple of the Mohammedans. For at least twenty years he had collected money for the journey. He was a poor man. When he had enough money he went on the journey, but the next day he was back and all the money was gone.

The people were puzzled; they said 'What happened? Have you been robbed?' He said, No, I met a mystic just outside the town and he asked me 'Where are you going?'. I have never seen such a powerful man! The way he asked, me, the way he looked at me... I started trembling! I don't know what happened -- I had to touch his feet. He had a certain energy-field around him.

He said "I know where you are going. Are you going to Kaaba!" I said 'Yes, Sir, I am going to Kaaba.' He said, "There is no need. What will you do in Kaaba?" I said, "I have to go and make seven rounds of the sacred stone". He said "Forget all about that. Give me the money and you can make seven rounds around me!"

'The way he looked.... For a moment I was shocked -- what was he saying? But his eyes were so penetrating that I had to give the money to him and I made seven rounds. He blessed me and he said "Your journey is fulfilled. Now you go home. And whenever you want to go again, there is no need even to come to me -- just close your eyes and go withinwards, because the one who has commanded through me is sitting inside you too!" And I am convinced of it,' Bayazid said to the people. 'I have found my Kaaba, I have found my temple.'

He never went to Kaaba again. In fact soon people started coming to him: the miracle had happened! Without any formality something had transpired between that mystic and Bayazid. Bayazid never even

knew the name of the master. He went again to find out, but the man had disappeared.

Sufis say he was no one but Khidr. Khidr is a metaphorical figure, a spiritual guide who leads people to reality, an eternal master who always appears whenever somebody is in need. It is just an allegory, but the story is beautiful.

That is the meaning of your name, go withinwards, there is nowhere else to god. If you have found yourself you have found all.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #17

Chapter title: None

One who loves is loved by the whole existence. Existence only echoes us from all directions, from all dimensions. If we sing a beautiful song the song comes back to us a thousandfold more beautiful, it showers back on us. Whatsoever we give is given back. People are miserable for the simple reason that they are giving misery to others, they are giving pain to others.

This is the whole philosophy of karma. It is a very simple fact of life: whatsoever we sow we reap. And of course if you sow a single seed, you will reap thousands of seeds. Existence is not miserly, it gives abundantly, but it can give only when you have given already -- it multiplies that which you give, so everything basically depends on you. If you want bliss, shower bliss on everyone, on everything. If you want love, love. If you want anything, wanting is not going to help -- do it, materialise it, and soon you will be surprised: whatsoever you have given always comes back to you, multiplied a thousandfold, not less than that.

And everybody is in need of love. It is impossible to find a person who is not in need of love. But we don't love, we only want to be loved -- and that is not possible. Everybody wants to be loved and nobody loves; hence there is so much conflict, so much destructiveness, violence. The same energy can bring great benediction, but it only creates hell.

Let this be the foundation for your sannyas: whatsoever you want, give and you will not remain empty. You will be fulfilled, immensely fulfilled; beyond your imagination, beyond your dreams you will be fulfilled.

God is light. The experience of inner light is the experience of god; hence light became synonymous with god. Light became another aspect of the experience of the divine.

Bliss is both. It is divine, the most divine phenomenon in existence is bliss. That's why everybody seeks it. Even the atheist -- one who does not believe in god, one who does not believe in any after-life -- still believes in bliss. It is impossible to find a person who is not seeking bliss.

If somebody says 'I am not seeking bliss, that simply means that no seeking bliss is his bliss. If

somebody says 'I am seeking misery,' that simply means he feels blissful in misery -- that's all, nothing else. Misery is his bliss, he enjoys it. He is masochistic, that's all; he is ill, pathological. But it is impossible to find a person who does not seek bliss. Even the person who commits suicide commits suicide in order to find bliss. Whatsoever one does, the fundamental reason is always the same: it is bliss. The motive is always the same.

And bliss, once achieved, cannot be hidden. you cannot hide it; it shines forth like the sunrise. It is as bright as the day, it is luminous. Even if you want to hide it... Many have tried. There are traditions, there are a few mystic schools, which teach you to try to hide your bliss, because people are miserable. It is not good to move blissfully amongst miserable people. They will feel offended, they will take revenge; they will not be able to forgive you. That's what happened to Jesus, that's what happened to Socrates, that's what happened to Al Hillaj Mansoor.

About Al Hillaj Mansoor, the Sufi mystic, the story is very clear. his master, Junaid, told him, 'Keep it hidden.' When for the first time Al Hillaj experienced the joy of knowing truth, he was so ecstatic he started dancing and shouting out of sheer joy. He shouted 'Ana'l Haq' -- I am god. Junaid said, 'Shut up! I know, you know -- there is no need to shout.'

Because the master was saying keep quiet, he promised to keep quiet, but again and again he would forget his promise. Again and again he would start dancing and shouting. Finally Junaid said, 'You will get into trouble and you will also get *me* into trouble. And because of you my whole work will be disturbed.'

Junaid was a great master. He had thousand of followers and they were all working secretly. Living amongst Mohammedans and working is really dangerous because they are very fanatic people. They don't know any generosity, they don't know any tolerance. They don't argue -- their only argument is the sword: whosoever wins is right, whosoever is killed is wrong.

Junaid told Mansoor again and again. Finally he said, 'Go to Mecca, to the Mohammedan shrine of Kaaba on a pilgrimage.' In those days it used to take at least three years. 'So the journey will take you away and I can work silently with my people. and in three years you will also cool down.'

But Al Hillaj simply stood up, went around Junaid seven times and said, 'The journey is finished -- *you* are my Kaaba, *you* are my Mecca. I don't know any holy place other than you. You are my temple, so I have done it,; and he started shouting again! And what Junaid was afraid of finally happened: Al Hillaj was killed and Junaid's whole school was disturbed. Junaid was trying to keep it secret, utterly secret, but nobody had become enlightened before al Hillaj.

My feeling is that anybody would have done the same; it was nothing to do with Al Hillaj. He was the first disciple who became enlightened, and he exploded. this would have happened to anybody. In fact it had happened to Junaid himself, but he was living in the mountains; for seven years he lived in the mountains. Of course, trees don't feel offended and rocks don't feel offended. He was shouting and singing and dancing, but in those seven years he cooled down. He became aware of a great message -- that he had to go and work in the world.

Even though he was trying to keep it secret, he could not keep it secret. When Al Hillaj was killed people were throwing stones at him, and just to participate with people so nobody took any note of Junaid, so nobody thought that Junaid was against the murder, he was also standing in the crowd, crying. He threw a flower, a rose flower at Mansoor, just to show him 'I love you. I know that whatsoever you are saying is right, but I have been telling you and you didn't listen to me: this was going to happen. I had predicted it.

Al Hillaj Mansoor was laughing when others were throwing stones, hitting him hard -- from all over his body blood was oozing. When he was hit by the rose flower thrown by Junaid, he started crying. Somebody asked 'Why are you crying?' He said, 'The people who were throwing stones at me don't understand, but the person who has thrown the rose flower understands me -- still he is throwing the rose flower. His rose flower hits me far more deeply than their stones. Their stones are nothing. They are stupid people -- it is to be expected.'

Like Junaid, many masters have tried many times to keep bliss submerged, but nobody has ever succeeded. Sooner or later it becomes known, because it is just like daylight: how can you hide the morning? When the night is gone, when the stars have disappeared and the sun has risen, the birds start singing, the flowers start opening. It is not some small things, it is not a small lamp that you can hide behind something.

Remember: bliss is divine, and when it explodes it is a sunrise, it is as bright as day; the night is over.

That is the goal of sannyas. And I don't want my sannyasins to hide it. I want them to shout and sing and dance. And if it brings death, it is okay: die dancing, shouting. There is no need to worry. Anyway, even

Junaid died after only a few years. My feeling is that Mansoor died a far better death.

Junaid is remembered only because of Mansoor. Nobody would have remembered Junaid, nobody would have even remembered his work. It is through Mansoor that his work is remembered. His name has become one of the most significant names in the history of mysticism -- it is because of Mansoor and his death.

So there is no need to be afraid: let it shine forth! I believe more in Jesus. He said to his disciples, 'Go onto the tops of houses, onto the roofs, and from there shout -- because people are deaf. Unless you shout they won't listen.' And if you are killed while dancing and singing blissfully, there can be nothing better than that. Live celebrating, die celebrating.

Bliss is not something that comes from the outside, it is already the case, it is inside you. *You* are outside, bliss is inside -- that is the problem -- not vice versa.

People think they are inside and bliss is outside so it has to be found in money, in power, in prestige, in something outside. The reality is just the opposite: bliss is inside and you are outside; you are running hither and thither, everywhere. you go everywhere -- except in. People are going to the Everest, they will go to Tibet, they will go in search of Shambala, they are ready to go to the moon.

One company in Japan is selling tickets for the moon for the first of January, 1986, and people are booking!

Just the other day I came across the news that they are planning a city in the sky, a city hanging in the sky between the earth and the moon. it will be inside a big balloon for then thousand people. People are already purchasing apartment! That will happen by the end of this century. it will take twenty years, these people may not be there, but they think, 'So what? -- our children will have the opportunity -- they will be the first ones to live in a space city.'

People are ready to go anywhere, any foolish idea... and they become tempted. Just one thing never becomes a longing in them: to explore their own being. They take themselves for granted -- and that's where they are wrong. don't take yourself for granted. you are carrying within you a dark continent, unexplored.

Sannyas means its exploration. And it is the most important thing in life. those who have gone in have found immortality, have found deathlessness, have found eternity, truth, consciousness, bliss, in a single word they have found god.

Christianity has the idea of a trinity, but its trinity is very childish, it is very primitive. It is conceived of as a family, it is a projected idea of a family -- and that too is not complete because the woman is missing: god the father, Jesus Christ the son, and the Holy Ghost. Unless this Holy Ghost functions as a woman... Nobody knows -- ghosts can do things, even impossible things they can do... But it is a very strange family: the first gay family!

In the East we have a far more beautiful idea of a trinity: satyam, shivam, sundaram. Satyam means truth, shivam means good, sundaram means beautiful. This is the Eastern concept of trinity, these are the three faces of god: he is true, he is good, he is beautiful. He can be explored in three ways; these are his three dimensions.

Religions explore him from the side of good. That's why they talk about god: god means the good one, the ultimate good. the philosophers enquire from another dimension, truth. Their whole concern is 'What is the ultimate truth?' They enter from the door of truth. and the poets, the musicians, the dancers, the artists, the painters, all enter from the door of the beautiful.

My approach is that of the poet. I am not a religious person in the ordinary sense. I am close to art than to religion, closer to aesthetics than to religion, because I see that existence provides you many more opportunities to see the beautiful than it provides to see truth or good. In the flowers, in the stars, in the mountains, in the people, in the birds, in the animals -- you can find beauty everywhere.

Seek god through beauty -- the beauty of everything. let that become your enquiry, worship beauty, rejoice in beauty. And when you worship beauty and rejoice in beauty, you start becoming beautiful. And to be beautiful is to be a sannyasin. Truth and good will follow. if one can attain one out of the three the other two automatically come along.

There is a silence that can be imposed from outside. through practising a certain body posture, by eating a certain kind of food, by fasting, a certain silence can be cultivated. By moving to the mountains, being alone, one can manage to be silent, but that will be something managed from the outside, forced. It will not

be very deep, it will be just a facade. That's what saints, the so-called saints have been doing all along, in the monasteries, in the caves, in the jungles, in the mountains: fasting, living alone or not talking. These are tricks to create a pseudo kind of silence, but deep down the unconscious goes on boiling. It can explode any day. This is really repression.

Real silence comes only out of meditation. You are not to cultivate it; it is a by-product, it is a consequence. You have to go into meditation, you have to learn the art of meditation. As you become more and more meditative, you become aware of a certain silence that starts following you like a shadow. You have not done anything about it -- it is suddenly there, it is there because of your meditation. And as meditation deepens, it will deepen. When meditation is complete, your silence is complete.

And this is a silence that nobody can take away. Then you can be in the marketplace and you will remain undisturbed, undistracted. Then you can live with people, you can be together with people; that will not change anything -- you will be as alone as ever, even in the crowd. You can do the ordinary activities of life and still you will remain aloof and beyond and unconcerned. You will become a lotus in the lake; it is in the water, yet the water touches it not.

That's the idea of a real sannyasin: to be in the world and yet not to be of it, to be in the world but not to allow the world to be in you.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #18

Chapter title: None

Man is a seed, a seed of great potential. But millions of people die without ever realising that potential, they never come to a flowering. It is only through meditation -- there is no other way, there never has been, there will never be -- meditation is the only way to bring your potential into reality, to transform it into actuality. Seeds can become flowers, and not ordinary flowers either -- not flowers that exist only for the moment and then are gone but flowers of eternity, not of time, flowers which defy death, flowers which are undying, which know no beginning, no end, which are beyond time and beyond space too.

The art of bringing those flowers into your being is meditation. And meditation is a simple process, the same as the process of bringing a seed into life. The seed is almost dead, but if it falls into the soil and is ready to die into the soil, then immediately life springs up, then a sprout comes up. Soon it will become a bush or a tree with a profusion of flowers.

The same is the art of meditation. It is nothing but the courage to surrender, the courage to die as an ego. Ego is like a hard crust that surrounds everybody, the hard crust that surrounds every seed; it is protective. It is good as far as it goes, but if it remains forever then it becomes a grave. It protects the seed till it come to the right soil, then it simply disappears.

To be with a master means to be ready to die. The ancient scriptures of the East say the master is death a very strange statement but very true. And the disciple is one who is tired of the ego, its misery, its agony, its darkness, and who has come to a conclusion that there is no way within the ego, one has to take a jump out of it.

Initiation is a death -- the death of the ego, but the death of the ego becomes the birth of your real being. The death of the ego is the death of all that is dead in you and the beginning of all that is really alive in you.

Misery only proves one thing, that the person is stupid, that he has got no intelligence. Bliss proves just the contrary - that the person is intelligent, that he knows how to live, that he knows how to enjoy, that he knows how to use this great opportunity of life.

The miserable person is one who has not yet discovered his intelligence. He can go on trying everything -- nothing is going to work, because misery is a by-product. The miserable person tries not to be miserable, but whatsoever he does will create more misery because all those actions will be coming out of his stupidity. He will get into the mess more and more and he will become more and more desperate. And the more desperate one is, the more one tries each and everything to come out of it. But unless you radically change your own being nothing can help.

The miserable person can move from a hut into a palace -- nothing will change. He will remain miserable, he may even become more miserable in the palace because a palace has more space. And whatsoever he does is bound to create misery. The miserable person can have money, power, prestige, but he will create misery out of it.

You can see very rich people utterly miserable, very powerful people almost going insane, because they have not changed the radical, the essential, the fundamental. They have been trying to change the circumference instead of changing the centre. A sannyasin is one who becomes aware of this phenomenon. This is a simple arithmetic of life, that 'If I am miserable, then I am wrong somewhere -- deep down I am not behaving intelligently. I am messing things up.' So rather than doing anything on the outside, it is better first to stop doing everything and move inwards to discover one's intelligence. And everybody brings intelligence into the world, nobody comes without intelligence. Life is intrinsically intelligence, but it has to be discovered. You have to dig for it.

It is just like water: it is everywhere, you just have to dig a well to find it. Maybe somewhere it is thirty feet below, somewhere forty feet, somewhere sixty feet, but it is always there. Even in the desert it is there; you may have to go a little deeper... Exactly like that, intelligence is in every person. We have to remove a few rocks, a little earth, and we will be able to find it.

This is the first step of the sannyasins: to discover one's intelligence, and then whatsoever you do will bring bliss to you. In fact you will be surprised to know, you may go on doing the things that you were doing before, but the same things that were bringing you misery before, will bring you bliss now. You are doing exactly the same things -- but it is not a matter of what you do. The real matter depends on who the doer is, from where the act arises -- from the circumference or from the centre, from the conditioning of the society, or from the natural spontaneous tao within you.

Bliss is a criterion. Whenever your actions start bringing bliss to you, now you can move with the solid confidence that you are on the right track. whenever your actions bring misery -- beware! Better to stop before you take any more steps into the same direction. And don't start running into the opposite direction either, because directions are not the question: discover your intelligence. Everything depends on your intelligence, and out of intelligence there is beauty, there is bliss, there is benediction.

Meditation is the discovery of the inner flame. It is already there; we have not to create it, we have only to become connected with it. We have become disconnected, we have lost contact with our own self -- that's why there is so much darkness in life. Once we are bridged with our own light all darkness disappears.

And the miracle is that we are carrying that light with us every moment of our life, without using it. And we are suffering because we are not using it. We are really in anguish, we are creating hell. We are stumbling everywhere because it is all darkness. We want to do good but whatsoever we do turns out to be bad.

Everybody wants to do good, everybody at least intends to do good, but nothing seems to work. Parents do harm to children -- and they *love* their children; nobody can doubt their love. But their love is without any light, it is groping in darkness. Wives love their husbands, husbands love their wives, but there is only conflict, continuous struggle. Slowly slowly people only learn to tolerate each other; that's all. That is not

harmony, that is not joy; that is just calculation. There is nothing else to do we are tired of fighting so we will tolerate each other. But deep down there is great hatred and it erupts once in a while, again and again.

Children want to love their parents but they hate them. d because they want to love their parents and they cannot, they feel guilty. And they will feel guilty for their whole life.

Everything seems to be unnecessarily complicated for the simple reason that we don't seek and search for our inner light.

My effort here is to help you to find your own light. I don't give you any other discipline, I don't give you any other ritual, I don't give you any morality, I don't give you any commandments. My work is very simple in a way, but sometimes it's the simple that we go on missing because it is so obvious. My work consists of only one thing: to bridge you again with your innermost core, with your flame. Once that happens you are transformed, you are reborn, you are no more the old self. Then your whole life changes, without any effort. And when things change without any effort there is great beauty. There is no struggle, there is no imposition, there is no cultivation, there is no discipline. There is only an understanding -- and understanding is liberating. It is the only liberation. there is.

Meditation is surrender of the ego, of the mind, of all that you have been up to now, of the whole past. One has to go through a complete renewal, a death and a rebirth. You have to become discontinuous with the past, as if you are born *this* very moment, as if your whole part were just a fiction that you have read somewhere or a movie that you have seen, or a dream.

Becoming a sannyasin means becoming disconnected with the past, because the past is the only problem. And rather than solving problems it is better to put aside the whole past. That's where the approach of meditation and psychoanalysis differs: psychoanalysis goes on dissecting the whole bullshit: go on dissecting and dissecting. There is no end to it because a person gathers so much bullshit in his whole life that it takes years. Three years is not enough, even seven years is not enough. There are people who have been in psychoanalysis for ten years, twelve years, and it is still incomplete. I have not seen a single person whose psychoanalysis is complete; it cannot be complete, because while you are going through psychoanalysis, dissecting your past, you are creating a new past every day.

If you go through psychoanalysis for ten years, then those ten years will become your new past, now dissect them. It is an infinite regress. And in a life of seventy years, if one has to go on dissecting, one gathers so much dust in twenty-four hours that if one wants to dissect everything and analyse everything -- why this is so, what is beyond it - one will get more and more into trouble. And not only what you think has to be dissected, what you dream has to be dissected. It is an impossible process. It may help you in a certain way to become adjusted to the society, but the society itself is insane. To get adjusted to an insane society is not sanity. It will help you to be at ease with other mad people, but they are mad and you will be mad. There are two kinds of madness: the normal kind, the average kind, and the little-bit-abnormal kind. The abnormal person is thought to be mentally ill, and the normally insane is the average person. The psychoanalysts' work is to help the abnormally mad to become normally mad -- that's all.

Meditation has a totally different approach. It functions like a sword: it simply cuts the whole thing off. Why bother about it? We can simply slip out of it just like a snake slips out of its old skin. There is no need even to look back. Why bother about it?

And that's what sannyas is. Slip out of the past. The past is not the only problem, it also creates other problems; it creates the future. It is out of the past that you this; about your future, you go on imagining your future in terms of the past. Whatsoever you loved in the past, you would like to have more of that in the future, and whatsoever is painful you would not like to have in the future. So your future is carved out of the past. It is not going to be something really new; it is going to be the past a little modified, a little refined, but it is going to be the past.

And remember one thing: if you choose anything from the past, if you choose the good things from the past, the bad things are bound to come with them. They are together; you cannot leave them aside. So you will be disillusioned. You cannot say 'I will only choose the roses and leave the thorns. Those thorns are part of the same bush, they come with the roses. If you want the roses those thorns will be there.

And between the past and the future you lose track of the present, which is the only reality.

Meditation means moving into the present. Disconnecting yourself from the past simply means disconnecting yourself from the future too. And then there is nothing left except the present, except this moment nothing is left. And just see the point: in this moment where is the problem? What is there to dissect and analyse? There is no problem at all. And if one can enter into the present moment there is

immediate freedom, immediate bliss, immediate realisation of truth, of god, of beauty.

Surrendering the past is the only way of entering into the present. And to enter the present is the way of the sannyasin. The sannyasin lives in the now, in the here. He has no other concern.

My vision of god is a god of bliss and songs. So If you really want to know what god is, you have to know what bliss is, you have to become more and more song-full, dance-full. You have to become more and more celebrating.

The old religions have been teaching people celibacy. I teach celebration! Why have been teaching people seriousness I teach singing, dancing. They have been teaching people to have long faces, my whole effort here is to give you love and laughter. If one can become laughter, if one can become love, then there is no need of any other prayer, one has already entered into the divine.

I have never seen any sad person enter into god. The only way towards god is the way of dancing. So learn to dance, sing! celebrate, rejoice, and then you will find god anywhere. Then each experience is divine and the ordinary starts changing into the extraordinary, the mundane disappears into the sacred. The whole of life becomes so god-full that it is not a question of some god somewhere above, in the skies wherever you are, you are surrounded by god, You are always walking on holy ground, Then each stone has a sermon in it and each rock is a scripture. One just needs a heart, a dancing heart, to see, to feel, to be!

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #19

Chapter title: None

Meditation is not achieved through effort, it is achieved through surrender. All the effort that is made, is made to make surrender possible. Once surrender becomes possible then you are ready to receive the gift. Effort *is* needed, but not for meditation; effort is needed only to prepare you to receive the gift. Meditation always comes as a gift; hence it is never food for the ego, it cannot be because it is not your achievement at all. On the contrary, it happens only when the ego has been totally surrendered. You cannot say 'I have found it,' you can only say, 'God has found me.' You cannot say, you cannot brag 'This is *my* achievement, *my* realisation,' because it happens when you are not, hence how can it be your realisation and your achievement? It is god's grace.

But it is a very complex phenomenon.

There are two kinds of misunderstandings about meditation. One is that no effort is needed. Then why make any effort? Whenever it is going to happen it will happen -- what can we do about it? That is a misunderstanding. You can do something, not to achieve meditation but to prepare yourself to be receptive.

The other misunderstanding is that because effort *is* needed to prepare, then effort is essential, and you

achieve meditation through your effort. So: go on making effort. If you are not achieving it, that means your effort is still not enough, so make more effort, put more intensity into it, put more energy into it, get more involved. Both are misunderstandings.

Effort is needed but not for meditation. Effort is needed only up to a point. It has nothing to do with meditation, but it is very essential too, because unless you are ready you will miss the gift. The gift is arriving every moment, it is showering on everybody, but people are missing it because they don't have any space to absorb it, they don't have any place to allow it entry into their being. It is all full of rubbish, all full of junk.

This has to become one of the most important understandings, that effort is needed, yet meditation is a gift. It is needed for surrender and surrender is needed for meditation. So there is no direct connection with the effort, but a very indirect connection is there.

So avoid both pitfalls and just be in the middle. It is a razor's edge: if you fall here, you fall into a lake, if you fall on the other side you fall into a well. You have to keep yourself like a tightrope walker; avoiding both pitfalls, avoiding both extremes, maintaining a balance between effort and no-effort. Once that balance is there, meditation comes like a spring and you become full of flowers. Your life has all the splendour and all the joy that existence can give to you -- it is infinite.

A sannyasin has to transcend all hardness. He has to become soft, vulnerable, open. We are hard because we have been told that life is a struggle. We are hard because we are prepared to fight for sheer survival. But that is not the way to find god. Maybe that is the way to find money, power, prestige, but that is not the way to find god. We cannot conquer god, we have to be conquered by him, we have to allow him to conquer us. In fact, to be defeated by god is to be victorious. In that very defeat is victory.

The sannyasin is just the opposite of a soldier. The soldier has to be hard, aggressive, violent, ambitious, and the sannyasin has to be soft, receptive, non-ambitious so that god can conquer him. And god is always ready: he goes on waiting patiently for us to get ready.

Bliss is a by-product of the search for truth. If you seek truth you will find it without seeking it. The moment truth is found bliss happens of its own accord. It is the flavor, the fragrance of truth.

You can hold a flower in your hand but you cannot hold its fragrance. And if you are seeking the fragrance you will never find it. Seek the flower. Once the flower is found the fragrance is all yours.

Truth is the flower and bliss is its fragrance. It has been found only by those who have found truth. Everybody seeks bliss, nobody bothers about truth -- that's why everybody is miserable. Very few people seek truth, and those who have sought truth have also found bliss. It comes like a shadow, the other side of truth. It happens without making any effort to seek it.

In ordinary life also that is true: you cannot seek happiness directly; it happens through something else. Somebody may enjoy swimming and he may tell you that it is ecstatic. It brings such joy, and you may go to swim in order to get the joy, the ecstasy. You will miss the whole thing because the whole time you will be waiting: "When is it going to happen?" You will simply feel tired, you will look stupid, silly. What are you doing? -- throwing your hands in the water and nothing is happening. This man always says that there is so much ecstasy in swimming. You are also swimming but you have made happiness your goal. For him swimming is his goal; happiness comes as a by-product.

These are the three planes of bliss. The first, the most gross is pleasure, and the highest, the most subtle is bliss. Between the two is happiness, it is half way: a little gross, a little subtle, a part of it pleasure and a part of it bliss. But their happening is the same.

If somebody is making love to a woman to get pleasure out of it, he will not find it. It is impossible to find any pleasure. He will look simply stupid, going through all those empty exercises. Making love will simply be like an exercise.

I have heard about a drunkard who saw a man doing some exercises on the beach -- just push-ups. He sat by the side and looked at the man: The man was breathing hard and perspiring. The drunkard started laughing: the man was a little annoyed. He asked, "What is the matter? Why are you laughing?" The drunkard said, "I am laughing because the woman you are making love has left! What are you doing? -- There is no woman at all! You are looking so silly, that's why I am laughing."

A man who is seeking pleasure will simply be doing push-ups, nothing else. He will simply feel tired, he will be perspiring and will look stupid and start thinking "What is all this about orgasm, etcetera? I have been befooled."

But if you are in love and you are not thinking of pleasure at all and love happens on its own -- a spontaneous phenomenon -- then there is pleasure, great pleasure.

Millions of people are missing orgasm for the simple reason that they are seeking it. And after the Kinsey Report, and Masters and Johnsons' research work, millions of people are looking for orgasm. These people had never bothered about it before. Now these books were talking so much about orgasm that they started feeling that they are missing something very essential. And the more they feel they are missing, the more they look at it; the more they look for it, the more they are going to miss. Now they are in a vicious circle.

Somebody has to tell them, "Forget all about orgasm, drop the whole idea of orgasm, and then there is a possibility of its happening."

That is the lowest... but the rule exists, the same rule, for higher planes too.

If you listen to music and you are a lover of music there is great happiness. But if you have just gone there to be happy and you don't love music, you don't bother about music, you have no ear for music, no sensibility for music, you are just sitting there, waiting for when happiness comes and knocks on your door, it will never come.

Bliss also happens, but you cannot seek it directly. Seek truth and in finding truth you will find bliss also.

Bliss and truth are synonymous, they are inseparable, just like two sides of the same coin. Everybody is interested in bliss, naturally -- who wants to be miserable? -- but nobody is ready to pay the price. Everybody wants it cheap, and if possible, then free. Nobody wants to travel; one wants to find a short-cut, or is it possible, not to take even a single step -- that would be the best thing. That's why people go on boiling in their misery; their whole life is nothing but hell.

One has to pay for truth, for bliss, and the only way is to become committed. Sannyas is a commitment, a commitment to the search. It is not just curiosity, it is going on a long pilgrimage -- not seeking any short-cut, not asking that it should be cheap or without any cost. If it is needed, the committed person is ready to sacrifice even his life for it. Not that to sacrifice your life is needed, but that readiness must be there.

With that very readiness some radical change starts happening within your being. When something is higher than life, when something is so valuable to you that you can even sacrifice your life for it, in that very moment a transformation has already happened. You are no more concerned with the ordinary things, you have become interested in the extraordinary. Your priorities have changed: money is no more valuable, power is no more valuable, fame is no more valuable. Only one thing is valuable now: how to know oneself.

That's what the goal of sannyas is: how to know oneself. By knowing oneself one comes to know truth on one hand and bliss on the other hand.

Socrates is right when he says 'Know thyself,' because in knowing that, all is known, all that is worth knowing is known. Except for that, all knowledge is simply rubbish, it is of no use. It won't help you to go beyond death, to go beyond time. It won't help you to transcend misery, anguish, anxiety, darkness. Knowing yourself you become light, you become luminous. Now even death cannot extinguish your light. Now you know something indestructible in your being, something immortal has been found. And with that finding all anguish, anxiety disappears, all fear, all greed disappears. That is true freedom.

The ultimate goal of sannyas is freedom, and the means to that ultimate goal is self-knowledge.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #20

Chapter title: None

Divine rejoicing is precisely the definition of my sannyas.

Misery is evil, joy is divine. To be miserable is the greatest sin in the world because the miserable person creates misery for others. He cannot help it, he is bound to create misery. The blissful person creates bliss, spontaneously, effortlessly. Wherever he moves a paradise moves with him, wherever he is there is paradise.

The whole art of religion is the shifting of consciousness from misery to bliss. Both are our possibilities. They don't come from the outside. Misery simply means our energies are upside-down, they are not in harmony. Bliss means our energies are functioning in harmony, humming in harmony, attuned to each other.

Once our energies are in harmony within, suddenly you find that you are in harmony with the whole too: the inner harmony brings you to the outer harmony. When there is music inside, you fall in tune with the universe, with tao, then you are part of this organic unity.

In misery ego exists, in bliss ego disappears. Being my sannyasin simply means rejoicing.

Misery is dark, it is gloomy. It is a dark night with no moon, with no stars, not even a candlelight; it is utter darkness. That's where millions of people are living and they have accepted it as if this is the only way life is supposed to be. They are born not for this life, they bring a great potential for light, but they never make that potential actual, they never go through a transformation. They remain seeds. They contain flowers, they contain great perfume. But if you dissect the seed you will not find the flowers or the perfume. The seed has to find the right soil, the right gardener, water, sun, the right climate. When everything is helping the seed, creating a confidence in the seed so that it can allow a let-go, it can disappear in the soil, then the potential starts becoming actual.

Bliss is light. That's why another name for bliss *is* delight -- it is delight. But one has to go through a great radical change; one has to learn how to die like the seed dies into the soil. And that's what sannyas is all about: a death, and then the resurrection follows.

The master is only a gardener; he can only help you. All that will happen will happen within you. It is yours, it has always been yours -- nobody can give it to you. And the field, the energy field of the master is the right soil. If one can disappear into it, if one can become anonymous, a nobody in it, then miracles start happening. All darkness disappears and the whole being becomes full of light. Then there is no death.

Once you have learned how to die as far as the ego is concerned, then there is no death. Then you are eternal, then you are part of eternity.

Only a man of peace can attain to bliss. Peace is the foundation. Without peace there is no possibility for bliss. Peace prepares you to receive bliss. Bliss cannot happen in a disturbed state. It needs a calm and quiet and still being; hence the importance of meditation.

Meditation does not create bliss, it only creates a peaceful state, a tranquil state. But once that tranquility is there, bliss starts descending of its own accord. When you are ready then not even a single moment is missed, there is no delay; the universal law functions immediately. But we have to show our preparation, we have to show that we are ready.

Existence is very fair, very just. It never gives bliss to anybody who does not deserve it and it never delays bliss for anybody who deserves it, not even by a split second.

My path is the path of bliss. It is not to be confused with the so-called religions.

The so-called religions are all rooted in a sad attitude. Their approach towards life is very serious. they

don't take it as fun, they don't take it as a cosmic joke; they are very serious about it -- and that seriousness becomes a cancer in the soul. Life becomes a burden because for centuries these so-called religions have been teaching people how to renounce life, not how to live it. They have not taught the art of loving; their whole concern is how to commit slow suicide. and your so-called saints are nothing but suicidal people. to me they are all pathological, ill, they are not healthy and whole. They are lopsided; their vision is not clear. And they are not really religious.

A really religious person will say yes to life joyously, dancingly. His whole being will be a celebration. He will not act out of fear, he will act out of love. He will not be worried about hell and heaven, he will not be worried at all. He will live moment-to-moment, but he will live each moment with utter totality. and that total living brings bliss, that total living is the path of bliss.

I don't teach that you have to live some other kind of life, some monastic life. I teach: live the ordinary life but live it with extraordinary awareness and love, with extraordinary totality, intensity, passion. And then you will find something growing in you each moment. Slowly slowly you will see clearly that a peak is arising in you. When that peak comes to a culmination you realise what life is all about, the meaning of it, the purpose of it. You can call it god, you can call it tao -- any name will do. In fact it is a nameless experience, but tremendously ecstatic.

Love is the only experience in life which defies death, which transcends death, which gives you a glimpse of immortality; it opens a door into eternity.

Love is the basic religious experience. It is the most sacred phenomenon on earth. All true spirituality has arisen out of the experience of love. Of course it only opens the window, and that too, only for a moment, but once you have seen the vast sky, the splendor of that moment, then you can never remain confined in small, mundane concerns. You will start finding more and more ways to jump out of all confinement. You will start finding the door.

Without love one never becomes aware of the beyond. And unless one is aware of the beyond why should one seek and search for it? The question, the very question does not arise. One simply lives in a prison cell believing that this is all there is to life, there is no more to it, because one has no consciousness of anything beyond the four walls of the prison.

Love is the key, the magic that uplifts you and gives you an opportunity to see the sky full of stars, the flowers, the trees, the wind, the sun, the moon. And suddenly a great longing arises in you to transcend those limits, to go beyond the four walls of the prison.

It is this longing that has brought you here; it is this longing that has made you take the jump into sannyas.

Religion is nothing but the science of love. it has nothing to do with Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism. Its whole concern is with love, and only with love. And love cannot be Christian or Hindu or Mohammedan or Christian, neither can you.

Trees are trees; the sun is not Christian, the moon is not Hindu. Existence knows nothing of all this nonsense. It is only the stupidity of man that goes on dividing; and all divisions create conflict, fight, continuous chaos. Man has lived in this chaos for centuries, but because the chaos has beautiful names -- Christianity, Hinduism, Mohammedanism -- because of these beautiful names one is deceived, one is utterly deceived. Once we take those labels away you can see the reality; it is naked violence, hatred, masquerading as love.

Love cannot divide, love unites. Love is the only way of becoming one -- not only with humanity but with all life as such and ultimately with all existence as such. And when you start feeling one with the whole, how can misery exist, how can anxiety or worry exist?

All these things become possible because we feel ourselves as separate from the whole. It is the separation from the whole that creates hell, it is union with the whole that creates paradise. And love is the bridge!

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #21

Chapter title: None

Richa means poetry born out of the heart of a Buddha -- not ordinary poetry, but poetry that flows through total awareness. The ordinary poet is as asleep as everybody else. His poetry is just a mumbling in deep sleep. Maybe he mumbles in a better way than others, his mumbling has a certain rhythm, a certain music to it, but it is still the mumbling of a fast-asleep person. He is dreaming; hence the poets are called dreamers.

Richa means poetry born out of a man who has become awakened, who is no more a dreamer; he can see, he is a seer. And because he can see, truth is available to him, so whatsoever he says is poetry, the way he lives is poetry. It is not only that he has to compose poetry, then it will be poetry; even his silence is poetic. He walks, talks, eats, sleeps, but all these actions have a poetry surrounding them. They have a deep harmony. Each of his acts is beautiful, it is divine.

There are many poets in the world, but the true poets are rare. Out of one hundred only one is a real poet. and out of a real poet, richa is born. Hence the poetry collected in the Vedas, in the Upanishadas, is called richa; the Koran consists of richas, the Bible consists of richas. It is the highest form of the experience of beauty and its expression.

Bliss is our treasure but we are completely oblivious of it. We have forgotten all about it, that we are carrying the greatest treasure within our being, and we are begging for small things. We are born kings and have become beggars. This is a very strange situation. We have completely forgotten who we are.

The whole purpose of sannyas is to make you aware of your own treasure, And you have not to go to seek is anywhere else, because it is within you at the very core of your being, Even if you want to lose it you cannot lose it, It is intrinsically part of your being, it is your very being; hence inseparable, nobody can steal it. If you want to give it to anybody you cannot do that either. It is born with you, it dies with you, you bring it and you take it away with you. But between birth and death you live like a beggar.

One can live like an emperor, one *should* live like an emperor. But only Buddhas can live like emperors Even Alexander the Great remains a beggar for his whole lifes always desiring more and more. That is the style of begging. Desire is begging. To live desirelessly, to live in the moment, to enjoy the moment to the full is to live like an emperor.

One may have everything of the world, one may not have anything of the world -- it is really irrelevant, it does not matter. What matters is self-knowledge. Meditation is the key to self-knowledge.

Put your total energy into self-enquiry, because that is the greatest adventure one can go on. And it is only through it that one comes to fulfilment, contentment.

The only victory worth calling victory is the attainment of bliss. Everything is only a toy to play with, to remain occupied with -- except bliss. Money, power, prestige -- these are toys for grown-up children, who are basically childish, who have not really grown. Of course, chronologically they have become grown-ups, but not psychologically; psychologically they are immature. They are still concerned, too concerned with futile things, with unnecessary things, while the most necessary is being left undone. Time is so short, and tomorrow is not certain; all we can be certain about is this moment. Even the next moment may come or may not come.

There is a famous story in the life of a mystic Eknath. A man used to come to see Eknath, always enquiring about great metaphysical things. One day he came very early in the morning. Eknath asked 'Today you have come so early -- is there something urgent?' The man said 'Yes. I always wanted to ask one thing but I cannot ask it in front of others, so before others come I have come. My question is a little silly, but whatsoever it is, it has been tormenting me for years. Since I have seen you this question has persisted in me and I will not get rid of it unless I ask it, Permit me to ask.'

Eknath said 'You can ask, you could have asked any time! All questions are silly, so it doesn't matter. Ask right now.' The man said 'You look so blissful that even emperors feel jealous of you, but deep inside me a doubt persists: maybe you are just pretending. Maybe inside you are the same as we all are; you are simply acting. Who knows? -- maybe the same desires, the same lust, the same greed, the same anger that haunts us may be haunting you too and you have repressed it. I cannot figure it out, I know it is not right to ask such a question, but what can I do? This goes on and on inside me.'

Eknath said 'I will answer the question, but not right now. Right now I have something more important to say to you and then you can repeat the question and I will answer it. Just let me see your hand.'

The sun was rising and Eknath said 'I just saw your hand... I may forget if I start answering your question, and this seems to be far more urgent, so let me say it first: your time is finished, only seven days more. The line of your age has come to its very end. Today is Sunday; next Sunday as the sun sets you will die. That's all the time that is left for you. Now you can ask what you wanted to ask. Please remind me again, then I can answer you.'

The man stood up, he started trembling. He said, 'I am not interested in any question at all. Right now I want to go home.' Eknath said 'But those questions have been tormenting you for years.' The man said 'Forget all about that -- who bothers about such things when death is so close?'

When he had come just a few moments before, he was young, with great strength; now he was almost old. Within moments it happened. When he went down the steps of the temple he was trembling; he had to take the support of the wall to get down the steps, He reached home, he told the family. Everybody started crying and weeping, he himself was crying and weeping.

Those seven days were hell. He stopped eating -- what was the point of eating any more? He stopped talking, he simply lay down on the bed. And when the last day came and the sun was just about to set, he was asking only one question again and again 'How much more time is left for me?'

Eknath came. The whole family started weeping and crying and asking Eknath to save him, to do somethings 'You can do miracles -- you are such a great saint.'

Eknath said 'Forget all about this. Don't waste time, there is not much time left -- let me talk to him!' He went in, he said to the man 'I have to ask you one question: in these seven days has greed, lust, anger ever bothered you?' The man said 'What are you asking a dying man when death is so close? Where is the space for greed, anger, and lust to arise?' Eknath said 'Then don't be worried -- you are not going to die. I have just answered your question! Get up, forget all about it! -- you will be living a long life. But I know that whether you live seven days or seven years or seventy years or seven hundred years, it makes no difference: death is going to come. Hence do that which is really essential. Since I have become aware of death, all these stupid ideas have disappeared from my being. I have not repressed them -- it is awareness of death that has transformed me.'

'Get up from your bed, you are not going to die. It was just a strategy to answer you, otherwise you would not have understood.'

The man was transformed; these seven days were really a master device. The man touched Eknath's feet and told his family 'Now I have to become a disciple of Eknath, I cannot go on letting you think that I am dying. In fact I am dead: the man who used to be has died within these seven days. I am a totally new man, because now my enquiry is different, my interest is different; now I move inwards.'

Life is short, very momentary, but people are so foolish that they go on wasting it on unnecessary things. The only important thing in life is the attainment of bliss, and that's the purpose of sannyas. It has

only one goal, only one target, and all your energies have to be poured towards it.

Become victorious over your own inner being -- that is true victory. And those who have known their own inner being have conquered all, even death.

These are two polarities in life: meditation and love. This is the ultimate polarity.

The whole of life consists of polarities: the positive and the negative, birth and death, man and woman, day and night, summer and winter. The whole of life consists of polar opposites. But those polar opposites are not only polar opposites, they are also complementaries. They are helping each other, they are supporting each other.

They are like the bricks of an arch. In an arch the bricks have to be arranged against each other. They appear to be against each other, but it is through their polar opposition that the arch is built, remains. The strength of the arch is dependent on the polarity of the bricks arranged opposite each other.

This is the ultimate polarity: meditation means the art of being alone, and love means the art of being together. The whole person is one who knows both and who is capable of moving from one to the other as easily as possible. It is just like breathing in and breathing out -- there is no difficulty. They are opposite: when you breathe in there is one process, and when you breathe out the process is just the opposite. But breathing in and breathing out make one full breath.

In meditation you breathe in, in love you breathe out. And with love and meditation together your breath is complete, entire, is whole.

For centuries religions have tried to attain one pole to the exclusion of the other. There are religions of meditation. For example, Jainism, Buddhism -- they are meditative religions, they are rooted in meditation. And there are Bhakti religions, religions of devotion: Sufism, Hassidism -- they are rooted in love. A religion rooted in love needs God as the other to love, to pray to, Without a god the religion of love cannot exist it is inconceivable -- you need an object of love. But a religion of meditation can exist without the concept of God; the hypothesis can be discarded. Hence Buddhism and Jainism don't believe in any god. There is no need of the other. You just have to know how to be alone, how to be silent, how to be still, how to be utterly calm and quiet within yourself. The other has to be completely dropped, forgotten. Hence these are godless religions.

When for the first time Western theologians came across Buddhist and Jaina literature they were very puzzled: how to call these godless philosophies religions? They could be called philosophies, but how to call them religions? It was inconceivable to them because the Judaic and Christian tradition thinks that to be religious God is the most essential hypothesis. The religious person is one who is God-fearing, and these people say there is no God, hence there is no question of fearing God.

In the West for thousands of years it has been thought that the person who does not believe in God is an atheist, he is not a religious person. But Buddha is atheistic and religious. It was very strange for Westerners because they were not at all aware that there are religions that are rooted in meditation.

And the same is true about the followers of Buddha and Mahavira. They laugh at the stupidity of other religions that believe in God, because the whole idea is absurd. It is just fantasy, imagination, nothing else; it is a projection. But to me, both are true together.

My understanding is not rooted in one pole; my understanding is fluid. I have tasted truth from both sides: I have loved totally and I have meditated totally. And this is my experience, that a person is whole only when he has known both. Otherwise he remains half, something remains missing in him.

Buddha is half -- so is Jesus. Jesus knows what love is, Buddha knows what meditation is, but if they meet, it will be impossible for them to communicate with each other. They will not understand each other's language. Jesus will talk about the kingdom of God and Buddha will start laughing: "What nonsense are you talking? The kingdom of God?" Buddha will say just "Cessation of the self, disappearance of the self." And Jesus will say, "Disappearance of the self? Cessation of the self? That is committing suicide, the ultimate suicide. What kind of religion is this? Talk about the supreme self!"

They will not understand each other's words. If they ever meet they will need a man like me to interpret; otherwise there can be no communication between them. And I will have to interpret in such a way that I will be untrue to both! Jesus will say "kingdom of God" and I will translate it as nirvana -- then Buddha will understand. Buddha will say "nirvana" and to Jesus I will say "Kingdom of God" -- then he will understand.

Humanity needs a total vision now. We have lived with half visions for too long. It was a necessity of the past, but now man has come of age. My sannyasins have to prove that they can meditate and pray together, that they can meditate and love together, that they can be silent as possible and they can be as

dancing and celebrating as possible. Their silence has to become their celebration, and their celebration has to become their silence. I am giving them the hardest task ever given to any disciples, because this is the meeting of the opposites.

And in this meeting all other opposites will melt and become one: East and West, man and woman, matter and consciousness, this world and that world, life and death. All opposites will meet and merge through this one meeting, because this is the ultimate polarity; it contains all the polarities.

This meeting will create my man -- Zorba the Buddha. That's my name for the new man. And each of my sannyasins has to make all the efforts possible to become such a liquidity, a flow, so that both poles belong to you.

Then you will have the taste of wholeness. And to know wholeness is the only way to know what is holy. There is no other way.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #22

Chapter title: None

Bliss is a child of light; it is a by-product. One cannot find it directly. Those who try to find it directly will create more misery for themselves because it is impossible to find it directly. It is as if one is trying to find the fragrance of rose flowers directly. It is a by-product: you grow roses and the fragrance comes on its own. When the roses bloom there is fragrance in the air.

Everybody seeks bliss but people rarely find it for the simple reason that they start seeking it directly. And the more you seek bliss directly, the more miserable you will become, because except for frustration, and failure, nothing can be achieved.

The people who want to be blissful have to seek light, they have to find their inner flame; they have to find their inner awareness. Light represents awareness, darkness represents unawareness. Light means consciousness, darkness means unconsciousness -- and we are all living in unconsciousness. We have to move towards the dawn, towards light, towards awareness.

One has to completely forget about bliss. There is no need to bother about it. If you can transform your unconsciousness into consciousness, then slowly slowly you will be surprised that a great bliss is arising in you for no reason at all. From where is it coming? You will not be able to find even its source. It is just through the flowering of the light inside you, the fragrance is released.

People who are seeking bliss directly start seeking money, power, prestige, because they think you can purchase everything if you have money; if you have enough money you can purchase bliss -- it seems logical. But bliss cannot be purchased.

Once a great king came to Mahavira. Mahavira is one of those few people who have attained the

ultimate light. The king was a great conqueror, he had achieved everything, but again and again people told him 'You may have achieved everything but you have not achieved bliss yet. One thing more remains to be conquered.'

And that had always been a wound in him -- that one thing remained to be conquered. Where to find it? From whom to find it? He knew only one way, and that was to conquer it, to fight for it.

Somebody suggested, 'Why don't you go to Mahavira? He is just very close to your capitol.' He went there and he said to Mahavira, 'I have heard you have attained bliss.' Mahavira said, 'You have heard rightly.' The king said, 'Then I have come to ask you to give it to me. I am ready to pay any price you ask for it.'

Mahavira laughed. He said, 'You don't understand at all. You understand how to conquer a a great kingdom, how to accumulate money, how to have many things, how to possess -- you don't know anything about bliss. You are asking such a childish question.'

The king said, 'Don't be worried about the price. whatsoever you ask I am ready to pay for it. Don't hesitate at all.'

Now this is how the worldly one always thinks: he can purchase everything. Mahavira played a joke on him. He said, 'Do one thing. I am not willing to sell it, I have no desire to sell it, but there is a man in your capitol itself, a very poor man. He has also attained it and he is so poor that he may be ready, he may be willing to sell it. Go and ask that men.'

Mahavira gave him the address. That man was a follower of Mahavira, a very poor man, but he had also attained.

The king said, 'Then it is very easy. The address that you have given is in the poorest part of the town. I will purchase it, but if the man is not willing to sell it, then he will be in trouble.'

He went to the poor man and he asked him. The poor man said, 'Mahavira must be joking, because it is not something that can be sold or purchased. I can give you my life; if you want ME I am ready. You can make me a prisoner, you can kill me -- whatsoever you want to do with me, I am ready. I am just your subject. I am a poor man -- you can do whatsoever you want.'

'It is not that I am unwilling to give you bliss, but you don't understand the mathematics of bliss: it is a by-product. You have to find your inner light first. *My* inner light will not be of any use to you. My consciousness is *my* consciousness. It is unsharable, untransferrable. You will have to go deep into meditation -- there is no other way. You will have to go inwards. You know only how to go outwards. You are an extrovert, par excellence, you are an extreme extrovert -- and the whole process of finding the light is introversion. I have found it, Mahavira has found it, *you* can find it because I can see -- it is there inside you, but just a seed, just a potential.'

'But forget about bliss. Go again to Mahavira and ask how to meditate. You asked a wrong question. Ask how to find the inner light. Don't talk in terms of purchasing.'

Once you know how to find the inner light, bliss comes. It comes so silently that you will not even hear its footsteps. It fill you, and it fills you forever. It comes and never goes. In fact it does not come, it only appears to be a coming. It is your own innermost flowering and its fragrance.

Meditation and Karuna are tremendously significant words, and both have to be understood.

Meditation is not concentration. It is written in the books that it is, because books are written by people who know nothing of meditation. Ninety-nine percent of books on meditation are written by non-meditators. They may be scholars, they may have read all the literature about meditation, but they have not tasted its joy! They have not gone into it, it is not their own experience; hence they go on repeating each other.

It is *so* easy to write a book: just read ten books on meditation and the eleventh book is born. Whatsoever you write, you have read in those ten books, and they were written in the same way.

I have come across many people who have written beautiful books on meditation and they have not tasted even a single drop of meditateness. They have not experienced a single moment of that joy, of that bliss, of that ecstasy, of that dance, of that celebration. They are absolutely unaware of what they are writing, they are simply repeating like parrots.

All these books will tell you that meditation means concentration. If any book tells you that meditation means concentration, it simply means that the person knows nothing of meditation at all, because meditation is just the opposite of concentration.

Concentration is a process of the mind. It is focussing the mind on one object; meditation is a state of unfocussing. In concentration there is one object; in meditation there is no object at all. It is objectless; it is

a mirror reflecting nothing -- just a mirror, not a reflecting even a single object.

When two meditators face each other they are like two mirrors. And when two mirrors are in front of each other, they go on reflecting each other -- nothing else. There is only emptiness reflected again and again.

Once a great meditator, Sheikh Farid -- he was a Sufi mystic -- met another great mystic, Kabir. They both sat for two days together. Not a single word was uttered by either -- neither Kabir nor Farid said anything. Their disciples were very much puzzled: 'What has happened?' They were expecting that something would be said that would be of immense value. But those two people were absolutely silent. They looked into each other's eyes, they smiled, they nodded, they laughed, they hugged each other and then they departed -- not even a goodbye.

When they were left along with their disciples their disciples said, 'Master, this is too much! For two days we waited and waited and waited, and we have been waiting for this opportunity for years, thinking that at the meeting of two great enlightened persons something would be bound to transpire. We were thrilled, so excited, but you both remained utterly silent.'

Farid said, 'When two mirrors face each other, nothing is reflected or only nothing is reflected, again and again. He is silent, I am silent; he knows, I know; I am not, he is not. We have both disappeared into the ultimate. what is there to say? Who is there to say it?'

And the same was said by Kabir. When his disciples asked him, 'Lord...' he said, 'If either of us had spoken, that would have proved that he knew nothing. We looked into each others' eyes and we recognised that the other had become a mirror, he recognised that I had become a mirror. That's why we nodded: without saying yes, we recognised, that it happened. It is very rare, so we rejoiced, we laughed. and we laughed at you also because you were so excited, sitting and waiting for something to be said. the meeting was beautiful,' Kabir said, 'It was tremendously beautiful: the meeting of two hearts, two souls, in deep silence.'

Meditation means becoming a mirror without any thoughts, any clouds. Concentration needs effort, meditation needs relaxation. Concentration tires you, meditation rejuvenates. concentration is a forced thing, unnatural, against tao.

Meditation is simply flowing with the river, going with the wind, just like a dead leaf moving with the wind, wherever it goes. The dead leaf has no will of its own. If the wind is going south it goes south; if the wind suddenly turns towards the north it starts moving towards the north. It does not say 'What does it mean? We were going to the south and now you have turned towards the north -- this is contradictory. The whole effort is wasted.' It says nothing; there is nothing to say. It has simply become surrendered.

Meditation is surrender, concentration is struggle. Concentration is a fight to force the mind into a certain pattern, to channelise the mind towards a certain object, not to allow it freedom, to chain it, to make it tethered and to force it to remain stagnant on that point, not to move. Meditation is a flowing phenomenon. There is no question of any effort, not question of forcing, no question of fighting, no question of any goal, achievement, ambition. It is a total let-go, it is the most beautiful experience. There is nothing which is more beautiful than meditation; hence out of such relaxation, compassion arises.

Compassion is the flowering of a relaxed consciousness. One starts feeling great compassion for all that is. One starts feeling compassion because people are unnecessarily miserable. They need not be miserable; that is not their destiny. They are creating their misery, they are making a great effort to create their hells, and then they are caught in their own nets. They go on crying and weeping and they want to get out of the misery but still they go on making the same prisons again and again. They don't want to remain imprisoned, but they have become so unconscious, so mechanical, that they only know how to make prisons. They go on saying "We want to be free, we want to be blissful," but whatsoever they do brings more misery, On one hand they make some effort to get out of the prison, on the other hand they destroy it. People are in a dilemma.

The man of meditation feels tremendous compassion for all beings -- not only man: animals, birds, trees, rocks -- for all that is, because they are all imprisoned. Every being is an imprisoned splendour -- it can be released, But nobody can force anybody out of his imprisonment, If he has decided to remain a prisoner nobody can do anything about. Hence the man of meditation feels even more compassion.,

He can see clearly the whole ridiculousness of it. The absurdity of the human mind, of the human endeavour, is so clear to him that there is no question about his compassion, It is not something cultivated. It is not that he forces himself to feel compassion for others, he simply feels compassion.

Buddha made it a point -- and it was the first time in the history of thought; before him nobody had

made it clear in that way, nobody had emphasised it -- that true compassion is not a cultivated phenomenon, True compassion comes naturally out of meditation. Hence he says, 'Compassion is the criterion of whether meditation has succeeded or not, whether you have really become relaxed or not.'

If your life becomes compassionate, that is the proof, a very concrete proof that you have gone through an inner transformation, all tensions have disappeared and there is now absolute calm, absolute silence, absolute peace, you have arrived home. Compassion becomes the symbol, the criterion, the manifestation of what has happened at the innermost core of your being.

Meditation happens inside, compassion is its outer expression, its manifestation. Nobody can see anybody else's meditateness, but everybody can see the compassion, the love, that surrounds such a person. He becomes love, he becomes compassion.

Go deeply into meditation so compassion can be achieved. That is the ultimate truth of life.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #23

Chapter title: None

Meditation is a state of no-mind. Mind means being in thinking, desiring, dreaming; no-mind means no thinking, no desiring, no dreaming, absolute inward silence, when nothing stirs inside, as if everything has totally stopped. It is a full-stop, the mind is no more functioning. It is a tremendous silence, very pregnant. It is not dead, it is very alive, very vibrant, full of great possibilities. In fact mind is absolutely impotent; it only thinks. And thoughts are just hot air and nothing else.

An old man was telling his physician 'I am feeling very weak.' The physician checked him and told him 'You will have to cut your sex life to almost half.' The old man said, 'Which half do I have to cut? -- talking about it or thinking about it?'

That's what mind goes on doing. Talking means thinking loudly; thinking means talking silently inside, whispering to yourself. It is the same: whether you talk aloud or you talk without moving your lips the process is the same. Thoughts cannot lead you to reality. Thoughts are just thoughts.

You can think about great things: god, love, truth, but to think about god has no meaning. To know god is a totally different phenomenon. The person who knows god never thinks about god -- there is no need to think.

Thinking is like a blind man pondering over, contemplating light -- what light is, how it looks, what exactly it consists of, why people are so interested in light. He is trying to define light -- which is impossible for him. A blind man cannot define light -- it is an experience. So is god, so is love, so is truth.

Mind keeps you clouded. The whole sky of your inner universe remains clouded; you can't see clearly. It keeps you in the dark, it keeps your eyes closed. You are not blind, nobody is born blind; as far as

consciousness is concerned nobody is born blind. Even the physically blind person is not blind inwardly. He can become enlightened. He may not be able to know the outer light but he can know the inner light. That inner light is everybody's birthright, it is intrinsic to our being. But for it one has to go beyond mind.

Going beyond mind is just like taking your aeroplane above the clouds, moving upwards. When you are travelling in an aeroplane sometimes you are below the clouds, sometimes you are in the clouds, sometimes you are above the clouds. And the beauty of being above the clouds is tremendous. The whole sky is open for you, the whole infinity is open to you. Nothing debars your vision, the insight is absolutely clear. You can see into the unbounded.

Meditation is exactly the same process: taking yourself above mind, transcending mind, surpassing mind. And once you have known something beyond the mind, mind looks just child's play, of no utility at all. It looks ridiculous, and all its efforts and all its endeavours that you have made your whole life, look stupid, silly, because now you can see. And it was impossible for the mind to conceive that which you are seeing, it is incomprehensible through the mind.

The way to transcend the mind is watchfulness: you have simply to watch the mind. It is a very simple process but with immense possibilities. One cannot even imagine how such a simple process can take you beyond the mind. But all ultimate laws are very simple.

Man had never thought that one day he would be able to fly. Of course people had imagined it for centuries; all the scriptures of the world are full of stories. But they are all stories, fiction, an old type of science fiction; nobody really believed them.

When for the first time the Wright brothers started working to make a machine that would fly, everybody laughed. People thought they were mad, their whole family thought they were mad. They were so condemned that they could work only in the night and that too, in the basement of their house so nobody would disturb them. Otherwise everybody was ready to condemn them.

The first flying machine that they made was made out of old cycle parts, because their father owned a bicycle shop. He used to purchase old bicycles and make them workable and then sell them again. So there was a huge pile of old parts in the basement of the house. The first aeroplane was made of old bicycles.

When they had made it they didn't declare it, because nobody would believe it. In fact they themselves were very afraid to believe, it was impossible for them to believe that it was going to fly. They went alone outside the town. The first time they were the only persons there: one brother watched and the other brother took the machine up. For only sixty seconds, for only one minute, was it in the air. But that was enough: the principle had been found. And then the whole world said, 'There is nothing in it -- anybody could have done it.' But for centuries nobody had done it. That's how people are: once you do a thing they will say, 'This is so simple.'

Meditation also is a very simple process. It is just a silent watching of the mind: thoughts moving, desires moving, dreams coming in, going out, and you remain centred, looking at it without doing a thing. That's the most important point to remember. If you start doing something, immediately you have forgotten to watch, you have fallen into the mind. You are no more sitting on the bank of the river, you have jumped into the river. That temptation is the only barrier, and it is a great temptation.

Some thoughts are so beautiful, some dreams are so beautiful, that one forgets to watch; one becomes identified, one starts following those thoughts, one starts getting into imagination, into fantasising.

All that is needed is not to be tempted by anything passing by; just remain untempted. Slowly slowly the knack is learned, and when you are untemptedly watching, the transcendence happens of its own accord. The moment you are a watcher you have already transcended, because the watcher cannot be the watched, the observer cannot be the observed. Those thoughts are there; you are here, a witness. You are no more part of it; the no-mind has started growing in you. This is the way a man becomes a Christ or a Buddha or a Zarathustra or a Lao Tzu.

The word 'Marie' is very beautiful. It has three meanings which define the whole process of meditation.

The first meaning is bitterness. Meditation starts in a very bitter state. The taste is bitter. In the beginning it is bitter, because temptation is sweet and you have always been a victim of temptation; it is an old habit. It is really bitter to keep yourself aloof, cool, untempted, not to get into the merry-go-round of the mind, not to start playing with the beautiful toys -- and they are very colourful, very psychedelic, really alluring, intoxicating, infatuating.

For example, a sexual desire passes in the mind. Suddenly you think of a beautiful man or a woman -- and no man, no woman, is as beautiful as the colourful image of a man or woman can be inside the mind. It

is so attractive. One is unconsciously pulled into it; one gets into the whirlpool of it, forgets all about meditation. One says to oneself, 'I can meditate later on but let us go a little more into this thought. This Sophia Loren may come again, may not come again, this Mohammed may visit, may not visit again -- who knows? Meditation you can do any time, it is up to you, but don't miss this opportunity.' One starts postponing meditation.

And the strange thing is when you start meditating, very beautiful thoughts will come, great desires will arise because mind will try in every way to manipulate you; mind is a master of you and you are a slave, and through meditation You will become the master and the mind will be the slave. And the mind has remained a master for so long, it does not want to become a slave. Who wants to lose one's mastery so easily?

So it will give all kinds of temptations. There is no other devil except your own mind; hence the beginning is very bitter. The first meaning of Marie is bitterness. If you can pass through it...

The second meaning of Marie is rebellion. If one can pass through bitterness, if you can start centering and settling into yourself, and the mind no longer has any power over you, a great radical change happens in your consciousness; a rebellion happens. You are no more the same person, you are reborn.

This rebirth is true rebellion. All other rebellions are just so-called. They are only reforms, not rebellions, because they only change the outer form, they never change the inner spirit.

All the revolutions have failed in that sense. No revolution has yet succeeded. French or Russian or Chinese -- no revolution has succeeded. Only a few rebellious people have succeeded, but they have succeeded through meditation.

The fight is not outside, the fight is inside, with your own mind. The mind is the real czar, and you have to rebel against the mind. Once this rebellion is possible you are for the first time beginning to live life with a new light, with new perceptiveness, with a new clarity, with new transparency. Your whole inner world is new, and because the inner is new the outer is bound to change for *you*. It will not change for anybody else, but for you the whole world will be different.

And the third meaning of Marie is fragrance. If this rebirth happens you flower; your ultimate potential becomes actual. You are no more a seed, you become a flower. You have become a grown-up, you have matured, you have come home. And great fragrance is released. That fragrance is a celebration: the celebration of coming home, the celebration of the ultimate achievement.

Buddha calls it nirvana, Jesus calls it kingdom of God, Mahavira calls it moksha, ultimate freedom. Now you know what the meaning of life is, now you know what the beauty of life is, now you know what the music of life is, now you know what the poetry of life is. Each moment becomes a dance, a song. And it goes on growing -- it is a process that begins but never ends.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #24

Chapter title: None

Meditation is a state of awareness, watchfulness, witnessing. Ordinarily we live just like a robot: we go through all the gestures of living, but they are only gestures; there is no consciousness behind it. We are functioning like a mechanism. And that's what the society wants us to do. The society needs machines, not men.

Machines are good in a way; they are very obedient. Nobody has ever heard of any machine being rebellious, of any machine saying no. They are always at your disposals push the button and they start functioning, and whenever you want. They don't even need a coffee break; day in, day out, they can go on working for you.

Hence slowly slowly society has tried to reduce man to a machine. It has almost succeeded. Fortunately it has only *almost* succeeded. With a few persons it has failed -- and those few are the salt of the earth.

Moise is a form of Moses. Moses is one of those few people who can be called the salt of the earth. Existence is beautiful because there have been people like Moses. They function consciously; they create great rebellions. The whole evolution has depended on these few people.

Meditation means undoing what the society has done to you. It has reduced you to a machine; you have to de-automatise yourself, you have to become a man again. You have to come out of this state of unconsciousness, of mechanicalness. You have to come out of this sleep. It is possible only through meditation. There is no other way, there has never been, there will never be. The only way to reduce a man to a machine is take away his consciousness force him to function unconsciously. And just the opposite is the way of meditation: give him back his consciousness.

That's my work here: to help you to become conscious again so you can be rid of all structures that have been imposed upon you, which are keeping you in slavery, in a mental slavery. The slavery is so subtle that one is not ordinarily even aware of it, that it exists. People take it for granted that they are Christians, Hindus, Mohammedans, Indians, Japanese, French. They never think, even for a single moment, that each child is born without any religion, without any nation, without any race; he is simply born as a conscious being. But we take away his consciousness, and instead of it we give him poor substitutes. We take away his real identity and give him false ideas; 'You are this, you are that,' and then he goes on living according to those ideas. His whole life becomes a falsification.

One has to wake up from this sleep.

The meaning of Moise is very beautiful. It has two meanings. Those two meaning are like two sides of the same coin.

The first meaning is servant of god. It simply means one who is surrendered to tao, to existence, to nature. God is just a metaphor for the ultimate law of existence.

And the second meaning is one who is saved by god. The first has to precede, then the second succeeds of its own accords if you surrender to the ultimate law of existence you are saved; to surrender is to be saved. Sannyas is nothing but a discipline of surrendering, and the outcome is deliverance.

You have to disappear as an ego and then you are suddenly born as the very ocean. You have to disappear as a person, as a separate entity, and then you appear as the whole. And to be the whole is to be holy.

The discipline that is imposed from the outside is always ugly because it is destructive, it is paralysing, It cripples you. Rather than cutting the cloth according to you and then making a dress out of it, it does just the opposite: the dress is already there, made by somebody maybe thousands of years before, and you have to fit into it. If you don't fit into it then You have to be cut, not the dress. Then something is wrong with you, not with the dress.

That is the moralistic attitude, the puritan attitude, that the moral rules are always right. If something is wrong it is always you, so you have to fit with the moral rules. If you don't fit it creates guilt; if you try to fit, it creates discomfort. If you are stupid you try to fit, but then your whole life becomes a misery. If you are clever, cunning, then you become a hypocrite. You pretend 'Yes, everything is okay. I am fitting in perfectly -- the dress is beautiful, it is lovely!'

But then you have to live a double life: one life in your drawing room, the other life, which is your real life, from the backdoor. And then there is a split; then you are constantly in a kind of inner struggle, an inner tension, and you can never be at ease. You are pulled apart: if you try to be real you start feeling you are being oral; if you try to be moral you start feeling you are being unnatural. And both prove to be tense

states.

My approach is totally different; it is not moralistic at all. And I make a clear-cut distinction between morality and religion. Morality is discipline imposed from the outside, religion is an inner discipline. It arises out of your own consciousness. Morality depends on creating a conscience, and very conscience is bound to create problem for you because it is against you somewhere. It may look right basically, but nature knows no logic. You may have to agree intellectually, but existence is far bigger than the intellect. You cannot manage to force existence into intellectual patterns. Moreover, the patterns were created long ago.

Manu, the Indian law-maker, the Hindu founder, prescribed certain rules. Five thousand years have passed and the Hindu still has to follow them. Now, the whole world has changed, man has changed; nothing is the same. If Manu comes back he will not even be able to recognise anything. But his rules are still there. If the Hindu follows those rules, in one sense he feels good that he is following the right path. But then there is repression, and then the whole situation is against him and he looks silly and stupid -- to himself, to others too. He does not look contemporary. He becomes a mess.

Morality is for man -- man is not for morality. And morality has to change with the times. Peoples' needs change, requirements change; you cannot continue with old rules. Ten commandments were given three thousand years ago; now everything is different -- they are absolutely irrelevant. You have to find new ways to live, new ways to be. The only possibility is that we drop the whole idea of conscience. Instead of conscience we should depend on consciousness.

Conscience is always created by others. It is a manipulation, it is a subtle slavery. Consciousness is created by you. It is your own effort to stand on your own two feet, to look at life and to gather enough courage to live according to your light. Of course when you live according to your light you may commit many mistakes, but there is nothing wrong in committing mistakes because that's the only way to learn. The more mistakes one commits, the more one learns. The only thing to be remembered is: don't commit the same mistake again and again, because that is stupid! Commit new mistakes, find out ways to commit new mistakes.

As you grow, as you learn, as you become conscious, as you become more and more alert, a certain inner discipline arises without any imposition, because you can see what is right and what is wrong. And when *you* see it, there is no split; then you are not of a double mind, then it does not create a kind of schizophrenia. Otherwise the whole humanity has lived a schizophrenic life up to now, because of the moralistic past.

We have to free religion from morality. Once religion is freed from morality, then religion gives you a totally new kind of morality, but it will not be of Manu and it will not be of Moses and it will not be of Jesus, and it will not be of Buddha, it will not be mine -- it will be yours. And when it is yours there is a joy in living it, there is great growth through it. You don't feel crippled, paralysed, hampered, obstructed, manipulated; you become more and more natural, simple, spontaneous. You become more and more attuned to the universe.

That's the way of sannyas: it is non-moralistic but absolutely religious. I teach an amoral religion: not immoral, not moral, but amoral -- a religion that transcends morality. Then it brings freedom to you, and freedom is the ultimate value. There is nothing higher than that. Freedom is the highest truth. It is another name for god.

Bliss is not something philosophical, something intellectual. It is existential, it is an experience -- like love, like light, like life.

You cannot teach a blind man what light is. You can tell him about the physics of light, you can tell him about the mathematics of light, you can tell him all the theories about light, but even all those theories, physics and mathematics, will not give him a single glimpse of light. He will not know even a single ray of light: he is blind. In fact he does not even know darkness -- what to say about light?

People ordinarily think that blind people live in darkness. That is absolutely wrong. That is just *our* idea, because we close our eyes and there is darkness, so we think blind people must be living in darkness. The blind person cannot see at all, how can he see darkness? To see darkness eyes are needed as much as eyes are needed to see light. You cannot even explain darkness to a blind man, what to say about light? Impossible!

The only possible way is to help him so that his eyes are cured, so that he can also see. Then he may not know the physics -- who knows the physics of light. I don't know, but I know what light is. Who knows the mathematics of light? Millions of people use light without knowing anything about it.

It is said that once it happened that Thomas Alva Edison, who was the inventor of the electric bulb, went to a village, a hill station, for a holiday. The hill station had a small school and the school was celebrating its hundredth anniversary, so they had many functions; many celebrations were going on.

He had nothing to do so he went to see what was going on there. The school children had arranged a small exhibition and they had made a few electrical things. A boy was showing him: 'Push this button and the light comes on, push this button and the fan starts moving,' and the villagers were very enchanted, amused. It was so new; they had never seen electricity.

Edison also showed much interest, and nobody knew that he was Edison, the inventor. Humorously he asked the young boy, 'What is electricity?' The boy said, 'What is electricity? Wait. I don't know -- I will call my teacher, my science teacher.' So the science teacher was called and Edison asked, 'What is electricity?' The science teacher was almost at a loss for an answer. He said, 'Wait. I am not very educated, just a B.Sc., but our principal holds a doctorate in science; I will call him.'

The principal came and Edison asked, 'What is electricity?' The principal looked very puzzled and said, 'You have asked such a great question.'

Seeing the difficulty, Edison laughed and said, 'Don't be worried -- I am Thomas Alva Edison. I myself don't know what electricity is. Not that we know is how to use it. So don't get worried about it. I am the inventor of all these things that you are showing here. I was just joking. I *myself* don't know what electricity is exactly -- it is indefinable. But we are using it, are using light, we are using air, we are using water. People were drinking water even before they came to know that water means H₂O. It was not needed. Without knowing what water consists of, people have been drinking and surviving perfectly well...

The blind man needs eyes and then he will know light. He does not need theories about it. Exactly is the case with bliss: you don't need theories about it. I am not a theoretician and I don't encourage my sannyasins to be philosophical. I discourage them as much as I can. I destroy all their philosophical curiosity in order to emphasise the existential, because once you start moving into the philosophic direction, there is no end to it; you will never come to know what bliss is. You will go on thinking and thinking and thinking; and one thought leads to another thought, ad infinitum.

Bliss is an experience. I can teach you how to experience it, I cannot tell you what it is. If you become silent, still, calm and quiet and collected, you will experience it. Bliss is the experience of a silent state of mind, because in a silent state of mind, mind disappears. It is no more mind; it becomes no-mind. And with the disappearance of the mind all desires disappear, all tensions disappear, all anxieties disappear. And these are the barriers which do not allow the flow of bliss in you, otherwise bliss is your nature. If all the rocks are beloved, suddenly it with great force -- your bliss starts flowing like a stream.

A sannyasin has to remember it continuously because mind always distracts you towards philosophy. And it is very easy to talk about, to think about, to read about; the real problem is to experience. That is arduous, because for that you will have to go through, an inner transformation, from mind to no-mind, from thought to no-thought, from desire to no-desire.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #25

Chapter title: None

The real victory comes only through meditation. All else that looks like victory -- money, power, prestige -- is only a deception, a mirage. Even Alexander the Great remains a beggar and dies a beggar, because the outer riches cannot make you inwardly rich and the outer victories cannot fill your inner emptiness. He also became aware of the fact, but then it was too late. Just before he died he realised it, that his whole life had been a sheer wastage. In trying to conquer the world he had completely forgotten himself. And now death was knocking on the door, no time was left, He was going as empty-handed as he came into the world.

He confessed it -- that is one of the most beautiful things about him, otherwise rarely do people like Alexander ever confess their failure. His last wish was that when he was taken to the cemetery his hands should be left hanging outside the coffin. His ministers and generals were puzzled. They said, 'What do you mean? It is not done?' He said, 'Whether it is done or not, that is not the point. Thousands of people will see me being carried to the cemetery and I want them to know that I am going empty-handed. Let my hands hang out of the coffin so everybody recognises the stupidity that I have committed.'

Meditation means an inward journey. It is moving from the circumference to the centre. The moment you reach your centre you are victorious. When you reach the innermost core you are victorious, and now you know that there is no birth, no death, you are immortal. Only the circumference goes on changing, with each birth it is a different circumference, but it is the same centre. As far as the centre is concerned nothing ever changes, it is unchanging. It does not belong to the world of time, it transcends time, it is part of eternity.

Meditation makes you a really loving one. Without meditation one only pretends to love. It is pseudo, it is a mask; it is not your real face. Behind the mask other things are hiding; sometimes even hatred is hiding behind your love. And it is almost always an effort to exploit the other as a means -- and love cannot exploit, love cannot use the other as a means. Love respects the other as an end unto himself or herself.

Love cannot possess, love respects the freedom of the other. Possession is one of the most ugly things. It cannot exist with love. To possess someone means you have reduced the other to a thing. Only things can be possessed, not persons, not beings. You can share but you cannot possess. But *that* love is possible only when you have become rooted in your own being, when you have become grounded, when you are so grounded in yourself that you can enjoy your aloneness. Then there is no need to possess the other.

The need to possess the other arises out of your incapacity to enjoy yourself in your aloneness. You are afraid: if you don't possess the other you may be left lonely, the other may move away. So you create all kinds of barriers and chains -- legal and social. You create a kind of slavery for the other and naturally, the other is doing the same to you. Hence lovers become gaolers for each other; they start destroying each other. They don't help growth. They are afraid of the other's growth, because who knows? -- if the other starts growing, he may love you, he may not love you because he will be a totally different person, He has to be stopped, wherever he is, so that he goes on loving you. With any change in his life you feel afraid, shaken, And you immediately start destroying all possibilities for growth.

That's why peoples' psychological age is very retarded near about thirteen. They may be seventy years chronologically but only thirteen years psychologically, And then there is trouble because the gap between their psychology and their physiology is so vast, so unbridgeable, that they become two persons: psychologically they live very childishly, physiologically they are grown-ups, so there is a split in them. Almost the whole of humanity lives in this kind of split for the simple reason that we don't know how to first get rooted in our being.

Love is a flowering of meditation. Meditation is the art of being alone, and love is the art of being alone together. But your aloneness remains intact and you keep the others' aloneness unhindered, untouched. It is so sacred, it is so divine, it cannot be destroyed... if you love the person. But this kind of love can grow only out of meditation. Hence to me, meditation is the foundation; and then only you can make the temple of

love.

People are making sandcastles -- but they call it love -- because they are missing something very fundamental: the foundation is not there.

Start with meditation, and as you go deeper into meditation you will find love arising in you, a totally new quality of love, a new flavour of love, a love that you have never known before, a love that is synonymous with god.

There is a vast difference between satisfaction and contentment. The dictionaries will not say there is any difference -- if you look up contentment the meaning 'satisfaction' will be given, and if you look for the meaning of satisfaction you will find 'contentment'. They are not synonymous at all... but dictionaries are not made by buddhas.

Satisfaction is a negative state, contentment is a positive state. Satisfaction is like the famous Aesop's fable, the fable about the sour grapes.

The fox wanted to reach the grapes but they were too far away. The fox jumped, tried hard and fell on the ground many times, but they were beyond his reach. Utterly frustrated he went away, but before he went away he looked all around to see that nobody was watching.

Hidden behind a bush a small rabbit was watching.

He said, "Uncle, what happened?" And the fox changed his face; there was no more any frustration, no sign of failure.

He laughed and said, "Those grapes are sour. Let them become ripe. We will have to wait a little."

That is satisfaction. You can deceive others, you can also deceive yourself. It is a strategy to survive as an ego, otherwise there are so many problems in life. You don't have enough money, you don't have enough power, you don't have enough fame. The ego feels wounded and hurt, and slowly slowly you have to create a certain kind of satisfaction, you have to create many rationalizations: "Who cares?"

Nirupa is sitting there -- she is my medium. Before she became a medium she used to think, "I don't want to be a medium -- who cares?" That was satisfaction: trying to satisfy herself -- "I am not interested in it." But now she knows what that was; now she understands that that was not contentment, that was satisfaction. That is a strategy to hide your wounds. It is a negative state.

Contentment is a positive phenomenon. It is not that you are trying to rationalize some failure, it is simply that you are enjoying a certain blissful moment inside. It can happen only through meditation, otherwise you will know only satisfaction. It is through meditation that you start experiencing bliss, peace, silence, joy, and then there is tremendous contentment; you are so overfull, in fact so full that you would like to share. You are overflowing.

Satisfaction is a poor man's effort to keep his face smiling, somehow. Contentment is the joy of inner richness. It is the aura that surrounds a meditative person. It is the fragrance that naturally comes to those who go beyond mind. Satisfaction is of the mind, contentment is of no-mind. And that's what meditation is all about: a shift of your consciousness from thought to no-thought, from constant chattering to an inner silence.

And unless one knows contentment one is not really alive. One is somehow dragging, somehow keeping oneself together. But the moment you experience contentment you need not keep yourself from falling apart.

You become integrated, you become crystallized.

You are not only a union, you become a unity; you are one.

And that oneness is the goal of sannyas.

Knowledge can be acquired in two ways. Either you acquire knowledge from others... Then it is superficial. You become knowledgeable but you don't become wise. You become more informed, more learned, but you remain the same old person with no inner change, with no radical transformation. All your knowledge becomes just an addition to whatsoever you were. It does not affect you, it leaves you intact.

The other way to find knowledge is to go deep into your own being, to dig deep. That's what meditation is: a method of digging deep within yourself so that you can find the real source of your life. From there arises a totally different kind of knowledge -- that is wisdom. It is not just an addition to whatsoever you were before, it is a transformation. You are no more the same person, you become new through it. You are reborn; it is a rebirth.

And unless one is reborn one cannot understand the mystery of existence. One can know much about

god, but to know about god is not to know god. One can know much about love, but to know about love is not to know love. To know about love is fallacious. We need not to know about god, but to *know* god, to know love, to know life, to know light, to know who we are. It is not a question of about; the word 'about' means around.

The so-called knowledge goes around and around, never touching the centre; it goes in circles. Meditation leads you directly to the centre of the very source of your being -- and it is also the source of the whole existence. Having a taste of it changes you completely, changes your perspective. Everything else remains the same but you are no more the same. And because you are no more the same, nothing is the same any more. Now you have new eyes to see, new ears to hear; a new heart to love, new hands to touch and reel. Now you have a new being, a new heart-beat. And with this newness, life becomes a dance, a song, a celebration.

Sannyas is a celebration of life. It is not renunciation, it is rejoicing.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #26

Chapter title: None

Meditation needs tremendous perseverance. It is not like a seasonal flower, it is more like a cedar of Lebanon; it needs time to grow roots. That is one of the reasons why the contemporary man is missing the inner treasure: he is always in a hurry. Never before was man in such a hurry. Speed was never such an addiction. People were moving slowly, living slowly; there was a kind of unhurriedness in their life. As technology has progressed, it has given more and more speed to man, and everything is moving faster and faster. We are becoming more and more intoxicated with speed; it is a drug. It does not allow us to grow anything that takes time, patience, perseverance. It does not allow us anything that needs the art of waiting...

Hence we are running outwards. It is possible with scientific technology to rush towards the moon, towards the stars one day; but to go in no scientific technology can be of any help. There nature has to take its own course. And one has to learn not to be so concerned with the result, with the goal. One should start enjoying the journey itself. One should start enjoying the trees by the side of the road, the birds singing, the sun rising, the clouds floating in the sky. One should move slowly, at one's natural pace. And one should not even be in competition with others because everybody has their own natural pace and everybody has a unique individuality.

So one should listen to one's own heart. And it is not difficult to judge if you are in a hurry you are tense. That tension is enough to indicate, it is an indicator that you are doing something against your nature, you are straining too much. Slow down. Move in a relaxed way, as if there is the whole infinity available. In fact it is so, the whole infinity is available. We are not born with our birth and we don't die with our death

either. We are eternal.

One can go into deep meditation only with this understanding. One should forget completely whether anything is happening or not. One should start enjoying just sitting silently, for no reason at all, with no motive at all -- just for the sheer joy of sitting silently, just breathing, being, listening to the birds or watching your breath. Slowly slowly a new fragrance starts arising in your being. That fragrance is meditation, that poise, that calmness, that stillness. It comes from the beyond as a gift. And whenever someone is ready it always happens, inevitably.

Nature is never unfair to anybody. Whosoever deserves and whatsoever he deserves, he gets it. If people are miserable they deserve it, that's what they deserve. Nobody is at fault, nobody else; nobody else is responsible. They have earned it. They may have forgotten how they have earned it, they may not be conscious how they have got into the mess, but that's what they have been doing. It is the outcome of their own work.

If somebody is blissful that simply means he deserves it. Nature always gives that for which you have become worthy, for which you are ready and prepared and receptive to.

Perseverance, constant effort with no hurry -- that is one of the fundamentals of meditation. The word 'con' comes from constantia, constancy; it is a beautiful word. It can become the very foundation of your inner growth. Just be relaxed, at ease with life, with yourself, with others, and drop this whole nonsense of rushing.

There is a Korean Zen story... An old monk gets out of a boat with his young disciple. They are carrying many ancient scriptures with them. The village they want to reach is on a hilltop and the sun is almost setting so they ask the ferryman, 'Will we be able to reach it before the sun sets? -- because we have heard that as the sun sets the doors of the village will be closed. It is surrounded by a wall and we will not be able to enter then. We will have to wait till morning, and it is dangerous to wait outside the gates; it is wild territory, wild animals are there. Will we be able to reach there?'

The ferryman said, 'If you go slowly you *may* manage. If you go fast I cannot say that you will be able to manage it.'

They thought the ferryman was just mad: What was he saying? 'If you go slowly you *may* manage to reach, but if you go fast I cannot guarantee it. I cannot say even that -- that you will be able to manage it. The greater possibility is that you will not be able to reach before sunset.' There was no point in waiting time with such a madman. They rushed! And what the ferryman said *did* happen. The old man was really very old and they were carrying a big load of scriptures; the track was hilly and he slipped on a rock, fell into a ditch and had many fractures. All the scriptures were spread all over the place. The young man was collecting the scriptures, and the old man was not even in a state to walk.

Meanwhile the ferryman came. He had been putting his boat in the right place for the night. He had chained his boat and then he had come along slowly. He looked at the scene and he said 'I told you -- you didn't listen. Now I will have to carry you. But I am also old. Now even if we go slowly it is not possible to reach the gates before sunset. But you didn't listen. You thought I was a madman! You think you are meditators -- you are fools! I am a meditator. For my whole life I have been meditating, carrying people in the boat from this side to that, from that side to this. What am I doing? -- just meditating, silently, rowing the boat. I have nothing else to do so I go on watching my breath.

'One thing I have learned that if you go slowly you always reach. I had thought that you being Buddhist monks would understand it. I am not a monk, but I think you have never meditated in your life; you are just formal monks.'

Now they understood; now they could see the man clearly. Now for the first time they looked at his eyes, his face, his aura, his presence, his beauty. They bowed down and touched his feet and they said. 'You are a master!'

Go slowly. Those who go slowly always reach. It looks like a paradox, but life *is* paradoxical. Those who hurry never reach. As far as the inner journey is concerned this is the law, this is tao.

Meditation is a gift from god. It does not mean that you have not to do anything at all. You have to do much to become receptive, to become available to god, to become capable, worthy. But that's all that man can do -- the real thing always comes as a gift. Hence there have been two kinds of misunderstanding and they are both very ancient.

One misunderstanding is that because meditation is a gift you need not do anything at all. Whenever it is going to happen, it is going to happen you cannot do anything, so why bother?

That is a fallacy, that logic is fallacious. Meditation will never happen.

The other misunderstanding is that because you have to do much preparation, it is not a gift, it is the outcome of your work. So if you are not getting it that means: go on straining more and more. That's another extreme. So people become almost mads they strive too much to reach a meditative state. And their very striving at a certain point becomes the barrier.

My understanding is that your effort is needed up to a certain point and then the effort has to be dropped. You have to make the effort and you have to drop the effort -- both are essential. And you have to be alert enough to know *where* to stop.

Whenever your effort starts creating tension and anxiety in you, relax, drop it. You have done enough; now wait. But don't start waiting from the very beginning. First prepare the soil, remove the rocks, the weeds, then sow the seeds of the flowers, then water the ground, and then wait! But if you start waiting from the very beginning without removing the weeds and without removing the rocks and without sowing the seeds, nothing is going to happen. And if you go on digging every day and looking at the seeds to see whether something is happening or not, then too nothing will happen.

You have to work and then you have to wait. And there has to be a balance between work and waiting, a very subtle balance. It is not impossible to judge it. Every indication is being given by your inner being.

It is just as when you have a headache you know, although you cannot explain to anybody else how you know it. How can you prove that you have a headache? But you know it. All that is needed is a little awareness. Yes, sometimes it may happen that you have a headache but you are so engaged in something that you lose all awareness of the headache.

For example, your house catches fire... You may forget the headache because your consciousness becomes wholly directed towards the fire. Now you are not in a state to bother about a small thing like a headache. It is as if a curtain is pulled over it and the headache disappears for the moment. But it is there.

In George Bernard Shaw's life there is an anecdote. He phoned his old doctor -- the doctor was as old as Bernard Shaw, Bernard Shaw was ninety and the doctor was also ninety -- he was his private physician. Bernard Shaw said 'I am feeling as if it is a heart attack. Come immediately! It seems I am sinking and dying.'

In the middle of the night the old doctor came, almost running. He had to go up the staircase; and he was very old so he was breathing hard and panting. When he reached the room, before asking George Bernard Shaw anything, he fell into a chair just to have a little rest. Bernard Shaw became very much afraid. He was lying on his bed; he stood up, brought water for the doctor and a fan and started fanning him -- he was perspiring. The doctor had one of his hands on his heart. Bernard Shaw was afraid: 'It seems that he has a heart attack. He is an old man and he had to come in the middle of the night, his sleep was disturbed and he had to come up a long flight of stairs.' He forgot all about his own heart attack and the sinking heart and everything. After fifteen minutes, when the doctor was okay, the doctor asked for the fee and started leaving!

Bernard Shaw said, 'This is something! I have been serving you for fifteen minutes continuously, bringing water and ice and this and that, and fanning you. You ask me for the fee -- and you have not done a single thing.'

The doctor said, 'But I have been doing something -- where is your heart attack? I made you get up of the bed, you were running here and there, bringing things and fanning me -- you are perfectly okay! That was just my medicine for you. Give me the fee!' He took the fee. And Bernard Shaw recalls in his memoirs 'That was something. He really played a great joke on me! I used to think that only I had a sense of humour, but he had much more.'

If you have a headache and the house is suddenly on fire, your consciousness will move towards the fire. But otherwise every indication of your headache is given.

And exactly the same happens when you are meditating. First work, put your whole energy into it, with intensity, totality, passion, and then the indication will come that now is the time to relax and wait -- you have sown the seeds. They will sprout in their own times now let the spring come. And the spring always comes.

Meditation is a gift, but the gift is available only to those who are ready for it.

Meditation brings perfection. In fact the only way perfection comes to one is through meditation. Without meditation something always remains missing. We may have wealth, power, prestige and all that the world can offer, but deep down there is always some emptiness, some meaninglessness. One goes on

feeling that life must be something more than this -- and life certainly is more.

That gap inside, that yawning gap inside can be filled only through meditation; nothing else can fill it. People try to fill it with every kind of thing but it cannot be filled by anything from the outside. It is basically inner, hence nothing from the outside can fill it. Something has to grow inside, only then can it be fulfilled. And when that inner gap is full, overflowing, one experiences perfection for the first time. And by perfection I mean one starts feeling nothing is missing, one starts feeling meaning, significance. For the first time life becomes not just an accident but a significant event of immense value.

Blessed are those who have known meditation. Only those few people are the blessed people; others are simply groping in darkness. Meditation gives you an inner light, and then wherever you are there is light and whatsoever you do, you do in full light and clarity. Hence there is never any guilt, no repentance, no looking back. Whatsoever one does, one feels that's the only thing that can be done. It is *always* right.

And when each of your actions has such totality it does not leave any trace on you. It is only incomplete action that goes on leaving a trace upon your consciousness. It is the incomplete action that goes on hankering around you for completion. It is the incomplete past that we are burdened with.

The meditative man lives each moment so totally, so fully, that once he has lived it, it is finished; he is out of it. And he is always fresh because he carries no past. He has no karma, no bondage with the past; he is absolutely free. And because each action comes out of his freedom and freshness, it has a tremendous beauty and grace; it has perfection in it.

Meditation is only a means -- the end is awakening. The end is to become absolutely aware. Ordinarily we live out of unconsciousness; we live like a robot, we function more like a machine than like a man. And that's the whole problem: how to release the man from the machine. That's what sannyas is all about: how to free the man from the machine.

The machine is heavy and it surrounds you from everywhere. You are imprisoned in it. Man *is* an imprisoned splendour and the misery is nothing but the realisation of what he can be and what he is: 'I can be as blissful as Buddha, Christ, Krishna -- full of songs and celebration -- but I am just full of misery. It is for the simple reason that we have not even tried, we have not made any effort to transform our potential into the actual. We go on living at the minimum. We can live at the maximum, we can reach the ultimate heights of consciousness; hence the great anguish, because somewhere deep down we feel what we can be; what is possible.

Nothing is impossible as far as inner growth is concerned. Napoleon's statement that nothing is impossible may not be true about the outside world, but it is absolutely true about the inner: nothing is impossible in the inner world. We just have to start moving in the right direction by the right means. Meditation is the beginning of the right step, in the right direction. Meditation simply means an effort to watch your mind, how the mind functions, with no interference, neither for nor against, no condemnation, no appreciation, with absolute neutrality, pure watchfulness, just like a mirror. The mirror does not bother whether you are beautiful or ugly; whosoever you are, the mirror simply reflects.

When your consciousness starts reflecting your mind with all its ugliness and all its beauties, with all its pleasures and with all its pains; with no choice... when your mind is reflected in your consciousness in a choiceless way, you have started meditation.

Choiceless awareness is meditation. And then you have to go on doing the same, slowly slowly deepening the process. And one day, the ultimate flowering happens: the inner lotus opens up. That's the state of the awakened one, the state of a Buddha, Christ, Lao Tzu.

Unless we achieve it there is no possibility of rest. Something inside will go on goading us. And it is good that something inside goes on goading us. If it stops goading us we will remain unfulfilled, immature, ungrown-up.

There is an inner guide who goes on goading, who says 'This is not enough -- something has to be done.' That goading has brought you here. Now don't miss this opportunity of being here. It is a great opportunity for growing, a rare challenge. If one accepts it one can become a beautiful peak of joy, of bliss, of celebration. But everything has to begin in meditation. And if you begin in meditation whatsoever is needed will go on happening to you naturally, without any effort.

Meditation creates almost a magnetic force in you. It attracts whatsoever is right and whatsoever is needed. It attracts the right nourishment, the right people, the right guidance.

One of the ancient Egyptian scriptures says: When the disciple is ready the master appears. It simply means if you are meditating the master is *bound* to appear; if you are meditating then all that is needed will

be provided for. Nature takes care of it.

We are not orphans, we are part of this universe. And the universe is not indifferent to us, it takes every care, we just have to move in the right direction and immediately the whole existence starts supporting us. It hinders you when you start going wrong. That too is because it loves you. But when you start going right it supports you, it removes all hindrances. Remember, god is a friend of all seekers.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #27

Chapter title: None

Just as in spring miracles start happening in nature, bliss brings a spring to your inner world and miracles start happening. Bliss is the springtime of the inner world. Without bliss nothing flowers, here is no fulfilment, no fragrance, no meaning. Life remains a drag. One can go on existing somehow, but it is not true living because there is no celebration in the heart. There is no dance in your being; one remains hollow and empty.

And because of this emptiness we go on doing a thousand and one things to fill it, to forget it, to cover it somehow, but nothing ever succeeds. Maybe for the time-being you can cover it; soon, you will have to encounter it again. For the time being you can forget it; you can become so occupied in outward activities. But for how long can one remain occupied? One needs rest, one needs relaxation. And the moment you are at rest, suddenly the inner emptiness is there.

That's why people go on moving from one occupation to another. Even on their holidays they cannot rest; in fact they work more on their holidays than ever. They are afraid, afraid of something inner -- that they may have to face it. They don't want to face it.

From immemorial times man has remained interested in all kinds of alcoholic beverages for the simple reason: to forget. He wants to forget the inner emptiness. But for how long can you remain intoxicated? Sooner or later you have to come out of it, and the inner emptiness is there, hurting. It is like a wound that goes on becoming bigger and bigger. It heals only when you have been able to attain a state of bliss. Then suddenly all wounds disappear, and instead of wounds there are flowers. Each wound becomes a flower, a lotus flower.

But there are very few people who try to seek bliss, because the journey seems to be that of absolute aloneness. And it is: nobody can accompany you. And we have become addicted to the crowd, we always want company; we are very much scared of aloneness. That is one of the reasons why only very daring souls go into the search for bliss, because the first step is: you have to be alone, because you will be going inwards. Outside you can have company but inside no company is possible. The deeper you go in, the more

alone you will be.

The whole art of meditation is a training in being alone, without any fear; in fact, tremendously curious to explore one's aloneness. When one becomes allured by this adventure of being alone, then bliss is not far away. The more alone you are, the more bliss starts happening. When you are absolutely capable of being alone your whole consciousness becomes full of bliss -- and that is the springtime for the soul. After that you can be in the crowd, in the marketplace, you can have as many relationships as you want, friendships, all kinds of friendships, but you will never lose your rootedness in your aloneness; hence nothing will be a distraction.

Once the taste of aloneness and bliss has penetrated into every pore of your being it remains with you wherever you are. Then your whole life becomes full of aloneness and full of bliss. Bliss and aloneness are two aspects of the same coin.

Bliss is the goal of life; meditation is the means, the way to it. Bliss is the end; meditation is the bridge, the boat that takes you to the farther shore. Without meditation nobody has ever known what bliss is.

It is not pleasure. Pleasure is physiological, chemical; it has no depth and it is very momentary. For example, a sexual orgasm is pleasure. For a moment you feel on the top of the world, but only for the moment. And in the wake of that moment deep sadness and depression sets in; hence after love people immediately fall asleep. That's a way to avoid the sadness that is bound to come in.

Watch animals making love; after they have made love you will see sadness even on their faces. They don't seem to be ecstatic. If you observe closely, you will see that they are disillusioned; they are feeling as if they have been cheated. And it is in fact, a trick of nature. Nature is cheating you. It has its purposes; nature wants to reproduce the species and nature has devised clever means. The most clever is the pleasure that you attain for a moment. It is for that pleasure that you are ready to reproduce. If there were no pleasure at all, the whole sexual activity will look so silly. It would look like gymnastics or doing yoga... it would look foolish.

It is because of that pleasure, that one is ready to go on doing any kind of stupid things. But it is just a chemical phenomenon, hormonal, physiological; it can't be deep because physiology is not deep.

Bliss is not even happiness. What we call happiness is psychological. Whenever you find a certain moment of elation your ego is fulfilled, you feel happy. You have become the president of a country, you feel happy, but only for the time being, because your ego is fulfilled. You have defeated all other competitors, you have arrived; whereas others have failed, you have succeeded... or you have much money, power, prestige, fame. But soon one becomes tired of it all.

Only the successful people know how tiring success is. Only the rich people know how utterly disappointed they are, but they cannot even say so, because to say so seems to be even more foolish, people will laugh. They have wasted their whole life in accumulating wealth and now they say that it is stupid.

Mahavira and Buddha who renounced their kingdoms, must have been really courageous people. It needs courage to renounce. It needs courage to recognize the fact, "This was all stupid and we have been living a stupid life up to now." The ego does not want to do that; the ego wants to go on keeping the illusion. So on the surface you go on smiling, but deep down there are tears and nothing else, deep down there is anguish. Whenever ego is fulfilled, you feel happy.

Bliss is not happiness but a totally different phenomenon. It is not pleasure because it is not physiological. It is not happiness because there is no ego fulfillment. On the contrary, it is dissolution of the ego, it is dissolving your separate entity into the whole. That's what meditation is all about, merging, melting into the whole, totally forgetting that you are separate, remembering your unity with the whole. That's why Gurdjieff used to call his meditation process "self-remembering"; it is really a remembering. Buddha used to call his meditation, "right remembering".

We are one with the whole; even though we think we are separate. We are inseparable. Just by thinking we are separate, we cannot become separate. All that is needed is a remembrance; all that is needed is dropping this false notion that we are separate. And in those rare moments when you can put aside your ego, your personality, your body-mind complex, and you are just a watcher, a witness, a consciousness, you know the first taste of meditation. And with that, immediately great bliss comes, it rushes towards you from all directions, from all dimensions. All your inner emptiness is immediately filled. It becomes a lake of bliss. That is the end, the goal of sannyas. And the method and the means is meditation. There is no other method, there is no other way.

Hence one has to learn to imbibe the spirit of meditation. However long it takes, whatsoever cost one

has to pay for it, one has to be ready. Once you are ready to have it at any cost, then it is not difficult. That very readiness makes you worthy of it, and things become very simple.

The search for bliss is as scientific as any objective science. The difference is only of direction. The science watches the objective world and enquires into the reality that surrounds us. Religion moves into the watcher, into the subject, into subjectivity itself. Science is concerned with the object; religion is concerned with subjectivity itself -- but the approach, the method, the attitude, is exactly the same.

Religion is not superstition, it is not belief. It is not at all a dogma in which you can believe; it is something to be experienced. Just as science works through experimentation, religion works through experimentation. The experiment of religion is, of course, far deeper than that of science, far more individual, personal. Science and its enquiry is collective, objective; others can watch. But when you are moving into meditation, nobody can watch; *except* for you nobody else will be there to be a witness of it.

Of course, others will be able to see that something is happening to you, but what exactly it is they will never be able to decipher. something mysterious will start surrounding you, and those who are very perceptive will be able to have some glimpse that you are no more the same old person. Something new has entered your life. You have changed -- but to what exactly there is not way to judge from the outside or to measure from the outside. Only you know it.

It is like love: if you love, *you* know. Prayer is even deeper, far deeper than love. Meditation is the deepest; there is no more depth than meditation. But one thing which modern man has completely forgotten has to be remembered, that religion is also a science.

All the so-called modern thinkers go on saying, writing, proving, arguing, that religion is superstitious, it is dogmatic, that it is nothing but blind belief. All these assertions are basically wrong. They are true as far as the so-called organised religions are concerned -- Christianity, Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Judaism -- but they are not true about Buddha or Jesus or Krishna or Mohammed, they are not true about the *really* religious people. They are true about people who have been conditioned as Christians and Hindus, who have never explored on their own what exactly it is, who have simply believed as a formality.

They go to the church every Sunday, just as a social formality. It is another kind of club. Rotary clubs are there and Lions' clubs are there, and the church -- Catholic, Protestant, this and that... These are just clubs, good meeting places. and they give you a certain kind of social status. People think that you are religious, that you are a good person. and people thinking that you are religious and a good person helps you in your business, in your social life, in your relationships. It functions like a lubricating agent. So cunning people go to the churches, to the temples, to the mosques. They use religion, but they are not religious.

To be religious one needs a really daring spirit, a tremendous longing for the unknown, such a deep desire and thirst for truth that even if life has to be sacrificed, one is ready for it. those few people are religious -- and they are not superstitious at all.

Buddha says again and again to his disciples, 'Don't believe in what I am saying, don't believe that this is written in the scriptures, don't believe that all the past Buddhas have said it; believe only when *you* have known it, otherwise don't believe, because to believe without knowing will keep you blind forever. and a blind person cannot see truth, cannot see god.

Religion is a very precise science of creating clarity, perceptiveness, transparency, within your being, so that you can see things as they are. and the moment you see things as they are you know god is. You simply know god is -- just as you know when the sun rises that light is. No other proof is needed. Proofs are needed only for believers; for those who have experienced, experience is self-evident. it needs no proof at all.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #28

Chapter title: None

The moment we use the word 'god' we create a fictitious person, who does not exist. Godliness is a truth, god is a fiction, Godliness is a quality, not a person but a presence. You cannot see godliness but you can feel it, you can experience it, you can have a taste of it. It is like fragrance, not like a flower. The flower is visible, the fragrance is invisible. You can possess the flower; you cannot catch hold of the fragrance.

All that you need to experience fragrance is a deep sensitivity. Godliness is the fragrance that surrounds the whole existence. The moment we say god, suddenly it seems god has an address. He must be somewhere: above in the sky, in heaven -- but somewhere. It is not accidental that the moment people pray they start looking towards the sky, It is an old habit, an old idea, a conditioning that god is there above the clouds.

Immediately the idea of god as a person is limited, defined. And then people start thinking about his personality: how he looks, what his preferences are, what he likes, what he dislikes, how we can pray to him, what language he understands. Hindus think he understands only Sanskrit, hence they call it the divine language. Jews think he understands only Hebrew. Mohammedans think he understands only Arabic, otherwise why should he have given his most precious treasure to the world in the Arabic language? Why had he chosen Mohammed to be his prophet?

These are natural, logical consequences of thinking of god as a person. One starts thinking of him as a white man or as a black man; and of course there are women liberationists who think he is not a he at all but a she, There is a great controversy: why should go be called a he? It smells of male-chauvinism. He should be called she.

Negroes will think of him as a Negro, Hindus will think of him as a Hindu and the Chinese will create his figure in a Chinese way. The Chinese god cannot have a very thick beard and thick moustache -- impossible: just a few hairs, that will do. And all the countries have the idea of god as an old man for the simple reason that for millions of years we have thought that old people are wise. God has to be old to be wise. All this nonsense comes with one idea: that god is a person. Once that idea is dropped, this whole rubbish disappears.

Godliness is my emphasis; and my message to my sannyasins is: never think of god as a person but only as a presence. And the presence can be neither Hindu nor Christian nor Mohammedan. The presence will not have any address and the presence cannot be masculine or feminine. The presence surrounds the whole existence like an aura; the whole existence is full of it. Each grass leaf, each star, each person -- knowingly or unknowingly... Those who know become the Buddhas. Those who don't know also have the same quality in their being, it is just that they are unaware of their treasure. It is within and without.

Godliness cannot be estimated, cannot be measured; it is immeasurable. The English word 'matter' literally means that which can be measured. God is not matter but consciousness, He cannot be measured, There is no way to weigh him, no possibility of ever drawing a map of godliness. It is a mystery and it is always going to remain a mystery. You cannot possess it you can disappear into it. You can become part of it but you cannot be the owner. And man's mind always likes things which it can measure, define, possess, because then the mind becomes the owner.

God or godliness is the only experience where you have to drop the very idea of ownership, of possessiveness. You have to disappear, you have to melt and merge into the ocean.

Whatsoever we say about god remains inadequate. Nothing can ever be adequate. Words are too small and he is vast; it is impossible to confine him in a small word. That would be like holding the whole sky in

your fist.

You cannot purchase god, it is not a commodity. And priests have been selling god, they have made it a commodity, You can purchase everything: a ticket for heaven, a special place in paradise -- you just have to pay the right amount.

There is a small Mohammedan community in this country; the chief of the community lives in Surat. When I visited Surat, a few of his followers came to me. They were angry young men, and they said 'So much nonsense is going on here in the name of religion that you have to say something about it.' I said 'What is the matter?' They said 'In our small sect you have to pay a certain price and then the arch-priest writes a letter to god, recommending that you should be given such and such a place, And when the person dies the letter is put into his pocket and he is buried in the ground. People collect money for their whole life just to have some special place in paradise.'

But people *are* gullible. Now such nonsense continues, even in the twentieth century. And it is not only with one small sect, it is with all religions.

God is not something that you can purchase or sell. It does not belong to the marketplace at all, it belongs to your inner world. And you have it already so there is no need to purchase it -- it is already the case.

Although it is beyond words, although we cannot say anything about god, still, when you experience something of godliness great praise arises in your heart, great gratitude -- that is the essence of prayer. Knowing perfectly well nothing can be said, still one has to express one's gratitude, one has to express it in some way or other. You can dance, you can sing, or you can be silent. That may be your way of saying it: just silent, in awe and wonder.

But whenever the experience happens it is such a gift, it is beyond our comprehension. We cannot believe it when it happens for the first time. It is so incredible: we cannot feel that we are worthy of it, that we have earned it, that we deserve it at all. One bows down and one mumbles something or other. All our prayers are just mumbling: significant as far as our heart is concerned, but inadequate as far as godliness is concerned.

Meditation is a state of awareness, watchfulness, consciousness, Ordinarily we are living as if we are sleepwalkers, somnambulists. Just the very minimum of awareness exists, enough for the day-to-day work, but not enough to know the truth of existence. It is the bare minimum. We are like an iceberg: just one-tenth of it shows above the water, nine-tenths below the water, Exactly the same is our situation, it is exactly the same proportion: only one-tenth of our consciousness is available, nine-tenths is just underground; it has yet to be discovered. It is our own inner territory which has remained unexplored.

We have explored the whole earth; we have gone to the very ends of the earth, we have reached the North Pole and the South Pole. Now we have reached the moon. Soon we will be reaching some other planets and then the stars -- plans are already on the way, scientists are already working on it. And the darkest continent, which remains unexplored and which is the *most* precious, is still within our being. Compared to it everything else is futile, utterly meaningless. If we are not capable of knowing ourselves, whatsoever we know is not going to help us. But if we know ourselves, even if we don't know anything else, that self-knowing will be enough to give us a beautiful life, a blissful life, a peaceful life, a life with significance, meaning, poetry, celebration.

Meditation is the art of slowly slowly making your whole being conscious, so not just the tip of the iceberg is available to you, but the whole being becomes available to you, There remains no dark corner in you. It is the greatest work and the greatest adventure in life.

Only the courageous one can go inside, because he will be travelling all alone -- without any maps, without any guide, with every possibility of getting lost, not exactly knowing where he is and where he is going and whether he will be able to reach his own centre ever or not. Nothing is guaranteed, nothing can be predicted. The inward pilgrim is always in for a surprise. At each step there is a surprise. He has never thought of the things which become available to him, and many times he goes astray, many times he moves away from himself.

There are many pitfalls in the inner world too. It is not so easy; it is not straight, it is very zigzag. It passes through a jungle where there is every possibility of losing your way. And many times you will lose it, many times you will think you have arrived and you will find sooner or later that that was an illusion. Many times beautiful experiences will happen and will deceive you, the experiences are so beautiful that one tends to believe in them.

The inner world is full of many beauties, and there is no way to know whether you have come to the very end yet or not, whether there is yet something to be discovered. And the distractions are great, attractions are great.

For example, as you start moving inwards many psychic forces become available to you. You can perform many things which will look like miracles to others and will be very ego-fulfilling, One tends to forget all about the inner journey; one starts using those miracles to prove oneself special, somebody, not ordinary -- extraordinary. For example, you can read other peoples' thoughts, and once you start doing that you will forget about the inner journey.

Once, a man who had been living in the Himalayas for thirty years, was brought to me. He thought he had become very efficient at meditating; he was simply concentrating. But he became capable of many things.

One of them was he could read anybody's ideas. You would enter his room and he would ask: 'So, your name is Hardy? You come from such-and-such a place? Your father's name is this? You are educated or not educated, married or not married, you have so many children or you don't?' And if something was going on in your head he would immediately start answering it before you had even articulated your questions. You would just write them down on paper and keep the paper in your pocket and he would read it from the outside, He would not open the envelope, it would be a closed envelope. but he would read the content exactly.

Of course he became very famous; he was thought to be a great siddha, one who has arrived. Somebody brought him to me and he said 'I would like to read your thoughts,' I said 'Okay. You are welcome.' I said, 'Read my thoughts if you can.' So he sat there and I sat there... After a few minutes he said 'But you don't think at all.' He said 'This is the first time in my life -- I am trying hard out I cannot catch hold of anything. How do you manage it?' he asked me.

I said 'This is meditation. What you have been thinking is meditation is not. Reading other peoples, thoughts is of no use -- their thoughts are stupid in the first place. They want to get rid of them and you are wasting your life in reading their thoughts! Why are you wasting your life? -- you should get rid of your own thoughts! What did you do for thirty years in the Himalayas?' He said, 'I was trying to meditate.'

I said, 'Forget all about it, Meditation means a state of no-thought. A man of meditation would not bother to read anybody's thought. Why should he? Why should he go into such bullshit, for what? He is finished with all that nonsense.' I said, 'Start meditating now. All that you have done is concentration, and through concentration this is possible. Telepathy is possible, clairvoyance is possible and many other things which look like miracles and on which the ego immediately jumps, becomes possible. These are the pitfalls for the inner pilgrim. One has to be very aware and very courageous to avoid them because the temptation is there.

People start seeing lights inside and they become very thrilled, as if something great is happening. Even if you see light inside it is nothing much. *You* are not that light, you are the seer, and the seer has to be seen -- nothing else is going to help. And meditation is the art of seeing the seer, not the light. Light is an object; whether you see the outside light or the inside light, it makes no difference, Then there are people who start smelling beautiful perfume inside and they think this is spiritual. It is nothing! And there are people who will start hearing music inside -- that too is nothing.

These are all-subtle games of the mind which can trap you, hence great courage is needed to remain untempted.

Momentary courage won't do. Everybody, once in a while, is courageous, but the question is of enduring courage, It should become something constant, you should never fall below it, otherwise whatsoever you gain will be lost in a single moment. Great patience, great endurance...

When courage is enduring the ultimate outcome is that you become brave. a person is brave when he is unshakable, when there is no wavering at all, when all wavering has ceased -- so much so that he is not even aware of his bravery, because to remain aware means the opposite will be there. The courageous person remains aware of his cowardliness. Without cowardliness he will not know his courage; it is in contrast with cowardliness that he feels courageous. The enduring person remains aware that there are still possibilities of cowardliness and he has to be watchful, alert, on guard, otherwise he can fall into the trap and lose. But the brave person is one whose courage has become his nature, very nature. He need not be on guard, he is simply brave. Others will know about his bravery, he himself will not know about it at all. It has entered into his bones, blood, into his very marrow. that is the highest state of courage.

All these three qualities are needed for the inner pilgrimage. These are the essential ingredients which

make one ready to go in. Because people are missing in these qualities they go on moving towards small things, toys: money, power, prestige. their life remains childish -- they never mature, they never grow.

The Imprisoned Splendor

Chapter #29

Chapter title: None

[NOTE: This is an unedited tape transcript of an unpublished darshan diary, which has been scanned and cleaned up. It is for reference purposes only.]

The greatest courage in life is needed when you go inwards, for many reasons...

The first is: it is a flight from the alone to the alone, it is going deeper into your aloneness. And man is caught up in such a way that he becomes accustomed to company, to people, to family. He forgets absolutely the joy of being alone; hence there is a fear of being left alone. That's why nations exist: it is because of fear, not because of any love. That's why religions exist -- not because of a longing for god. How many people really long for god? Not so many Christians, not so many Hindus, not so many Mohammedans. The whole world is religious in that way. But people are afraid of being left alone; they have to be part of some crowd -- a political crowd, a social crowd, a religious crowd; *any* crowd will do, but they are dependent on the crowd. They feel good when they are surrounded by people; they start feeling shaky, scared when they find there is nobody and they are alone. That is the fear that grips you when you are lost in a jungle or in a desert where, as far as you can see, there is nobody. That utter aloneness creates great fear because we are conditioned by the crowd, for the crowd, as part of the crowd. We are not brought up as individuals. We are brought up as small units of a great mechanism called the society, the nation, the church.

People are not satisfied with these crowds -- they create their small crowds -- because when the crowd is very big you start losing yourself in the crowd. It becomes impossible for you to recognise people, to see who is who; hence people create small crowds of their own: the Rotary Club, the Lion's Club. These are just small crowds where everybody knows everybody else, where everybody is acquainted with everybody else.

The greatest fear arises when you move inwards... because it *is* possible to find a man in the desert, it is possible to find somebody in the jungle when you are lost.

I have heard a story:

Once a hunter got lost in the jungle. He tried for three days continuously, but he could not find any way to get out. He got deeper and deeper in the thicker parts of the jungle. He became desperate: he could not sleep, there was nothing to eat. After three days he thought 'This is death. Now I cannot survive.' He shouted and did everything and on the third day evening, he suddenly saw a man coming. They both rejoiced, both ran towards each other and hugged each other. They were absolutely unacquainted, but what a joy to see another man! But soon they found that that joy was wrong, they were disillusioned: both were lost. Each was thinking 'Now I have found a person who will help me to get out,' and both rejoiced for a moment, but

the moment they explained to each other why they were rejoicing so much, both were shocked.

They were still lost in the same way, but they were not in so much despair. At least they could share their misery, they could communicate, relate, talk to each other, converse, do something -- together. They were still lost in the same way but somehow it felt different.

That's how marriage came into existence. Two lost people for a moment enjoy the honeymoon, thinking 'I have found the person whom I was seeking,' and each is thinking the same; soon they will be disillusioned. But still, even though they will be miserable, they will be miserable together. It is better, people think, to be miserable together than to be miserable alone; in fact in togetherness misery is multiplied. But people love togetherness because we are brought up in that way. From the very first moment of birth the child depends on the mother, on the father, on the family. Then his circle becomes bigger, but he always remains part of some group, some collectivity.

Meditation is the only phenomenon where there is no possibility of meeting anybody, where you have to go alone, totally alone. Hence only very courageous people can enter into the world of meditation. That's why so few people have ever entered, Why so few people have ever become enlightened.

Secondly: when you move inwards you move without any maps. Even if you go to the moon you have a certain map, a certain route. There have been people before you, their footprints are there, there are milestones everywhere. Even in the sea you are not totally lost, in the sky you are not totally lost: you can communicate with people, you can give messages -- even from the moon! You can remain in some kind of relationship; it may be just through radio waves, but you can remain connected. You can still hear the voices of people, you can still see that others are there; you are connected.

But when you move inwards, the people who have gone in cannot leave any footprints for anybody. It is impossible, because everybody's inner territory is so different that Buddha's footprints won't help you and if you follow Buddha's footprints literally, you will never find yourself.

Jesus' map won't help you; you cannot follow it literally. It can help in a very indirect way; it can make you aware of certain things inside, but in a very vague sense. It can give you the confidence that 'Yes, there is a world inside, no doubt about it, because so many people cannot be lying. Buddha, Jesus, Zarathustra, Lao Tzu, Mahavira, Krishna, Mohammed, such beautiful people cannot all be lying. They cannot be in a conspiracy -- for what? They never existed together -- they lived in different ages, in different countries -- yet they all speak almost the same language... But you cannot follow it *exactly* because Buddha's inner territory is different. Each individual is unique, so unique that you have to discover yourself all alone; hence great courage is needed.

This is the greatest adventure in life, and one who goes on this adventure is blessed.

These are the two paths that have been followed up to now by all the seekers. Either people have arrived through love -- Meera, Chaitanya, Farid, Bahauddin, Jesus, Mohammed... All these people have arrived through the path of love. And the other path is of meditation -- Buddha, Mahavira, Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, Lieh Tzu. These people have followed the path of meditation. Both arrive at the same goal; but up to now nobody has tried to create a higher synthesis of the two.

My effort here is to create that higher synthesis. Because of these two different paths, humanity has become divided. And it is possible that one can be both together, there is no intrinsic impossibility in it. They are complementaries, not opposites, but they have always been thought to be opposites. In fact opposites are always complementaries. For example, negative and positive poles look opposite but together they both create electricity. Man and woman, yin and yang, Shiva and Shakti, matter and consciousness -- these are all polarities. On the surface they are opposite, opposed to each other, but deep down they are connected, joined together.

My effort here is to help you to discover that inner connection; then a man can be both a lover and a meditator; and that will be the highest kind of man because he will have the qualities of Jesus and Buddha together. Of course, he will be more misunderstood in the world than anybody else. Jesus, who was in a way consistent, was misunderstood. So what to say about a man like me who is trying to live both these polarities together -- not only trying to live them himself, but helping many to live in the same way? I am bound to be misunderstood, I am going to be the most misunderstood man on the earth ever, for the simple reason that each of my statements will be contradictory to other statements -- my own statements! I am bound to be inconsistent for the simple reason that when I talk about love I am bound to say something which will look as if it is going against meditation, and vice versa; when I talk about meditation it is very easy to interpret it as going against love.

To understand me one will need a very sympathetic heart -- not an analytical mind. My approach will remain incomprehensible to the analytical mind. In that way Jesus will look clear-cut, Buddha will look very clear-cut, and far more clear-cut than Jesus, because Jesus follows the path of love and love can never be very clear. Love is a kind of mad affair with god. But Buddha is very clear, very logical, very consistent, comprehensible to any analytical mind.

But I am really going to be a dilemma. And that's what is creating so much controversy all over the world -- and it is going to grow every day. I would like to involve the whole world in a controversy over what I am doing, because that controversy will bring the most intelligent and sympathetic people to me. Only the stupid will be debarred, and who cares about them. I want only the most intelligent people; not intellectual but intelligent. The intellectual will not be able to understand; only the intelligent will be able to see the complementariness of the opposites.

And I would like my sannyasins to be more liquid than the followers of Jesus or Buddha -- they are more rigid. My sannyasins have to be more like water, so they can take any form. If you fill a pot with water, it takes the form of the pot; if you pour the water in a bucket, it takes the form of the bucket. It has no resistance, it does not fight with any form. It is always in a state of let-go.

My sannyasins have to be in a state of let-go, so when they are alone they will be meditators, enjoying their aloneness, their solitariness, and when they are together they will be lovers and great lovers and enjoying togetherness. They will not renounce the world; there is no reason to renounce the world -- they can fit anywhere, they can adjust anywhere. Their adjustability will be almost infinite. And that is what is needed in the world: not rigid people, not fanatic people, but liquid people. Become both love and meditation. Allow that synthesis to happen in you.

The old religions are religions of renunciation. They teach people anti-life attitudes, they are life-negative. they encourage people to renounce life, to escape to the monasteries, to the mountains, to the deserts.

My religion is a religion of celebration, festivity. I teach not renunciation, but deep rejoicing. Rejoice in life because life is synonymous with god. There is no other god than life. I am life-affirmative. I am a total yes-sayer to life and to all that it implies, from the very ordinary things to the very extraordinary. The whole spectrum has to be accepted with gratitude -- loved, lived, gone through, transcended, but not renounced.

Yes, There comes a moment of transcendence, but that comes through living it, experiencing it, going through it. That transcendence comes of its own accord, not through any effort. when you force something you become ugly. that's why your old so-called saints are ugly. they don't have the grace, the beauty, the joy, the splendour of the divine. they are like parrots: repeating, reciting scriptures, torturing themselves. In the name of religion they are really practising masochists, and teaching others also to torture themselves.

The whole of religion up to now has remained pathological, sado-masochistic: torture yourself and teach others to torture themselves. The more you torture yourself, the greater a saint you are, the more holy you are; the less you torture yourself of course, the smaller a saint you are. You will also have a place in heaven but just near the gate, not very close to the palace of god -- that is impossible. Around him will be *real* torturers.

He must be getting tired of these people, unless he himself is a sadist and enjoys all this torture: people fasting, lying down on a bed of nails, hitting their own body with spears, wounding themselves, creating as many wounds as possible in the body and never allowing those wounds to heal. Just think of a go surrounded by these people -- this god must be a sadist!

They say the best marriage is between a sadist and a masochist because the sadist wants to torture and the masochist wants to be tortured. That is the best kind of marriage, because both can enjoy themselves. But sometimes even that may not work.

One masochist read about this, that the best kind of marriage is that of a sadist with a masochist. and she *was* a masochist, she wanted to be tortured, so she searched for a sadist and she found one. The sadist was also happy because no woman was ready to marry him but this woman rejoiced in finding him because he would be torturing her -- that was *his* joy -- and to be tortured was *her* joy...

So on the first night of the honeymoon the woman threw off her clothes. Naked, she lay down on the floor and the man brought in the bag he used to carry for such loving situations. In the bag he used to have all kinds of instruments of torture -- nails and screwdrivers and all kinds of things! He started bringing them out and the woman rejoiced; she was almost going into orgasm, just seeing the things he was taking out! And then he just sat there.

The woman said, 'What are you doing? Start!' But he just sat there. The woman said, 'What are you doing?' He said, 'I rejoice in torturing people. Now, I will not do anything -- this is my joy. Now you will feel tortured, now you will know what torture is.' And he started putting the things back.

So sometimes even that may not work!

God is not a sadist and the mahatmas need not be masochists. They are ill and pathological people. My sannyasins have to be whole; they have to live as totally, as intensely, as passionately as possible. They have to rejoice in life.

Bliss is our goal, bliss is our ultimate truth, and we are going to find it dancing, celebrating. We will celebrate life, we will celebrate even death -- we will celebrate everything!

Celebration is the keyword if somebody want to understand me and my philosophy, my religion, my way of life.