

13 GURU OR THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE

1. The soul can only receive impulses from another soul, and from nothing else. We may study books all our lives, we may become very intellectual, but in the end, we find that we have not developed at all spiritually. It is not true that a high order of intellectual development always goes hand in hand with a proportionate development of the spiritual side in man. . . . This inadequacy of books to quicken spiritual growth is the reason why, although almost every one of us can speak most wonderfully on spiritual matters, when it comes to action and the living of a spiritual life, we find ourselves awfully deficient. To quicken the spirit, the impulse must come from another soul. The person from whose soul such impulse comes is called the Guru-the teacher; and the person to whose soul the impulse is conveyed is called the Shishya the student. . . .

2. The true preacher of religion has to be of wonderful capabilities, and clever shall his hearer be"; and when both of these are really wonderful and extraordinary, then will a splendid spiritual awakening result, and not otherwise. "I have crossed the terrible ocean of life, and without any idea of gain to himself, helps others also to cross the ocean." This is the Guru, and mark that none else can be a Guru.

3. It is a mysterious law of nature that as soon as the field is ready, the seed must come, as soon as the soul wants religion, the transmitter of religious force must come. "The seeking sinner meeteth the seeking saviour." When the power that attracts in the receiving soul is full and ripe, the power which answers to the attraction must come.

4. The real Guru is the one through whom we have our spiritual descent. He is the channel through which the spiritual current flows to us, the link which joins us to the spiritual world. Too much faith in personality has a tendency to produce weakness and idolatry, but intense love for the Guru makes rapid growth possible, he connects us with the internal Guru. Adore your Guru if there be real truth in him; that Guru- bhakti devotion to the teacher will quickly lead you to the highest.

5. If the Brahman is manifested in one man, thousands of men advance, finding their way out in that light. Only the knowers of Brahman are the spiritual teachers of mankind. This is corroborated by all Scriptures and reason too. It is only the selfish Brahmins who have introduced into this country the system of hereditary Gurus , which is against the Vedas and against the Shastras. Hence it is that even through their spiritual practice men do not succeed in perfecting themselves or in realising Brahman.

6. There are still greater dangers in regard to the transmitter, the Guru. There are many who, though immersed in ignorance, yet, in the pride of their hearts, fancy they know everything, and not only do not stop there, but offer to take others on their shoulders; and thus the blind leading the blind, both fall into the ditch. . . .The world is full of these. Every one wants to be a teacher, every beggar wants to make a gift of a million dollars.' Just as these beggars are ridiculous, so are these teachers.

7. There is nothing higher and holier than the knowledge which comes to the soul

transmitted by a spiritual teacher. If a man has become a perfect Yogi it comes by itself, but it cannot be got in books. You may go and knock your head against the four corners of the world, seek in the Himalayas, the Alps, the Caucasus, the Desert of Gobi or Sahara, or the bottom of the sea, but it will not come, until you find a teacher.

8. Get the mercy of God and of His greatest children; these are the two chief ways to God. The company of these children of light is very hard to get; five minutes in their company will change a whole life, and if you really want it enough, one will come to you. The presence of those who love God makes a place holy, such is the glory of the children of the Lord". They are He: and when they speak, their words are Scriptures. The place where they have been, becomes filled with their vibrations, and those going there feel them and have a tendency to become holy also.