

The Philosophy of Liberation

**Maharishi Mehi Paramahansa
Maharaj**

(Mokṣa–Darśan)

Author

**MAHARISHI MEHI PARAMAHANSA JI
MAHARAJ**

**TRANSLATED BY
DONALD AND VEENA HOWARD**

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Life History of Maharishi Mehi

Maharishi Mehi was born in the village of Manjhwa in Bihar, India on Tuesday, April 28th, 1885. He was named at birth Ramanugrah Lal. Later he was given the name “Mehi,” which means sharp or subtle. When he was four years of age, his mother passed away. Thereafter, he was raised by his uncle’s uncle Dunalal Das, who was very kind and affectionate.

At the age of ten, Maharishi began attending the Purnea Zila School. At an early age, he showed intelligence, learning several languages. However, gradually he began to lose interest in studies and developed a keen interest in the spiritual life. He was fond of studying the *Vedic* scriptures which led him to seek out the company of spiritual masters.

Always deep in Mehi’s heart there was a burning desire to be an ascetic and to seek God. By virtue of his attachment to his son his father did not want him to become a *sanyasi* and leave the house. His father pleaded with him, but Maharishi was firm in his resolve to follow a spiritual path. From birth Maharishi was unable to eat non-vegetarian foods in spite of the fact that his family was non-vegetarian. Regardless of his relatives’ efforts to persuade him otherwise, Maharishi Mehi could not tolerate a non-vegetarian diet.

In 1902 Maharishi Mehi met a mahatma who was a *hatha yogin*. Maharishi served him with great devotion and prayed for initiation in meditation. He was disappointed with the *mahatma* who told Maharishi, “This yoga is not meant for students like you. Your duty is to study.” Maharishi was crushed by this experience. Not long after this incident, Maharishi met Baba Ramanand, whom he also served. He became his disciple and practiced *mantra* and other Yogic practices taught by Baba Ramanand. Maharishi started to spend more time in solitude practicing the disciplines taught by his spiritual teacher. But he was not fully satisfied with the teachings, and his thirst for the “Truth” became even stronger. Therefore, he concentrated his attention on the spiritual disciplines while continuing his studies. At this time a strong wave of desire to become an ascetic and devote his life fully to that end arose in the heart of Maharishi.

In 1904, on July 4th during an examination at school, Maharishi driven by the longing to become an ascetic decided then and there to renounce the world and seek the Divine. He left his school

and home and set out on the difficult journey toward spiritual knowledge. He began his search for a true guru to guide him in his spiritual quest. In this pursuit, Maharishi met various saints and *sadus*. He eagerly served them with devotion. However, in following their teachings, he would at last become disappointed and leave their service. This series of disappointments made him all the more fervent to find a *sadguru* (true or perfect master) and the path of Divine-Sound described in the scriptures and writings of saints.

In answer to his relentless seeking, Dheeraj Lal, a follower of Baba Devi Sahab, told Maharishi about Sant Mat and the great saint of Northern India. Maharishi ardently studied Sant Mat with this follower of Baba Sahab from May 1909 to July of 1909. He came to understand that this was the path he has been searching for, the path to attain the Ultimate Truth. Soon afterward Maharishi was ready to take initiation in Sant Mat. A close disciple of Baba Devi Sahab narrated to Baba Devi Sahab the story of Maharishi's quest for a *Sadguru* and requested Baba Sahab to call Maharishi Mehi to stay with him. Baba Devi Sahab was silent on this issue, but a few days later he said, "Who is Mehi? He is haunting my mind since then. I am seeing him before my eyes....Don't call him now. Write to Dheeraj (disciple of Baba Devi Sahab) to tell him the way of spiritual practice." Baba Devi Sahab further said: "I will go to Bhagalpur on the occasion of Vijay-Dashmi. He will meet me there."

Maharishi initially received the teaching of Baba Devi Sahab from his close disciple, Sri Rajendra Nath. Finally, in 1909 Maharishi met Baba Devi Sahab in Bhagalpur, Bihar. Maharishi after receiving the practice from a true master was deeply satisfied. Maharishi continued practicing what Baba Devi Sahab had taught him. In 1911 he felt drawn to his master and went to Moradabad, the place where Baba Devi Sahab had his ashram. Baba Devi Sahab inquired of Maharishi how he made a living. Maharishi replied that he did not have gainful employment. His Guru chided him that it is not good to live off the labors of others. He further stated, "Your blood will become impure if you live on the free kitchen (of others)." Later Baba Devi Sahab recommended that Maharishi cultivate bamboo and plantain. Initially, Maharishi was concerned that it takes eight years for a crop of bamboo to be harvested and in eight years he could be dead. Baba Devi then became angry and told Maharishi, "I say-if you would live to see a hundred years of life, then what will you eat." (Maharishi lived to be over 100 years old.)

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After returning to Dharhara, a small village in Bihar, Maharishi took up the cultivation of bamboo and plantain. This endeavor would not yield crops and income for several years; therefore, in 1912 Maharishi started teaching in a primary school. In 1913, Baba Devi Sahab visited Katihar village in Bihar and gave many enlightening discourses on Sant Mat. Maharishi served his master by taking part in the arrangement of *satsang* (spirited discourses) as well as meals and other organizational details. In 1914, Baba Devi Sahab initiated Maharishi into *Surat Shabd-Yoga*, the final and essential practice in Sant Mat. However, Baba Devi Sahab instructed him not to practice the Yoga of Sound for ten years but instead practice only *Drsthu-Yoga* (Yoga of Vision).

Deeply content with the teachings of Sant Mat, Maharishi followed Baba Devi Sahab and his teachings. Baba Devi Sahab was very pleased by the devotion and spiritual discipline of Maharishi. Maharishi Mehi visited his Guru in 1915 and again in 1918, each time spending months with his master. However, during the visit in 1918, he found his Guru to be losing interest in the outer world. Baba Devi Sahab frequently was in a meditative state and often did not seem to be conscious of his body. Upon his return to Dharhara (a small village in Bihar), Maharishi received a letter from a close disciple of Baba Devi Sahab saying, "Our great master (Baba Devi Sahab) is ready to leave us forever due to his illness." A few days later, he received another letter stating that the great master Baba Devi Sahab left his material body on January 19, 1919. The final words of Baba Devi Sahab to his disciples were the following: "This world is illusion. death and birth are inevitable, meditate!" Maharishi Mehi was devastated after receiving word concerning his beloved masters passing.

After the passing of his master Baba Devi Sahab, Maharishi maintained his discipline of long meditations for many months. It is said that Lord Buddha did rigorous meditation for the attainment of *Nirvana*. Maharishi Mehi like Lord Buddha did intense meditation staying in a secluded cave in the village Dharhara. After these intense meditations, his face was radiant with a divine luster; however, his body had become frail and ashen. Within a few months he regained

his strength and began a search for an isolated place suitable for his practice. At last after seeing the caves of Maya Ganj of Bhagalpur which are situated on the banks of the holy river Ganga, his heart was delighted. Maharishi Mehi, in the solitude of these caves, practiced intensely the Yoga of Sound. After meditating resolutely from March of 1933 to November of 1934, Maharishi Mehi attained Self Knowledge--Liberation. A great Indian scholar and writer Prasuram Chaturvedi writes in his book *Tradition of Indian Saints*, "As the result of intense and diligent practice of Yoga his [Maharishi's] mind became still and he attained the complete realization of the Sant Mat of Baba Devi Sahab."

Maharishi Mehi after attaining the Knowledge of the Supreme, the ultimate goal of human life, engaged himself in teaching the path of Sant Mat. Maharishi Mehi spread the true teaching of God realization from the villages of Bihar and Nepal to the principal cities of various states of India. He wrote several works which contain the knowledge of the great books --*Vedas*, *Upanishads* and *Bhagavad-Gita*. In addition, he wrote on the Sant Mat tradition as well as upon his own experiences while following the way of saints, Sant Mat. The "Maharishi Mehi Ashram" in Bhagalpur, which was built in 1960, is the center for the study of this spiritual path. Maharishi Mehi departed from this material plane in 1986 at the age of 102, leaving behind Shri Sant Sevi Ji Maharaj, his close disciple, to continue the teaching of Sant Mat. Shri Sant Sevi Ji Maharaj ji is carrying the task of spreading the light of Sant Mat in the far corners.



Preface by Sri Santsevi Ji Maharaj

The author of Satsang-Yoga is Sri Maharishi Mehi Paramhans Ji Mahäräj. This treatise was first published in 1940 and since then 13 editions have been published. This book has four parts and 356 pages.

The first part of this book comprises the extracts from the great books of the Sanskrit literature: Vedas, Upanishads, Srīmad-Bhagvad-Gītā, Shrimad-Bhāgavad, Jñāna-Samkalini Tantra etc. The second part is a collection of the words of 53 Saints and devotees: Bhagvan Mahvira, Bhagvān Buddha, Mahayogi Gorakhnath, Kabir Sahab, Guru Nanak Sāhab, Goswami Tulsi Das Ji etc. The third part contains the remarkable expressions of great contemporary scholars and saints. Their writings are taken from the Klyana publication and other great texts. The fourth part (The Philosophy of Liberation) is the expression of the experience of the great Master Sri Maharishi Mehi. In these four parts of Satsang Yoga there is an extensive elaboration of the following subjects: Jiva (individual soul), Brahmā (Supreme God), Prakṛti (Nature) Bandha and Moksha (bondage and release), the realization of the Supreme Sovereign God and the importance of moral conduct of behavior etc. God is realized in one's own self, therefore, the inner practice (meditation) is absolutely essential. Within the work is depicted the systematic practices of Manas Jap, Manas Dhyana, Drishti Yoga and Surat-shabda-Yoga through which the Supreme Sovereign is realized. In addition the work prescribes moral rectitude or leaving the acts of untruth, stealing, use of intoxicating drugs, violence, and adultery.



We can summarize the essence of this work in the words of our great Master Maharishi Mehi:

"In these four parts of Satsang- Yoga, the practice of devotion and striving for Liberation require seven means which are of paramount importance: Satsanga (association with the saints which includes the study of their writings and Scriptures), selfless service of the spiritual master, extreme love for God, moral rectitude, purity of the heart, Japa (repetition of the Divine name) and Dhyāna (meditation). In the practice of meditation both-gross and subtle-meditations are described. In subtle meditation the meditation of the bindu (point)—the meditation of Light—Drishti Yoga (the Yoga of vision) and Nadanusavdhana (the meditation of Sabda-Yoga (the Yoga of Sound) are described."

After studying Satsang-Yoga it becomes clear that the Vedas, Vedanta, and the words of the saints emphasize that the devotee (practitioner) should seek the inner path. Through seeking the path within, one will go beyond the sensory realm—the coverings of Non-Conscious Nature and will attain kaivalya (the state of oneness). Having attained the state of oneness the practitioner attains the svarupa (essential nature, form) of one's deity and thereby will attain Moksa (Liberation) while living. The literature of the saints does not accept that realization of God and Moksa (Liberation) is attained after death.

By this beautiful treatise (of The Philosophy of Liberation) Hindi speaking people have greatly benefited. However, English



speaking people have been bereft of the precious wisdom of this treatise. It was my desire that this treatise be translated into English so that worthy people could benefit.

Although Sri Satya Dev Saha translated the fourth part of Satsang-Yoga (The Philosophy of Liberation) according to his knowledge, it was, nevertheless, not adequate for the Scholars of the Western World. There was a need for this scholarly and accurate translation. This task was accomplished by my disciples Don and Veena Howard.

I am deeply satisfied with their English translation. In spite of their busy schedule in America, they have greatly served Sant Mat. I am pleased with their task. My best wishes and many blessings for them.

Maharishi Mehi Ashram,

Bhagalpur-3, Bihar-India

India

Santsevi

2-22-1998

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The Philosophy of Liberation

1. Stillness or steadiness is the essence of *Shanti*.¹
2. He who has attained *Shanti* is a saint.²
3. Sant Mat encompasses the thoughts and way of saints.
4. The desire for attaining *Shanti* is natural in human beings.

In the *Upanishads*³ the formula for the attainment of *Shanti* is expounded by the seers and saints of these ancient works. Similar views have been expressed by the saints of all times, including such saints as Guru Nanak Sahab and Kabir Sahab who expounded their views in the *Punjabi* and *Hindi* languages respectively.⁴ Such expressions are for the inspiration and edification of all people.

However, the *Upanishads* uniquely and fully describe the means for attaining *Shanti* and describe the means for attaining the Highest Wisdom. That is why the *Upanishads* are considered the foundation of Sant Mat. Further, a comprehensive exposition of the Divine Word-Sound is given in the *Upanishads* which leads to the Highest Wisdom. The *Upanishads* explain the yogic techniques and systematic views of transcending thought and attaining the Absolute through the

¹*Shanti* is a Sanskrit word with several English meanings: peace, tranquility, bliss etc. The peace which results from some degree of Divine communion is *Shanti*

² A saint in the Sant Mat tradition is one who experiences the mystical state; it is a title conferred because of yogic achievements. Unlike the Western definition of saint which may be one who is only morally correct, the saint of the Sant Mat tradition is one who has achieved realization of the Divine, and subsequently his behavior is moral. Clearly, many Western saints also fall into the Sant Mat definition of saint. The words saint and saint are used interchangeably.

³ The *Upanishads* are ancient Vedic texts that define and categorize the philosophy of Yoga.

⁴ The seers of the *Upanishads* wrote in the Sanskrit language which is not a language of the common people. Guru Nanak and Kabir Sahab describe the same Upanishadic views in a language understood by the common man.



use of sound (Yoga of *Surat-Shabda*).⁵ Sant Mat follows the yogic path as prescribed in the *Upanishads* and specifically employs *Surat-Shabda Yoga* in its practices. The result of such practice is the attainment of the Highest Goal, the knowledge of the Supreme.

This is not to undermine the teachings of other saints, but rather to say that in the *Upanishads* are found the basis of the teachings of these saints. Often the teachings of various saints would, on the surface, seem contradictory to each other or even contradictory to the principles of the *Upanishads*. In fact, there is an unbreakable unity in the spiritual views of all saints. In different times and in different places saints appear, and their followers name their tradition in respect to the particular saint. The appearance of differences can be attributed to time, place and language, giving varied labels to views which are in reality the same. Likewise, due to excessively zealous followers these seeming differences are often accentuated. When all sectarianism and the forms of the particular time or place of the writings of a saint are removed, the basic principles of Sant Mat are in unity.

The Ultimate, Unbounded, Infinite state (as described in section 11) is the unique possession of a saint. Further, the means to attain this state (as described in section 59 and 61) are found in the writings of the saints. Even though there are differences in the name and form of the Deity of worship, the underlying unity of the Unbounded dissolves these seeming differences (according to the idea expounded in section 86).

Surat-Shabda Yoga as a means to attain the Unbounded state is an integral and indispensable aspect of the Sant Mat tradition. Any tradition devoid of this essential aspect is not true Sant Mat. Various saints describe the Yoga of *Surat* -

⁵*Surat Shabda-Yoga* is the practice of transcending the mind and entering the level beyond the mind, that is, the level of Oneness. The vehicle for this inward journey is sound. The way to employ sound and to understand its use is the practical application of *Surat Shabda-Yoga*. This is also known as *Nadansandhana* (search of Sound).



Shabda and from these descriptions we become aware of the significance of *Surat- Shabda*. The following are some words of the great saints, concerning the importance of *Surat- Shabda*

Guru Nanak states:

“The invisible and supra-sensory name of God (Divine Word-Sound) is extremely sweet and lovely.”

Tulsi Das states:

“I offer homage to the Divine Name of the Universal Being, *Ram*, which is the cause of the sun, the moon and the fire. That Divine Universal Name is the form of the creator, maintainer and destroyer. It is the soul of the *Vedas*, *Nirgun* (the aspect of the divine lacking qualities), unequalled and the abode of the attributes (*raj*, *sat* and *tam*) of Nature.

Name and form, both, are the illusions of God. Both are beyond expression and have no beginning. The wise practice meditation to understand this.”

Sant Daria Sahab states:

“O seekers! Meditate on the *Nirgun* (unqualified) Name of God.”

Sant Jagjivan Sahab states:

“One is astounded by the (experience of the) melodious tone of the subtle wave of the Unqualified, Unbounded Name (of God).”

5. All the spheres of *cetan* (conscious) and *jar* (non-conscious) are *sant* (finite) and *anasthir* (unstable).

6. Beyond the finite there must be *ananta* (Infinite).



7. The Infinite can never be more than one; and there can be no existence of any element other than the Infinite.

8. Only an Infinite Element, Reality, can be *Andi* (without beginning).

9. The existence of two or more elements without beginning is impossible. There can be only one unoriginated element or Reality.

10. It is absolutely possible for that whose nature is Infinite to possess Infinite power.

11. Sant Mat acknowledges the Supreme Sovereign as the Absolute Existence, which is beyond *jar* (non-conscious, lower) and *cetan* (conscious, upper) realms of *Prakriti* (nature), and is without beginning and is Infinite. The Supreme Sovereign is beyond *Saguna* and *Nirguna* (Qualified and Unqualified), possessing unlimited powers and being beyond time and space. It is beyond sound, names, forms and is One, without a second, beyond the reach of the mind, intellect and senses. The machinery of Nature is powered by the Supreme Sovereign, which is neither an individual nor a manifestation. It is beyond *maya* (illusion) and beyond space. It is absolutely Eternal, ancient and present from the beginning. It is the Ultimate Spiritual State: Ultimate Spiritual Being Supreme Sovereign God.

12. The State of *Kaivalya* (Oneness), also called *Jar Prakriti* (the Higher or Conscious Nature), is devoid of *gunas*⁶ (attributes); however, this state is brimming with reality, intelligence and bliss. *Apara Prakriti* (the Lower Nature, the phenomenal existence) is *trayagunamayi*, filled with the three *gunas* (attributes).

⁶ There are three *gunas* (attributes) of the phenomenal existence: *sattwa* which is purity, *raja* which is motion or activity and *tamas* which is lethargy or inertia. Any aspect of creation possesses one or more of these attributes.



13. The three mechanisms of the *Jar Prakriti* (phenomenal or lower nature) are the *gunas*: *sattva* is maintaining, *rajas* is creating, and *tamas* is destroying. The equal combination of the three *gunas* (attributes) is called *Jaratmak Mul Prakriti* (Lower Nature in its original form). It is the Non-conscious Primordial Matter.

14. The Supreme Sovereign God pervades *Samasta Prakriti Mandal* (the entire sphere of nature) and exists beyond the sphere of the phenomenal creation. The Supreme Sovereign is Infinite, Eternal and, therefore, is beyond imagination.

15. The Supreme Sovereign is *Ansi* (an endless sea of undivided parts); and *Saccidananda Brahma Brahma* (Unbounded Bliss, Existence and Knowledge), *Om Brahma* (that which is *Om*), *Purna Brahma* (Divinity pervading the universe), *Nirgun* and *Sagun* (Divinity with qualities and without qualities), *Iswara* (the Lord) and *Jiva* (the individual soul), all of which are Its inseparable parts. The relationship of the Supreme Sovereign and Its parts is like the relationship of *Mahadakasha* (firmament) and all its parts: *Mathakasha* (the space about), *Ghatakasha* (domed atmosphere), and *Patakasha*.

16. The state of bare Supreme Peace is beyond name and form, beyond words both articulate and non-articulate, beyond written or unwritten. This is the real nature of the Supreme Sovereign which is beyond *jar* (non-conscious) and *cetan* (conscious) and is essential and incomprehensible existence.

The Supreme Sovereign pervades existence in Its varying forms. It pervades *Brahma* (Universal Self) and *Jiva* (the individual soul). *Jiva or Ansa* (the individual self) and *Brahma or Ansi* (the Universal Self), are in essence the same although the individual self has attributes. However, all distinctions disappear in the dissolution of forms.

17. The only self-existence of the Supreme Sovereign is called *Atma* (Self). This is the only reality. All else is *Anatma-tatwa* (non-self).



18. *Atma* (Self) is the dweller in all bodies. It is the maintainer and knower on all levels of physical existence.

19. *Anatma-tatwa* (non-Self) consists of the body, all created levels of existence, and their manifestations.

20. In addition, *Anatma* (non-Self) consists of Conscious Nature, Non-Conscious Nature and their creations of names and forms: the *pinda* (microcosm), *brahamanda* (macrocosm), *stula* (gross), *suhshma* (subtle), *karana* (causal), *mahakarana* (supra- Causal), and *kaivalya* (pure consciousness).

21. The extension of the Non-Self is called *Acchadana Mandala* (realm of the coverings⁷).

22. The Existence of the Supreme Sovereign is only realized by going beyond the Non-Conscious Realm of coverings. There are four Non-Conscious Realms:

- *Astula* (Gross)⁸
- *Suksma* (Subtle)⁹
- *Karana* (Causal)
- *Mahakarana* (Supra-Causal) .

⁷ Achadana (Coverings) refer to levels of reality. The gross covering refers to the phenomenal world which most people perceive as their everyday reality. The subtler coverings refer to astral planes and other finer states of consciousness not directly perceived with the gross senses.

⁸ That Realm which we normally perceive as “the world”, the everyday experience of most people.

⁹ That Realm commonly referred to as the astral plane. This and the following Realms are perceived through refinement of consciousness in the state of meditation.



23. The ultimate human achievement is the realization (attainment) of the Supreme Sovereign God.
24. The individual soul perceives according to that realm in which he is living. Just as yellow colored glasses make the world appear yellow, so also that realm in which the individual soul lives makes all of creation appear as that particular realm, owing to the shadow of the Non-Conscious Realms (coverings). The reality of the Supreme Sovereign is as though non-existent.
25. Any forms containing *gunas* (attributes) have a beginning and are finite. They cannot be the Ultimate Reality nor the Supreme Sovereign in Its entirety.
26. Smell, touch, taste as well as the spoken and unspoken sounds of the realms of the three attributes (*sattwa, rajas, tamas*) can be called *Sarguna Nirakara* (Qualified-Unmanifest). No matter how subtle or how great these attributes of the realms may be, they can never reflect the Supreme Sovereign.
27. Pure Consciousness and the Original Word emanated from the center of Pure-Consciousness which is devoid of *sattwa, rajas, and tamas* (three attributes). They can be called *Nirguna Nirakara* (Unqualified Unmanifest). However, *Nirguna Prakriti* (Unqualified-Nature, Pure-Consciousness) does not exceed the Supreme Sovereign. This is only logical, as nothing which is finite can encompass that which is infinite.
28. Non-Conscious Nature with qualities or Lower Nature transforms itself into various forms. It is therefore called perishable and non-eternal.
29. Pure-Conscious Unqualified Nature is unchangeable. Therefore, it is known as *aksara* (imperishable) and is *sat* (true). The Supreme Sovereign is beyond the true and untrue as well as beyond the perishable and imperishable.
30. Creation comes into existence through the Divine Vibration (Wave) brought forth in the Supreme Sovereign by Itself (not otherwise).



31. An integral and inseparable aspect of the spiritual vibration is *Shabda* (sound). The vibration must accompany sound and the sound must accompany the vibration.

32. Before the creation of the Unqualified-Nature (Upper Nature) and before the creation of the Qualified-Nature (Lower Nature) there must have been manifested *Adi Dhvanyatmakashabda* (the Original Inarticulate Sound). This sound is called *Om*, *Satya* (True Word), *Sar shbda* (Essential Word), *Satya Nam* (True Name), *Ram Nam* (all pervading Sound), *Adi Shbda* (the Word of the beginning).

33. The creation could not come into being without vibration and sound. Necessarily, vibration and sound pervade all of the creations.

34. From the beginning, within the inner heart of creation, *Shabda* (the Sound) was vibrating ceaselessly. The Sound, all pervasive and true, is the essential basis of creation. Concerning this, there is no doubt.

35. Out of the Unmanifest emerged the manifest; from the subtle came forth the gross. Naturally, the subtle pervades the gross. And it follows that the Original Sound is all pervasive.

Through the medium of *Shabda* (sound), the Yogis attain the direct knowledge of the Supreme Sovereign, that is, realization of the Supreme Sovereign. This sound is called *Ram Nam* (All pervading Sound).¹⁰ This Sound is the essence of all and is unchanging. It is also called the *Sar Shabda* the *Satya Shabda* (the True Word), and *Satya Nam* (True Name).

36. The natural tendency of the Word (Sound) is to draw the attention or mind towards its center. Sound carries the qualities which correspond with the center of the respective realm. For one who focuses on specific sounds of the specific realms, Sound transmits Its subtler and subtler qualities.

¹⁰ This sound is called Om by the *Rishis* and seers of the *Upanishads*

37. There are two major spheres of Creation:

- *Para Prakriti Mandala* (the sphere of Upper Nature), *Satchitananda pad* (the State of Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss), the State of Oneness, the State of Pure Consciousness.
- *Apara Prakriti Mandala* (the sphere of Lower Nature), the domain of Non-Conscious Nature.

38. The Non-Conscious or Lower Nature is divided into four realms: Supra-Causal, Causal, Subtle and Gross. In its original intrinsic form, the Lower nature is an amalgam of the three *gunas* (*sattwa, rajas and tamas*). In the beginning of creation, the *gunas* were equally balanced. That is the *gunas* were equally present throughout the Lower Nature domain. When all the *gunas* are in equilibrium, this state of balance is called *Mahakarana* (Supra-Causal). However, whenever there is any movement among the *gunas*, an unbalanced situation occurs. The *gunas* are no longer in equilibrium. This imbalance causes the creation of the universe. In the original existence of *Jaratmaka Mul Prakriti* (conscious Nature) this imbalance is the cause of so many Universes. Therefore, Non-Conscious Nature in its original form can be called the ‘Ocean of Causes’. This imbalance of Nature in the form of ‘Cause’ flows downward and first takes the form of the subtle and then the gross. Thus the four realms of Non-Conscious or Lower Nature come into existence.

39. In total there are five Realms in the whole of creation. There are four Realms of Non-Conscious Nature: Supra-Causal, Causal, Subtle and Gross and one realm of Upper Conscious Nature: the realm of Oneness (Pure Consciousness).

40. As the whole of creation, the *brahmananda* (universe, macrocosm), is filled with the five realms of Nature mentioned above, so also is the *pinda* (body of an individual soul, the microcosm) filled with the same realms. When an individual soul lives in a particular realm of the microcosm, that same individual



at the same time lives in the corresponding realm in the macrocosm. And when an individual leaves a particular realm of the microcosm, that individual simultaneously leaves the corresponding realm of the macrocosm. This is true just as we experience the states of dreaming and waking. Furthermore, if the *surat* (consciousness-force, individual soul) will go beyond the five spheres of the microcosm, it will in the same instant go beyond the five spheres of the macrocosm.

41. The existence of a realm is dependent upon its center becoming established. Otherwise, a realm cannot come into existence.

42. From section 39 the inescapable logic dictates that there must be five centers for the corresponding five realms.

43. The center of the realm of *Kaivalaya* (Oneness or Pure Consciousness) is the Supreme Sovereign Itself. The center of the *Mahakaranaa* (Supra-Causal) realm is the junction point of the *Mahakarana and Kaivalya* (Supra-Causal Realm and Oneness of Upper Nature). The center of the *Karanaa* (Causal) realm is the junction point of the *Mahakarana and Kaivalya* (Supra-Causal and the Causal) Realms. The center of the *Shukshma* (Subtle) Realm is the junction point of the *Karana and Shukshma* (Causal and the Subtle) Realms. And finally the center of the *Asthula* (Gross) Realm is the junction point of the *Sukshma and Asthula* (Subtle and the Gross) Realms.

44. Creation comes into being through an outward flowing vibration from the Center. This outward flowing vibration is accompanied by Sound¹¹. Each of the five realms (mentioned in section 39) has its individual central sound. The central sounds of the five Realms naturally move from above to below, as that is their tendency. That is, the sound moves downward from the center of the realm toward the realm beneath its own position. For example, the sound moves from the Supra-Causal to the Causal. Each of the sounds of the centers of the five realms possesses an attribute to draw *surat* (the consciousness) upward to its

¹¹ The Sound exists by virtue of the flow of vibration and cannot exist without it.



center. The Essential Sound or Pure Spiritual Sound has the attribute to draw one's consciousness up to the Supreme Sovereign. The other *mayavi* sounds (material sounds mentioned above) of each of the respective five realms have the attribute to attract the person who hears it (or focuses on it) and to draw that person's *surat* (consciousness) to the sound of the realm directly above. Further, for the practitioner, the realization of the Essential Divine sound is impossible without first attaining the sounds of the lower realms. *Sar Shabda* (the Essential Divine Sound) beckons a return to the Supreme Sovereign. The progression of sound in all centers of the realms is upward, carrying one's consciousness from the lower centers to the higher centers ultimately reaching the Supreme Sovereign God.

45. The Sound of the higher realm naturally reaches to the lower realms. And the Gross is pervaded by the Subtle. Further, the sounds of the higher realms are more pervading (powerful) than the sounds of the lower realms. The sounds of different realms are each distinctive. The sound of the center of a specific realm above is perceived from the center of the next lower realm. This is a logical fact. Once the Consciousness experiences the sound of higher realms, it will not fall back to the lower realms.

46. The *Upanishads* and various saints of India elucidate the practice of *Surat-Shabda-Yoga* (Yoga of Sound). Through the progressive experience of all the sounds, one realizes the Supreme Sovereign. All the sounds of the realms described in section 45 draw *surat* (consciousness) upward. As it progresses, the consciousness goes beyond all the realms of creation where the Supreme Sovereign is found; that is, it achieves the direct experience of the Supreme.

47. *Prakriti* (Nature) was created by the desire of the Supreme Sovereign. Nature's creation was before time and space; therefore, its beginning cannot be placed in time and space which are elements of Nature. Thus, Nature is referred to as Unoriginated. In fact, it is the Supreme Sovereign that is Unoriginated, truly being beyond time and space. The Supreme Sovereign is the Originator of even the Unoriginated (Nature).



48. The physical body (the microcosm) is called *ksetra* (the field). Atma (the soul) is called *ksetrajna* (the knower of the field).

49. The four *ksetra* (Realms, bodies)—the Gross, Subtle, Causal and the Supra-Causal are non-conscious. The direct knowledge of the Supreme Sovereign or the Knowledge of One's own Self is hidden, concealed by these four coverings of the non-conscious realms.

50. *Kaivalyasarira* (the field or body of Oneness) is conscious (the opposite of non-conscious) and is near to the Supreme Sovereign God. Beyond the Realm of Oneness, there is only the Supreme Sovereign. In this Realm of Oneness it is possible to have direct knowledge of the Supreme Sovereign and the knowledge of one's *Atma* (Self) which is self-realization. Self may have the knowledge of one's Self and of the Supreme; of this there is no doubt.

51. The subtle is more extensive than the gross. It is not possible to be more extensive than the Unoriginated Infinite. Therefore, the Infinite is the Subtlest of all. The gross cannot grasp even a minute aspect of the Infinite.

The Supreme, being the Subtlest, cannot be apprehended by the gross sense-organs. (The five motor organs are the hands, feet, mouth, sex organs and anus. The five sense organs are the eyes, ears, nose, skin and tongue. The internal organs are the mind, intellect and ego.) Although, all the outward and inner tasks are performed by them, the sense-organs are gross and cannot grasp the Supreme Sovereign. It is impossible to have the Knowledge of the Supreme while being in the realm of the senses or Non-Conscious nature. One must go beyond the senses and Non-Conscious nature in order to realize the Supreme. For this reason, the outward practices of devotion are of not much use in attaining direct knowledge of the Supreme. The attainment of the state of Oneness is impossible by outer means. The state of Oneness is attained by going beyond all the realms of the non-conscious nature and by moving upward within the body. Waking and dreaming are the evidence that various states exist and can be altered .



One may argue the following premises:

1. The Supreme Sovereign is all pervasive and as such is already realized; therefore, there is no need to seek It.
2. The Supreme Sovereign is pervasive only through its energies or rays. The presence of Its actual form is in a locality. If we are able to go to that locality, then we will attain It.

In response to the first argument, although the Supreme Sovereign is all pervasive, one is not experiencing It directly. It is like attempting to satisfy oneself with imaginary sweets.

In response to the second argument, the Supreme Sovereign, by definition, is infinite. The Infinite cannot be contained in a single place, but must by definition be in all places. Further, the concept of locality contradicts the Unlimited form of the Supreme Sovereign. The Supreme Sovereign can only be Unoriginated and Unlimited.

In conclusion, the Supreme Sovereign should be sought within, beyond the sense realm as previously described.

52. To move spiritually upward within one's self, through and beyond the realms, is to progress towards union with the Supreme Sovereign. This practice is devotion to the Supreme Sovereign and is unfailing. This spiritual practice is for attaining the perfect Knowledge of the Self and is also called the *Antarik Satsanga* (inner effort to meet the Supreme Sovereign).

53. Listening to and study of the discourses on this sacred knowledge is an important step in the Sant Mat tradition. Listening to satsang (spiritual discourses) is prescribed as an essential activity.

54. The personal and private instruction in the art of this spiritual practice should be received from a *Sadguru* (an accomplished spiritual master). Once the



technique has been learned, one should practice it regularly and daily according to the instructions given by the master.

55. The transition from the waking state to the dreaming state is automatic and results in mental cares being left with an ensuing sense of relaxation. Similarly, in concentrating the mind and positioning it toward one-pointedness (intense internal transition), mental cares are left behind and a sense of ease pervades.

Concerning this, *Kabir Sahab* said:

“There is something mysterious in such activity in that in sitting, one walks.”

Sant Radhaswami Sahab said:

“He who sat finished the journey; he who walked could not find the way.”

56. When something is reversed, it moves in the opposite direction. When the mind is concentrated and attains one pointedness in the Gross Realm (which is the opposite of normal mental functions in the Gross Realm), the mind moves towards the Subtle Realm.

57. *Surat* (consciousness) exists in the *manas* (mind) as butter exists in milk. The consciousness moves as the mind moves. The mind is subtle and non-conscious. As a result it cannot go beyond the Causal Realm (which is the Non-Conscious Realm). The consciousness moves within the mind up to the Causal Realm. Then, the consciousness must go alone without the mind beyond the Causal Realm towards its own sphere, the upper realms (above the Non-conscious realms) from which the consciousness has descended.

58. The Divine Sound as described in section 35 is the Original Unspoken Word-Sound of the beginning. It is the special Name of the Supreme Sovereign. This Name makes apparent Its reality to the person who perceives It. By this



Divine Sound the direct knowledge of the Essential existence of the Supreme Sovereign may be attained. The spoken words by which the Supreme Sovereign is called are words of admiration for the Divine. Therefore, these spoken names express the glory of God and the Divine Sound. However, these spoken names give expression only of the qualities of the Supreme Sovereign, not direct knowledge of Its Essential Existence.

59. It is only natural to depend primarily on the elements of the realm in which one dwells. Those in the Gross Realm will naturally depend on the elements found therein and, therefore, should concentrate the mind by help of *Manas Japa*¹² or *Manas Dhyan*¹³.

As the Supreme Sovereign pervades all realms of the universe, the resplendent, glorious and purest virtues of creation are Its Divine facets. Having attained some ability to concentrate the mind by the above mentioned techniques of *Manas Japa* or *Manas Dhyan* the student¹⁴ should practice entering the Subtle Realm. The means for entering the Subtle Realm is *bindu* (point). This point is the finest expression (minutest of the minute) of the Supreme Sovereign who is the subtlest of the subtle. This *bindu* (point) cannot be measured and is indivisible. It is so fine that it cannot be marked by the tip of a hair. It is impossible to mark the *bindu* for the purpose of visualization because of its infinitesimal and abstract nature. It can only be visualized by *Drishti Yoga* (the Yoga of Vision) within one self. Moreover, in this practice straining of the pupils or eyeballs is not necessary. In fact, straining of the pupils or eyeballs brings pain and abnormality in the eyes.

The power of seeing is called *Drshti* (vision). The power to focus on the point is called the *Drshti Yoga* (Yoga of Vision). One attains one-pointedness by uniting

¹² *Manas Japa* is the mental repetition of any holy name of the Supreme Sovereign. This is done in silence with the eyes shut and as instructed by the spiritual master.

¹³ *Manas Dhyan* is concentrating the mind by visualizing any holy figure representative of the Supreme Sovereign. This is done with the eyes closed and as instructed by the spiritual master.

¹⁴ Student of Yoga and specifically Sant Mat Yoga.

the rays of both eyes on the locus and gazing on it with a steady mind.¹⁵ This practice is called *Drshti Yoga*. The consistent practice of *Drshti Yoga* opens the subtle or divine sight. Further, once established in the state of one-pointedness, it is quite possible to grasp the Divine Spiritual Sound, coming from the upper realms. The nature of sound is to draw the consciousness to its point of origin. The consciousness united with Sound moves upwards in Sound and is drawn to the Supreme Sovereign or *Sabhatti Pad* (a state beyond Sound). For this practice, the service and association of the *Sadguru* (the spiritual master), the intensive, continual practice of meditation and *kripaya* (grace) are essential.

60. The *Upanishads* and various other works by the saints of India prescribe the path of *Dhrishti Yoga* (the Yoga of Vision) to be followed by *Shabda Yoga* (the Yoga of Sound). It is, nevertheless, possible to hear the Sound coming from the center of the Gross realm by practicing diligently the Yoga of Sound. This can be accomplished even without the practice of the Yoga of Vision. Through constant practice of the Sound-Yoga, the unsteadiness of the mind is dissolved, and the mind enters into the Subtle Realm. It is not surprising that the mind established in the Subtle Realm can grasp the Sound of the center of the Subtle Realm. However, it should be noted that the established and preferred method as described in the *Upanishads* and literature of the saints is the practice of the Yoga of Vision followed by the Yoga of Sound. Once one is established on the path of internal sound, one cannot fall back to lower levels.

One will not succeed in Yoga if purity of character is disregarded. Lying, stealing, smoking, taking of drugs (including alcohol), violence, and adultery are all obstructions to the successful practice of Yoga.

In summary, one grasps the central sounds of the lower realms and progressively is drawn upward to the sounds of the higher realms. Ultimately, one reaches the center of the Original Sound, the Essential Divine Sound, and thereafter attains the Ultimate State, *Sabdatit Pad* (the state beyond the sound). The Yoga of

¹⁵ Steady mind means a mind without thought or distractions, the mind is so intent on the point that all other activities of the mind are silent.



Sound must be practiced in order to attain the Nameless State. This is fully elaborated and described in the *Upanishads* and literature of the saints. The Yoga of Sound is the only medium to reach this State, no other. The greatest good is in the attainment of the Ultimate State, the Nameless State.

61. It should be understood that in this Yoga, one should first be devoted to the Gross Qualified Manifest Form, and then to the Subtle Qualified Manifest Form, and then to the Qualified Unmanifest Form and finally to the Unqualified Unmanifest Form.

62. *Manas Japa* and *Manas Dhyana* are the practices of devotion to the Gross Qualified Manifest Form. The practice of being in one-pointedness or attaining the subtlest form is devotion to the Subtle Qualified Manifest Form. The practice of focusing on all other internal sounds except the Essential Divine Sound is devotion to the Subtle Qualified Unmanifest Form of Causal and Supra-Causal form. The meditation on the Essential Divine Sound is devotion to the Unqualified Unmanifest Form. All devotional practices end here. When all devotional practices are completed, then and only then does one reach the Nameless State or the Supreme Sovereign and thus attains *Moksha* (liberation) or final Peace.

63. As the Sound originates from the Soundless or Nameless State, by grasping the Sound, one is drawn naturally to the Soundless State (the Supreme Sovereign).

64. It is inconceivable to accept the existence of anything beyond the Soundless State and the existence of Soundlessness in any sphere of creation.

65. The *Upanishads* describe the Nameless State as the *Param Pad* (Absolute State) and the *Bhagavad-Gita* characterizes this state as *Ksetrajna* (the knower of the body- field); nothing is beyond or greater than this state. Correspondingly, it is futile to believe that there could exist a greater state beyond the *Anam* (Nameless State) of the *Upanishads*. However, if one does not agree with and understand the claims of the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad-Gita* let him prove

the existence of the Nameless state in the spheres of creation. Or let him prove a greater state than the Nameless state, an impossible task. Without any sound basis, claims made against the Upanishads are not appropriate and are misleading.

66. Without question, the Divine Sound or Original Sound leads to the Ultimate State or the State beyond Sound. However, it should not be thought that one should not meditate on the sounds of the lower realms because they are material in nature and, therefore, deleterious to man. (It is necessary and desirable to begin the practice of *Surat Shabda Yoga* (the meditation on Sound) by meditating on other sounds found in the lower realms. In fact, to begin the practice of *Shabda Yoga* in an attempt to grasp the Essential Divine Sound is simply not possible.)

This reasoning is supported in the *Upanishads*. For further elaboration on this subject, refer to sections 44, 45, 46, 59 and 60 of this work.

67. Although the practice of the Yoga of Vision is more difficult than the Yoga of Sound, nevertheless it is necessary to practice initially the Yoga of Vision to attain one-pointedness. It is unnecessary to continue practicing the *Drshti Yoga* (Yoga of Vision) once one is steadfast in one-pointedness. In fact it is undesirable as it will require more time and offers a more difficult path than the *Surat Shabda Yoga* (Yoga of Sound).

68. Having attained one-pointedness, the consciousness should be focused on the internal sounds. The consciousness will be drawn toward internal sounds, and at this time *bindu* (the point) will be left behind. Owing to the extreme delight experienced when hearing the internal sounds, the consciousness naturally will be engaged in the internal sounds. This leaving of the point and grasping of the internal sound is the meditation process and is highly desirable.

69. It is not possible to attain the Essential Divine Sound exclusively through the Yoga of Vision. Through the Yoga of Vision, one can reach some realm of the Non-Conscious Nature; however, without the meditation of other internal sounds, the Original Sound is unattainable. By employing the Yoga of Sound, it



is possible to reach the Essential Sound. The realms of Non-Conscious Nature to varying degrees obstruct direct knowledge of Divine Sound; nevertheless, the internal sounds lead the consciousness through the various realms to the Essential Divine Sound. The Original or Primordial Sound was manifested before the creation of the original Non-Conscious Nature. Therefore, the current of Essential Sound is the Pure Conscious flow.

70. Through constant practice of the Meditation of Sound, the practitioner also experiences the Divine Light. Just as upon attending a concert, one cannot help but notice the beautiful setting, so also the scenes of the Non-Conscious Realms are observed inevitably when engaged in the practice of the Yoga of Sound. Therefore, it is said (the light is within the sound). Not surprisingly, the meditation of Sound can transport the practitioner into the Divine Realm of Light. The Sound, however, is the essence of the practice, and the greatest loss would be in not achieving the Sound.

71. The Essential Divine Sound, the Supra Cosmic Sound, takes its origin from the Supreme Sovereign. It came into existence before the creation of the microcosm and the macrocosm. It is therefore impossible for spoken words created by humans on the Gross Realm or created from material substance to be able to duplicate the Essential Divine Sound. It is only possible to approximate its sound.¹⁶

Interestingly, the Muslim seers agree concerning the origin of the Divine Sound. Further, they also agree that the sequential inner ladder of the sounds of the realms must be traversed. They assign different sounds to the different realms. Concerning this Radhaswami Sahab says:

“...the Muslim sages recognize the sound of *Trukuti*(Subtle Sphere) as *AllahooHa* sound is of the *Sunya* (Causal realm), for the Muslim seer. *Anaahoo* sound belongs to the Supra-Causal (also known as *Bhanvar Guphaa* the cave of

¹⁶ For example *Om* is a simulated word representing the Essential Divine Sound.



Brahman). And the *Hakka* is the Divine Sound of *Satloka*
(the Pure Spiritual Realm).

Just as the Muslim saints ascribe the above described sounds to the different spheres, Radhasweami designates *Om*, *Raram*, *Soham* and *Satnam*¹⁷ to the same spheres respectively. We can conclude that any particular word cannot be “the” sound, and it is fallacious to ascribe to any word the actual attributes of the “Essential Divine Sound”.

72. The literature of various saints describes the sounds of the different realms. Some of the various sounds are said to be similar to the sounds of the *Veena* (stringed instrument similar to the lyre), the *murali* (flute), the *nafeeri* (horn instrument), the *mridang* (drum), the *mrdal* (cymbals), the *singi* (a horn), the *sitar* (stringed instrument), or the *sarangi* (similar to a lute). Other descriptions compare these sounds to a peal of thunder and a roar of a lion. Surprisingly, all saints do not ascribe the same sounds to corresponding Realms. For example, in the literature of some saints the music of the flute is described as belonging to the lower Realms while other saints place flute like music in the higher realms. Kabir Sahab says :

“The *Bhanvar Guphaa* (Supra-Causal Realm, a higher Realm) is vibrating with the *Soham* (knowledge of ‘I’, one’s real Self). And the mystical flute is sounding continuously therein.”

Sant Sant Tulsi Sahab states in the *Ghat Ramayana* :

“The five various divine colors are seen in the internal sky, viz. black, red, white, blue, yellow, and the enchanting wave of the spiritual sound is bursting with the melodious thrill of flutes.”

The Realm of the divine colors is often thought to be of the Lower Realm or Subtle Realm. The assumption could be that one saint is correct and the other incorrect. However, the words of a true saint cannot be wrong and as such we

¹⁷ Sant Radhaswami designates these names or sounds to the Subtle, Causal, Supra-Causal and Pure Spiritual realms respectively.

cannot say that a saint is incorrect. Therefore, one should not think that it is incorrect to meditate on the sounds of the lower realms because the saints do not agree specifically about their descriptions of the sound. From the literature it appears that specific sounds can occur in any realm. Just as the whole of a tree is contained in the sprout, and the sprout is contained in the seed, so also all the Gross Realm exists in the Subtle Realm and the Subtle Realm exists in the Causal Realm. In the same manner, the sounds of the Gross Realm can exist in the Subtle Realm, and the sounds of the Subtle Realm can exist in the Causal Realm; therefore, the sound of a lute could be heard in any realm.

Finally, it is necessary to focus on the various sounds in meditation. It is not possible to have experience of the Essential Divine Sound without first having experience of the sounds of the lower realms. This is consistent with the teachings of the saints. Section 66 deals with the necessity of experiencing and grasping the sounds of the lower realms prior to experiencing the Essential Divine Sound.

73. Thus, the various sounds experienced in meditation (such as a flute or a drum) cannot be correlated to any specific realm. With the exception of a few saints such as Sant Radhaswami and Kabir Sahab, most other saints as well as the writings of the *Upanishads* describe the various sounds but do not mention the corresponding realms. However, all essentially agree on the existence of the Nameless State.

In reading the various saints' descriptions of sounds the inescapable conclusion is that all have complete knowledge of the *Nadansandhana* (Yoga of Sound).

74. The sound of the Gross Realm is sweet and harmonious. The sound of the Subtle Realm is even sweeter and more harmonious than the Gross Realm. As one progresses from the Causal toward the Supra-Causal Realm the experience is of ever increasing sweetness and harmony of the sound. In the state of Oneness of Upper Nature, the plurality of sounds ceases to exist, and only then can the Essential Divine sound be experienced. Other sounds of the various Realms are



not experienced at this level of the State of Oneness because diversity does not exist in the state of Oneness.

75. The State beyond Sound is acknowledged in the writings of saints as the goal of their teachings. In addition, their writings accept *Manas Japa* (repetition of a Divine name), *Manas dhyan* (concentration on a form of the Divine), *Drshiti Yoga* (fixing the mind on a point) and *Nadanusandana* (concentrating on the inner sounds of the different spheres) as means to reach the Soundless State. These four techniques are therefore essential in Sant Mat.

76. Without achieving perfection in *Nadanusandana* (the Yoga of Sound), the realization of the Supreme Sovereign God or the Knowledge of the Self cannot be achieved.

77. Without resolute devotion to the *guru* (a spiritual master), even by means of the Yoga of Sound, the realization of the Supreme Sovereign God is not possible. Without the help of the master, it is not possible to attain the full devotion for the Divine and the highest good.

Kabir Sahab says:

“Without the true *guru* (preceptor who has attained perfection) the aspirant cannot attain perfection. If the spiritual teacher is rapacious, the aspirant will be as well, and it will result in pain twofold.”

78. When the true, accomplished¹⁸ spiritual master is found, the greatest good will be achieved with his guidance.

79. Meeting with a *sadguru* (an accomplished master) is equal to meeting the Supreme Sovereign.

¹⁸ By ‘accomplished’ is meant a spiritual preceptor who has reached the goal of Sant Mat and who has achieved realization of the Supreme Sovereign.



80. During this lifetime, the one whose consciousness at the time of *samadhi* (a state of deep trance) transcends all the concealments of the Non-Conscious Realms and immerses in the *Sabdatet Pada* is *sadguru* (the true spiritual master). Even while engaged in activity, the consciousness of a true master remains uninvolved, and remains poised in the Essential Divine Sound.

81. The various systems of knowledge do not compare to the spiritual science by which knowledge of the Supreme Sovereign is attained. Other teachings have little benefit compared to the teaching for the attainment of the Supreme Sovereign. Clearly, a teacher of science cannot be compared to a spiritual teacher owing to the preceptor's ability to guide one to the Supreme Sovereign. It is not necessary for the other teachers or scholars to have broken through the various Realms of Non-Conscious Nature (Gross Realm, Subtle Realm etc.) or to have shattered the illusion of the material plane. However, it is essential that the spiritual teacher has penetrated the Realms and shattered the illusion of the material plane. Even the spark of a little teaching of *Shabad Yoga* for the attainment of the Supreme as learned from a teacher will be of far greater value than the worldly teachings.

82. The recognition of a true spiritual master is the most difficult of tasks. However, the one who has purity of character (rectitude), who practices diligently the Yoga of Sound, and who can explain clearly Sant Mat (the path of saints) can be accepted and trusted and given devotion as a spiritual master. A person without rectitude or purity of character, regardless of the other qualities just mentioned, should not be regarded as a true master.

If one has accepted a spiritual teacher and later finds him or her lacking in rectitude, that teacher should be abandoned. In spite of the teacher's exquisite knowledge, association with that teacher is not desirable if he or she is lacking in moral character. As the aspirant is particularly affected by the teacher's moral character, it is imperative to avoid teachers without moral virtues. Purity of character is the essential quality of a teacher and if purity is lacking that teacher is



no better than an animal. A teacher lacking purity of character or other essential virtues is a false spiritual teacher.

Kabir Sahab states:

“ If you ought to learn the holy science of attaining the Supreme from the master, sacrifice your *sisā* (head, pride and ego) to him. For many having kept their pride, lost themselves in the current of ignorance.

Surrender yourself to him who has no worldly desires, who is devoted to God and has forgone his ego. Do not take long in leaving the association of a false teacher for you will wander time and again and will not find the entrance to the Divine Sound.”

The fruits of accepting a true master are immense. Unfortunately, true teachers are few and difficult to find. A spiritual master who is wise, pure and a practitioner of the Yoga of Divine Sound gradually imparts his or her virtues to the student. The good will of the spiritual teacher cannot but help affecting the aspirant in a positive manner because one is affected by the power of a higher vibration. Section 77 describes the qualities of the teacher and how the aspirant benefits from his or her relationship with the teacher.

The master who practices the Yoga of Sound but is negligent in his moral character and in his spiritual knowledge is harmful to the seeker of spiritual knowledge. If one has accepted such a master, disregarding the importance of rectitude and knowledge, the aspirant would be deprived of the benefits of the association with a true preceptor, mentioned in the previous paragraph. In addition, in following an immoral teacher the aspirant would have the difficult task of not going astray, much less advancing on the spiritual path. However, without the aid of a true teacher this spiritual task can be undertaken by a few steadfast learned disciples. For most it is almost impossible to undertake this task.



Clearly the energy, physical and mental, of one person can enhance the same faculties of another person. Thus it is not surprising that the spiritual power of one who is advanced in meditation enhances the spiritual energy of the aspirant.

There are several texts that discuss the above subject. In the *Kalyan Sadhanank* is quoted as saying the following:

“See, I also have had the holy presence of the great Spiritual Preceptor of the universe, Lord Swami Ramanand. For (on behalf of) my own preceptor, Khwaja Sahab I had gone to see Swamiji (Swami Ramanand) taking an incomparable present to Pancaganga Ghat (a place on the Ganges river). Swamiji (Swami Ramanand) imparted his merciful blessings upon me my heart became pure at once with his Supreme grace and therein reflected the holy glimpse of the Divine Light.” (Part I, p. 499)

K. Narayanswami Aiyar translates a Sanskrit hymn of the third *Bhramana* of the Mandal Brahmanopanishad as:

“Saying this, he the *Purusa* of the sun embraced his pupil and made him understand it¹⁹.”

In his commentary on this verse, Niriyanswami Aiyar states:

“This is a reference to the secret way of imparting higher Truth (the Knowledge of God).” (Thirty minor *Upanishads*, p.259)

It is apparent that the disciple benefits from the sacred radiance (personal aura), higher knowledge, and spiritual energy of the master. Baba Devi Sahab quotes the of verses Ghat Ramayana in which Sant Tulsi Sahab in giving instruction to an aspirant describes the importance of a true master:

“O *Taki* (disciple) after being veracious and content (giving up the illusory enchantments of the worldly things) go in the shelter of a perfect spiritual teacher who will give

¹⁹ ‘It’ refers to secret spiritual knowledge.



you the secret knowledge to get into *Sushumna Nadi* (the door to internal spiritual knowledge).”²⁰

Further Tulsi Sahab addresses the importance of the grace of a true master in the journey of God realization:

“Without the blessing of the true master, the path of God realization and the experience of going beyond the higher realms are out of reach.”

Further the same point is stated in the *Varahopnishads* :

“It has been said that without the supreme blessings of the perfect and true spiritual preceptor detachment from the worldly is arduous. It is difficult to realize the Truth and live in a state of realization of the Supreme. The worthiness of the service of the spiritual preceptor lies in the fact that the teacher offers such blessings to him (the aspirant).”

Lord Buddha no less instructs in his book the *Dhammapada* that an aspirant should serve the master from whom he learns the spiritual path:

“A disciple should serve the teacher, from whom he learns the *dharma* of Buddha, diligently like a *Brahman* serves the sacred fire of *Yajna*.”

Sant Charan Das says:

“Keep this instruction of mine in your heart; keep your mind at the feet of the spiritual master and dedicate your body in his or her service.

If the preceptor rebukes you a million times, do not turn yourself from his or her service. Connect your love with the preceptor and break your attachments from all.”

Baba Devi Sahabquotes the *Ghat Ramayana*:

²⁰ *Sushumna Nadi* is the entrance to the spiritual experience.



“This (spiritual) path and its destination is divine love, but it is not impossible to reach it (destination). The remover of difficulties is the one (spiritual teacher) before you, who has given you the secret knowledge (spiritual instruction).”

The saints and true teachers are known to be impartial; their blessings fall like the rain. However, the rain, while falling on all, tends to collect in deep pools just as the grace of the saints while showering on all flows rapidly and collects in the deep pools of the aspirants who are devoted. It is not surprising that the aspirants through their devotion draw the grace of the master towards them. Aspirants who give great attention to the ways of the teacher are worthy of the gift of knowledge. Obviously, not the careless one, but the one who honors the gift and cares for the receiving bowl receives the gift of the grace of the teacher. Making oneself worthy is the secret of devotion to the master, the way of gaining grace as described in the writings of the saints.

83. The aspiration to serve with love and behave humbly before the teacher arises naturally in the hearts of students. Therefore, devotion to the spiritual teacher is also natural. To say anything against devotion to the teacher is pointless. And also, the wise will not give devotion to an unworthy teacher and will influence other aspirants to do the same.

84. The four essential elements a *sadhaka* (an aspirant of the spiritual path) needs are the following: one, *satsanga* (association of saints and hearing of things spiritual); two, *sadacara* (moral rectitude); three, *guru seva* (dedication to the teacher); and four *dhyanaabhyasa* (practice of meditation). These essentials have previously been discussed; *satsanga* is referenced in section 53; moral rectitude is addressed in section 60; meditation is referenced in sections 54 through 59. In Sant Mat an intense eagerness to acquire these essentials must be present. However, devotion to the teacher is paramount to the other three essentials and is the key to achieving the other three.

85. The desire of an individual to be free from sufferings and to attain the happiness of absolute peace is naturally present in the hearts of all. The purpose



of Sant Mat is to provide a system which fulfills the desires of attaining absolute peace.

86. In the world there are many deities²¹ recognized by their respective devotees. Even though the deities have different names and forms their *Atma* (spiritual essence, Self) is the same. The devotees can never be perfect in their worship unless they realize the *Atma* (Self) of their deity. There is no doubt that one who realizes the Self of one's deity attains the Supreme Sovereign God. The Self can only be realized through the four essential practices described in section 84. Every deity is formed of Gross, Subtle, Causal, Supra-Causal and Oneness aspects as well as having *Suddha Atma* (Pure Self Existence). The devotee who does not understand the essential nature of the deity makes no effort to realize the *Atma* (Pure Self) and only engages in worship of the gross name and form of the deity will not attain liberation or the highest good.

87. The practice of the *Nadanusandhana* (Yoga of sound) is not mere child's play. Its full practice cannot be exercised by one who lacks *Yama* and *Niyama* (virtues and moral rectitude). See the following section 88 for more detail on *Yama* and *Niyama*.

There are sounds due to gross vibrations in the material body. To meditate on these gross sounds and believe it to be as the full practice of the Yoga of Sound shows a lack of knowledge of Yoga. According to the literature of the saints, *Yama* and *Niyama* are essential for mastery in the practice of the *Nadanusandhana* (Yoga of Sound).

88. *Yama* consists of five disciplines: *satya* (truthfulness), *ahimsa* (non-violence), *asteya* (non-stealing), *brahmachyarya* (continence), and *aparigraha* (control of greed or non-possessiveness).

²¹ Although "deity" is spelled in lowercase denoting an aspect of the Supreme Being, it in fact denotes any of the forms of God which various religions and philosophies recognize.



Niyama also consists of five practices, which are the following: *sauca* (internal and external purity), *santosha* (contentment), *tapas* (penance), *svadhyaya* (study of spiritual matters) and *Isvara pranidhana* (meditation on God).

89. In following *Yama* and *Niyama*, one exercises aversion from the five sins, serves the spiritual master, attends *satsanga* and practices meditation as referred to in section 60.

90. A comfortable *asana* (a pose of sitting or posture) of keeping the head, neck and trunk straight and steady is a must for meditation. Without the ability to sit in such a steady posture for prolonged periods, meditation cannot be practiced.

91. Meditation should be practiced being alert, without being drowsy, shutting the eyes comfortably and without turning the eyeballs or pressing them in any way.

92. The practice of meditation should be an essential part of the practitioner's daily routine. The preferred time of meditation is *brahmamahutra* (very early in the morning: 3:00 A.M.). Likewise one should meditate at mid-morning and then again in the evening time. While falling asleep, one should also engage his mind in meditation. Further, it is good to practice *manas japa* or *manas dhyana* while working.

Before learning the *Nadanusandhana* (meditation of sound) in practicing *manas japa* (mantra repetition), *manas dhyana* (focusing on the form of the master or a deity) and *Drashti Yoga* (focusing on a point that is practicing one-pointedness), one should meditate with eyes and mouth shut. Upon learning *Nadanusandhana* (meditation of sound) from the master, one should also close the ears.

94. The *dhyana* (absolute concentration) will result in the suspension of the breath as is evident from the example that in deep thinking or whenever the mind

is absorbed, the breath is correspondingly slower. In the practice of *pranayama*²² by *poroka* (repeatedly drawing the breath in), *rechaka* (expelling the breath out), and *kumbhaka* (retaining the breath), the suspension of breath results. However, it should be noted that to practice *pranayama* to the extent of breath suspension is a very difficult task. With suspension of the breath, the mind is perfectly concentrated.

Section 60 deals with the effects of concentration of the mind. Meditation is a much easier means of attaining suspension of breath than *pranayama*.

In the initial stages of *dhyana* (absolute concentration), *pratyahara*²³ is practiced. Through the means of *pratyahara*, the mind is brought back repeatedly to the focal point. By this constant practice of *Pratyahara* one is eventually able to concentrate for a short period on the focal point. This state of concentration is called *dharna* (steadiness of concentration or absorption). When absorption is maintained for longer and longer periods of time, then it is *dhyana* (absolute concentration). Then in this state of *dhyana*, one is able to grasp the streams of spiritual sounds (described in section 60) and finally achieves *samadhi* (Unity). *Drshti Yoga* (Yoga of Vision) will greatly facilitate *pratyahara* and *dharna*. *Drshti Yoga* is explained in detail in section 59.

95. In the states of waking and dreaming, the vision and respiration are active as well as the mind. In deep sleep, vision and mind become inactive; however, respiration continues to be active. Through these natural occurrences it is understood that when the vision is active so also is the mind; and when the vision is inactive the mind becomes inactive. Further, in spite of the respiration continuing, if the vision ceases to be active simultaneously the mind becomes inactive. Therefore, not suspension of respiration, but concentration of vision

²² *Pranayama* is the physical act of controlling the breath. It involves various breathing techniques to achieve its end. It is a component of *Hatha Yoga* and should be learned from a qualified Master. It is believed that by the control of breath one can control the mind.

²³ *Pratyahara* means to bring back. Bringing the mind from the worldly objects to the focal point in meditation.



holds the means to quieting the mind. It is further noted that mind and vision are subtle while breath is gross, and this explains why the focusing of vision is a more effective tool for quieting of the mind.

96. There are four kinds of *Drshiti* (vision):

Jagrat-Drshiti (vision of waking state), *Svapana-Drshiti* (the vision of dreaming state), *Manas-Drshiti* (mental vision) and *D* (Divine Vision). When the first three types of vision are concentrated, the mind becomes focused and the divine vision dawns. If one-pointedness is held in the divine vision, mind will move notably higher and grasp subtler and subtler sounds eventually merging with the Sound.

97. Upon merging the mind with the Sound, there remains only the consciousness, free of the association with the mind. The consciousness free of the mind will be drawn to the flow of sounds, ultimately merging in the State beyond Sound or the Supreme Sovereign God. The internal practice of meditation ends here: the Supreme God is realized and the work is completed.

98. The practitioner should support himself in gainful employment, living on one's own earnings. The aspirant is best content with a few things.

99. The aspirant should keep himself free of impulses such as lust, anger, greed, delusion, egotism, jealousy and fear. In his interest for spiritual progress, the practitioner should create pure mental habits: compassion, mercy, contentment, forgiveness and humbleness.

100. The following should be avoided because they cause unsteadiness of the mind: intake of intoxicants, including alcohol and various non-prescription drugs, and eating of meat and fish.

101. Through association of saints, the hearing of spiritual talks and study, wisdom can be acquired. Wisdom is essential in determining what is the right way to live your life. Without wisdom one can make poor decisions, which result in undesirable consequences.



102. The essential nature of the Pure Self (Supreme Sovereign) is infinite. Owing to Its infinitude, nothing exists beyond or outside It, nor can It come or go anywhere, as It is, by nature, everywhere and everything. On the other hand, the Conscious Realm is finite. By nature it is in a constant state of flux and motion. That portion of the Infinite where the forms of the Non-conscious Nature (the Realms) are dissolved is called liberated. The gross physical body (Gross Realm) is a form composed of Non-Conscious nature and is dependent upon the consciousness. When the consciousness leaves, the body vanishes. Thus it is evident that when the other realms and their respective forms of Non-Conscious Nature are devoid of the stream of consciousness, they will also vanish.

Through the practice of the *Nadanusandana* (Yoga of Sound), the consciousness will transcend the Non-Conscious forms (Realms). Subsequently, the Consciousness being lured to the Original Sound will merge in the center. Being forsaken of consciousness all the forms (realms of Non-Conscious Nature) will vanish. The various components of Nature—the Gross, the Subtle the Causal and the Supra-Causal—which form a physical body, will vanish leaving only the Pure Self devoid of the realms. This state will be a state of Liberation. The Pure Self despite its all-pervasiveness is unattached to material pain and happiness. However, by virtue of the Pure Self's association with the *chit* (mind) and *jar* (non-conscious, body), the existence of *jivatma* (individual soul) appears. The individual self experiences then pleasure and sorrow. Ultimately, this experience of pain and pleasure is unpleasant and therefore should be destroyed.

By destroying this association of the Pure Self with mind and body the above described experiences of pain and pleasure are dissolved. This association is the cause of pleasure and pain and of the existence of the individual self, the experiencer.

103. The individuality of the soul came into existence and therefore can also be destroyed. However, the Pure Self being infinite in nature is beyond destruction and cannot be destroyed by the extinction of the individuality of the soul. In any lifetime when the individuality is vanquished in the state of *Samadhi* (perfect



meditation), only then is the soul liberated in life and also in death. Without liberation in this life time, the practitioner will take birth again and again. However, by virtue of being a seeker, the practitioner will take human birth in good families. The practitioner will be influenced by his spiritual undertakings in previous lives, continuing on the road to liberation. Thereby, the practitioner after attaining good human births time and again will ultimately attain Liberation.

In the Supreme Sovereign, there arose a wave of creation. That wave once originated cannot be reversed because that wave must continue to create to the end of time. Since the infinite has no end, the wave will not return to the source. Since the wave cannot be reversed and since we as individual souls are contained within that wave, there is only one way to escape the continuing creation and that is to merge in the center of the wave, which is the source of the wave, the Supreme Sovereign. The portion of the infinite that achieves liberation from the forms of creation (realms of *Prakriti*) (as described in section 102) will not be able to go back to its prior state of ignorance, which is under the coverings of *Prakriti* (nature), and the individual soul will not come into existence. This is true Liberation; all others that may be described are not authentic unless they meet the above criterion.

104. Unless all the Realms are transcended, neither can the Supreme Sovereign be realized nor can liberation be attained. For the attainment of these two, liberation and realization of the Supreme Sovereign, only one means exists. It could be called devotion to the Supreme Sovereign or the way of Liberation. Both are in essence the same.

Sant Tulsi Das states:

“As water cannot exist without the earth, so liberation cannot exist without devotion to the Divine.”

105. The means to attain the direct knowledge of the Supreme Sovereign God (Summary of the Philosophy of Liberation).



Before learning the technique to attain the direct knowledge of the Supreme Sovereign, intellectual understanding of the essential nature of the Supreme Sovereign God and one's own self is necessary. Through *Satsanga* (hearing and studying the discourses of spiritual teachers) and contemplation, such knowledge can be acquired. Along with knowledge of the order of creation, the reason for not having the direct knowledge of both should be sought. Through intellectual understanding of the essential nature of the Supreme Sovereign, it is determined what needs to be attained. One should be able to discern whether it is the body which realizes the Supreme or the *Ksetrajna* (Self, Knower within the body). Also, for this realization should the practices be of an external nature (outwardly devotional practices) or internal nature (Yoga of Vision and Yoga of Sound)? Having come to an understanding, these wanderings will be left behind. After gaining the intellectual knowledge of one's Self, one will understand whether one is suited for attaining this Knowledge. Likewise, once the reason for the concealment of the order of creation and the direct knowledge of the Essential nature of the Supreme and the Self is known, the means will be brought to light. With this revelation one will be able to go beyond the concealments of Causal Nature imposed on the creation and the Self and then will meet with the Supreme and experience direct knowledge of the Supreme Sovereign God.

Through intellectual knowledge—gained through the study of the *Upanishads*, the study of the literature of Indian saints, or logical thinking—one will draw the conclusion that the essential nature of the Supreme is unmanifest, beyond the senses, without beginning or end, unborn, imperishable, without time and space, omnipresent and in all and beyond all. As the space within a jar is a part of the space of the vast sky so also the individual self is part of the Supreme Sovereign. Essentially they both are one. However, the Supreme Sovereign is not concealed, but the individual self, the part of the Supreme which dwells in the body, is concealed. Direct knowledge of both is not experienced because of the concealments of the four Realms of Qualified Lower Nature: Gross, Subtle, Causal and Supra-Causal.



The Creation comes into existence when the wave (vibration) for creation occurs in the Supreme Sovereign. Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge the existence of this wave or vibration in the beginning of the creation. Further, it is impossible to have vibration without sound. In the beginning of the world, that there was Sound is certain. Thus the progression of the creation continues to proceed from the subtle to the gross.

The realm of creation in which we live is the Gross Realm. Above the Gross is the Subtle Realm; above the Subtle is the Causal; above the Causal is the Supra-Causal, and above the Supra-Causal is *Kaivalya* (Pure Conscious Realm). The existence of these four realms is as fixed as the Pole star. Thus, there are five spheres of creation including the Gross Realm. *Kaivalya* is of Pure Consciousness and the other four realms are Non-Conscious, but coexisting with the conscious. In the creation of the Realm, first the center of each Realm must have been established. When the vibration (current) for the creation of that Realm emanated from its center, only then the creation of the Realm came into existence. In the origin of the flow or vibration, an accompanying sound must have been generated. Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge that the specific realms have their essential central sounds.

Sound by its nature has the quality to draw one to its point of origin. In reviewing the above, it is evident that creation continues to evolve through the sound. Logically, no other means is better than the sound for transcending the concealments (realms) of creation.

The Central Sounds of the various Realms cannot be spoken or articulated; they are non-spoken (inarticulate). The practice of *Nadanusandhana* (Yoga of Sound) works with these very inarticulate sounds. And due to the drawing power of sound, the practice of the Yoga of Sound results in reaching the highest realm.

The five Realms of creation (Gross Realm, Subtle Realm, etc.,) described above are the five concealments which connect and permeate the body (the microcosm) and the world (the macrocosm).



The Upper Nature or *surat* (consciousness) or Pure Conscious nature is extremely close to the essential nature of the Supreme Sovereign and therefore is perfectly suited for direct knowledge of the Supreme Sovereign. The essential nature of the Self is of a higher order than this conscious reality (Upper Nature) and is the superior of the two. Therefore, it can be said that the *ksetrajna* (the Self, the Unqualified, the knower of the body field) will experience the direct knowledge of one's own essential nature along with the essential nature of God. As long as the consciousness is within even one of the four Realms of Non-Conscious nature, it cannot experience nor attain direct knowledge of the Supreme Sovereign.

It is certain that Self (spirit) will have direct knowledge and realization of one's own essential nature as well as direct knowledge and realization of the Supreme Sovereign.

The Sound of the higher level naturally reaches far downward. Further, the flow of the subtle substance (Sound) is further than the flow of the gross substance (Sound), and naturally the subtle permeates the gross substance. This is natural in the order of creation: the subtle existing above and the gross existing below. Therefore, in the order of creation, the upper realms are subtler than the lower realms.

Subsequently, the sounds of the centers of the upper Realms are subtler than the sounds of the lower realms. Therefore, the sound originated from the center of the above realm and is sequentially grasped from the realm immediately under it. For example, the sound of the Subtle Realm can be grasped from the center or core of the Gross Realm; the sound of the Causal Realm can be grasped from the center or core of the Subtle Realm. The sequence progresses until the Divine Sound which originated from the center of the Realm of Pure Consciousness or the Supreme Sovereign will be grasped from the center of the Supra-Causal Realm. The consciousness drawn by the sound will meet with the Supreme Sovereign and after becoming one will lose its existence. This is the culmination



of the spiritual journey, the journey of seeking direct knowledge of the Supreme Sovereign.

The Original Divine Sound, which originated from the Supreme Sovereign, continuously without break reverberates throughout the hearts of the entire macrocosm and microcosm. The Sound will inherently go on for the duration of creation because the evolution of creation depends upon the existence of sound. Should the Sound cease so would creation. The ancient sages call this Original Supra-Cosmic Sound *Om*. The literature of Indian saints speaks of the Original Sound as the *Nirgun Ram Nam* (Unqualified All Pervading Sound), *Satyanam* (the Eternal Sound), *Adinam* (Eternal Word, the Name or Sound of the beginning) and *Sar Sshabda* (the Essential Sound). It is therefore useless to search the streams of the spiritual sounds outside oneself. This task of holding sounds will be accomplished through following the internal spiritual path under the guidance of a spiritual master.

Through the practice of meditation one can progressively move the consciousness inward within oneself. In the beginning the practice of subtle meditation is difficult to accomplish owing to its unfamiliarity. Through the initial practice of *Manas japa* (repetition of *mantra*), the mind begins to focus. Then one progresses to the subtler practice of *Manas Dhyan* (the form of deity) and prepares for the subtle meditation. Subsequently, through *Drshiti Yoga* one practices one-pointedness. Finally, through the practice of *Surat-Shabda-Yoga* (the Yoga of Sound) the transcending of all the realms is achieved.

In conclusion, as has been stated the microcosm and macrocosm are interconnected as they are completely permeated by the realms described above. Likewise, to go beyond all the realms is to go beyond all concealments. Further, in whatever realm the individual dwells, he dwells in that realm both in the microcosmic sense as well as the macrocosmic sense. In addition, if one ceases inhabiting one of the Realms, then he leaves behind both the microcosmic as well as the macrocosmic nature of that realm. Undoubtedly, when the realms of the body are transcended, so the realms of the universe are transcended.



The greatest Secret of the Supreme Yoga, Supreme Knowledge, Supreme Devotion, and the means to attain the Ultimate End have been described in brief.

(Translators note)

Section 106 deals with references concerning *Om* as the Essential Sound as occurring in other parts *Satsang-Yoga*²⁴. Section 107 also discusses references occurring in *Satsang-Yoga* concerning the importance of meditation on a *Saguna* (qualified) form of God. The goal of such meditation is to attain the *Nirguna* (unqualified) form of God, Liberation.

²⁴ *Satsang-Yoga* is the main treatise with four parts. *Philosophy of Liberation* is the fourth part of *Satsang-Yoga*.