

Kayr

**About the Path and
Travelers**

**Written down by
Anna Zubkova, M.A.**

**Edited and translated from Russian
by Dr.Vladimir Antonov**

**Corrector of English translation
— Hiero Nani**

Many lives I had to live to overcome the entire Path. And not everything in them was smooth. But both achievements and mistakes — they taught the main thing: I have managed to achieve the fullness of Mergence with the Creator — and this is the greatest Victory! It is called Nirvana, the fullness of Enlightenment or Self-Realization.

However the development of even Divine Souls continues endlessly. All We continue to improve Ourselves now.

How? What do I mean?

What I would like to explain now, is that what I was cognizing in not only my past when I was incarnate and followed the spiritual Path, trying — not once — to go through it to the end. But even now, I continue to collect experience and wisdom, participating in life and work with promising embodied disciples of God.

Many other Great Spiritual Masters take part in this work. They are Those Who have reached the cognition of the One Creator of the entire universe. Their Perfection, Their experience, Their knowledge are the basis of what I want to tell all people of the Earth.

Much of what, I describe now, was cognized by Me in My own incarnations. Much — I still watch and currently cognize.

I believe that it is very useful to know — for the travelers on the Great Path of Merging with the *United We*.

I am very pleased with the opportunity to share My knowledge! It is much easier to overcome the Path — for those travelers who already know about

what to encounter on it! After all, all the obstacles, which they encounter on the Path, are similar, and the ways of overcoming them are also similar.

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How to Take Our Lives in Our Own Hands

*“Every intention is blind when there is no knowledge.
All knowledge is vain when there is no work.
All work is fruitless when there is no love!”*
Khalil Gibran “The Prophet”

There were once two young men who were living in one poor village. They were friends. Their sad, almost beggarly existence among similar unhappy inhabitants, did not gladden them.

The soil in that area was not fertile. And moreover — year after year — droughts ruined almost the entire crop. Many people died due to diseases and hunger. And some men began to engage in robbery in order to feed their families.

But our young men were raised by their parents in good faith and did not want to offend other people.

However, a depressing existence in poverty, without hope for change to the better, was oppressing.

Their parents have already died, and so even caring for the elderly did not give meaning to their lives. And they did not hurry up their own families, seeing poverty and a sad existence around.

“So all life can pass... And nothing will change in it, if we ourselves do not begin to act! It depends

on us: what we spend our efforts and time on!” — one day one of them said to the other.

... And they decided to go on a journey — to seek happiness and a better life.

* * *

They walked for a long time. The settlements they met on the road — although slightly richer than their own — were not very different from it. Our young men wanted to find a place where they could really become happy.

They reached the big city. Noise, bustle, vast wealth of some people — and poverty of others — here were very close to each other.

Young men found employment — and they received money, which seemed to them even quite large. But it had to be quickly spent on housing and food — and it was necessary to earn money again and again through hard labor.

And happiness in their lives here was no more, than it was in their poor native village.

But now they had no time to be bored: they were always worried about how to make money, or how to spend less of it, or not being cheated or robbed.

And they have seen enough of cheating and deceit! And on themselves, it was not once experienced... Fortunately, their wealth was not great, so there were not great losses.

... One day, they witnessed the death of a young man: a fight broke out in the market due to

some deception — and it cost the life of one of the contenders...

Looking at the body of someone who has died being still so young, the young men thought that with them at any moment the same could happen. Death does not necessarily occur in old age. And therefore, it is not guaranteed at all that they have a lot of time to realize all their desires.

They have understood that from life in the big city they could not become happier. But they have become only... fussier.

... We have already discussed that our young men were raised in piety and good faith. They offered regular prayers to God, followed other religious rules and regulations, which were instilled from childhood. And now they began to think among themselves:

“Maybe we ask God for something wrong?

“Maybe we do not understand what He wants — both from us and from all people?

“Why are prayers unfulfilled for most people?

“Why is so much unjust and ugliness, if God is Justice and Beauty?

“Why so many sick, unhappy people?

“Why do some people bathe in luxury, while others drag themselves into a beggarly existence?

“Why does injustice reign everywhere, even among judges in courts, where only the pure truth should triumph?

“Why, for some, death occurs at a young age — but others live to feeble old age?

“And what is really worth wanting and achieving in life?”

They began to ask their questions to people who seemed to them clever. They turned to the gray-haired old men, asking what they had learned in their long years in this land: about the meaning of human life, about the purpose of good and evil, about the causes of inequality between people in material prosperity, in health or illness, in luck or failures.

But those old men could not explain all this to them. They said only that in all this is the Will of God...

... But one day, they were advised to go to the wise Master, who, most likely, would be able to answer all their questions.

* * *

They have reached that place late at night and asked to spend the night in the Master's house, where many of his disciples lived.

They were allowed to spend the night.

... How did they like everything here: both the cleanliness, and friendly smiles of the disciples, and the fact that they were sheltered without demands for payment! And calm and benevolent Master perceived by them as the height of perfection!

“How lucky we are! It's like in paradise, we have found ourselves! This place is — where it really is worth for living! We will stay here and become disciples of this Master!” — so they said to each other.

Next morning, after a meal, they asked Master some of their questions: about the misfortunes and injustices of this world, about the meaning of a person's life...

Master answered them:

“The body belongs to the ‘desert’ of this world. People here often spend their lives in pursuit of the mirage of wealth and glory, in the thirst for power and pleasure...

“But after all, man-soul, leaving this ‘desert’, cannot take even a handful of sand with him or her — no matter how much material wealth is accumulated in the world of matter!

“Only *how* a person has transformed him/her/self-soul, and that, which he or she has learned, that, he or she has mastered, — will remain with him or her in the ‘other world’.

“Lives of people on the Earth — with their ups and downs — are only at first glance full of injustice. But the destinies of people depend on so many facts and are intertwined into intricate patterns of many lives.

“How the fate of each person is formed — it is a long story. But the main principle is simple: ‘You always reap in your destiny the fruits of what you sowed and nurtured!’

“The fruits of some actions return to the person quickly, but the ‘ripening’ of others can be expected for a very long time. Sometimes this happens only in the next incarnation of the soul into a new body.

“Every time when the life in the body ends and a soul leaves it — a soul does not disappear and does not die. Life of a soul does not end with death of a body, but continues in the intangible world — until the time for a new birth in the body comes.

“And the true meaning of life of a soul on the Earth is not to pursue the mirages of the material

world, but the Path to God, Who is the One Lord of all worlds. This Path consists of cognition and of other aspects of perfecting.

“The soul is able to learn and master a lot of knowledge and skills.

“There are those qualities of a soul, which are useful in both worlds: material and immaterial. These are, above all, love, tenderness, care, forgiveness, gratitude, willingness to learn.

“All useful qualities can be developed in ourselves. Namely for this, each of us is in this world: in order to improve ourselves as souls.

“There are also those qualities that should be eradicated in ourselves. Because both in life on the material plane, and in life without bodies — these vices of the soul will bring nothing but troubles. These qualities are anger, irritability, violence, envy, resentment, desire to take over another’s, gluttony, deceit, lack of will, laziness, pride, and other manifestations of egocentrism. There are also smaller vices: for example, non-observance of esthetic norms of behavior.

“And one, who aspires to become better before the Face of God, can try to eliminate in oneself all those qualities of the soul that prevent this one from approaching God!

“We will understand that the events that surround us, into which we are involved or which we create ourselves, — can serve the main thing: it is our study from God.

“Yes, man can make the right choice in the purpose and direction of his or her life — and take his or her development and destiny in his or her own hands.

“After all, what purpose man will outline, — there the forces of the soul flow. And the more he or she strives for that goal, the faster the progress.

“Life only for the sake of entertainment and the satisfaction of whims — can seem simple and pleasant... But its result — if the whole lifetime was wasted on trifles — will be complete ruin...

“Each of the days of life on the Earth is a treasure, received from God! And you should not live without using it for developing you-soul and helping to improve other souls!

“Let us try to see the whole Path: from a small human soul — to the Divine Soul, living in Unity with the Creator!

“To get closer to God, it is necessary to advance namely consciously on this Path!

“The Path opens before those, who choose as the purpose and the meaning of their lives — God and service to Him.

“But, in order to be ready to enter the Path, one must first understand very much. Including, it is necessary to develop in oneself the ability to distinguish between good — and evil, necessary — and useless in life.

“And we must become sufficiently confident in the correctness of the made choice.

“In order to follow this Path, it is not necessary to ‘renounce the world’ and live in a monastery or in a single cell. Because the more experience the soul acquires, the better!”

... The young men listened to the Master’s response and were amazed at the opportunities opened before them. They asked permission to stay in order to learn from Him.

Master said that He allows them to stay for a while to understand: whether they really want and are ready to follow the Path of the Heart and whether their intention is firmly established. And at the end of the trial period, He will say whether they should stay at His house and strive to become His disciples.

On the Commandments of God and Purification of Souls

In the first days of the young men's life in the Master's house, He began to tell them about the difference between the rules of behavior invented by people — and the ethical Commandments of God:

“You asked me questions about injustice and suffering in this world. And today we will begin to search together for the answers to them.”

“Do you yourself not know the answers?” — the young men were surprised by the words of Master.

“I did not say that. But I would like you to make your own efforts to understand them, deeply think over it yourselves. And for this, it is not enough just to listen to Me and believe My words.

“Have you ever thought about the existence of those rules of behavior, which have been commanded namely by God?

“These rules exist and they are common for all peoples on the Earth.

“There are also some rules that are invented only by people. Such rules can be very different in these or those countries and in different religious traditions.

“Many times God’s Commandments sounded for people, being expressed in different words. You probably heard about them at least partially. We will talk more than once about these Commandments, but, briefly, the main of them can be formulated as follows:

“Love God — the Creator of all that exists!

“Love your neighbors!

“Do unto others, as you would like them to do unto you!

“Love all beings — the creatures of God!

“Be grateful!

“Do good! Do not do evil!

“Do not kill!

“Do not steal!

“Do not lie!

“Do not want another’s!

“Do not envy!

“Do not be angry!

“Do not be jealous!

“Get rid — as far as possible — of violence against other creatures!

“These ethical Commandments of God, intended for all people, were repeatedly brought to Earth by the Divine Messengers. Most of the religious Teachings began this way. But gradually, after the departure of the Messiahs and prophets, the Teachings became inverted into the dogmas of some priests. The meaning of the Commandments was distorted.

“Moreover, sets of rituals and rules had their origins not at all from God, but from those priests... The invented by them prerequisites allowed the priests to receive income for the performing of rituals. And even terrible religious wars arose more than once —

because the rules of worship to God, invented by different groups of priests, were different. And this served as the basis for the seizure of lands and wealth by the rulers of certain people — from other people.

“Such a distortion by people of the Divine Laws, according to which everything in the universe should develop, leads to a very deplorable formation of destinies for individuals as well as for entire human communities.

“It should be noted that the performance of certain rituals can be useful for beginners in religion. There are rituals that soothe the mind. There is also the benefit of overcoming fatigue, laziness, concern with the earthly: man accustoms himself or herself, performing rituals, to always remember God.

“Here, for example, for you, it helped not only to avoid becoming robbers, as some people from your village became, but it also prompted you to seek the Truth.”

“How do you know about this, Master? Can you see the past of any person?”

“It’s not difficult: God always opens the necessary knowledge before us!

“But now we will not be distracted from the topic. Believe only that what now seems surprising to you — will be very simple, when you yourselves learn this!

“This is similar to how a person, who does not know anything about the ability to write words with the help of letters and read them, will think that such skill is a miracle! But the one, who can read, does not see in this something surprising!

“Now we must think also about the following: why do people in most religious traditions, even knowing the ethical Commandments, do not execute them? Why do people not live as God commanded them?”

“This happens, first of all, because the rules of behavior, created and prescribed by the priests, are very much at variance with truly virtuous behavior!”

“There are, too, other reasons why the commandments of God are not fulfilled by many people. Even those, who would like to live righteously, do not always succeed. They cannot feel heart love to their neighbors, cannot resist the emotions of resentment or anger, condemnation or jealousy — even if they want to! They do not know *how* to defeat bad habits and emotions in themselves — and therefore they consider their sinfulness... natural and inevitable! And there is an opinion that ethical purity is the lot of only special persons: Saints and prophets, but not a rule for the life of everyone.

“... Souls come to the Earth many times... Long and hard they learn love and kindness, falling in love with each other, raising children, taking care of the destinies of the inhabitants of their country or of all humanity. They do a lot of mistakes that make their lives filled with suffering and disappointment...”

“But there are ways to purify and transform the soul, which can help that person, who wants to begin the spiritual Path.

“Throughout the history of existence of mankind on the Earth, there were such devotees, who — with God’s help — created methods that can quickly teach others to control their emotions and — as a result — live in heart love.

“You have always aspired to be righteous before the Face of God — and this is very commendable! But in order to truly experience, what is love for Him, what is happiness of life with such love, — it is necessary to purify the soul and body, and also to open the spiritual heart. Only then — one can stand before God and not be ashamed!

“... The first and primary way to begin purification of the soul is the acceptance and execution of ethical rules, which are commanded by God.

“But, in addition to understanding and acceptance of these rules, you can do simple exercises that will help in purifying bodily energies and in opening the center of heart love.”

Master offered to go out onto the terrace, from which a beautiful view of the neighborhood opened: the expanse, the beauty of nature! Everything was flooded with a gentle morning light, as if every smallest particle of air carried the energy of the rising sun!

Master continued:

“There is a very simple initial method of purification both of energies of the body, and the state of the soul.

“In many religious traditions, it is customary to perform ablutions. Yes, it is very useful to do this for the body — every morning!

“But it is possible to wash the body and soul in the same way with the Divine Light, similar to the morning sunlight.

“By this Divine Light, all the space is permeated! If you have not yet learned to see Him, you can ask God to help in this.

“Let us now ‘offer’ palms — and we will feel their fullness with shining Light, pouring as water!

And, with the help of the hands of the soul, connected with the hands of the body, you can wash your face with this Light.

“Then the movements of the hands of the soul can become wider. And this Light, pouring from above, can be taken again and again by the palms and poured on the body: from the head — to the soles of the feet. Let streams flow gently, washing the body and soul!

“You also can stand under the waterfall of this Light, so that we are washed and ready to live and work for God on this day.

“You can also raise your hands up, catch this Light in the palm of your hands, then ask Him to flow through all the cells of the body, fill all the corners of the soul — so that no dirt and darkness remain!

“We are filled with gratitude and love for God — for the bliss He gives!

“Find the place in the body where this bliss is born: it is about where everyone feels the center of him or her during a breath in.

“Further — we will try to give away love, peace, gratitude, tranquility from these centers — to all beings: the children of God who are around us. At first, we will embrace by love and peace those who are close, and then — we will send the waves of love and peace to all further and further!

“To begin with, you can help by hands of the body to send such waves of love. And then — gradually — it will be possible to learn to perform these exercises, acting only with the hands of the soul, which will become larger, stronger, more tender!

“Such exercises are easy to perform, but this does not make them less important or less useful on

the spiritual Path. Just do not be lazy in performing them every day.”

“And what: now we will have to do these exercises instead of the morning prayers?”

“You owe nothing! I suggest that you only master these exercises. And whether you need to continue to habitually address God, uttering the standard words, — let everyone decide independently.

“When you can talk with God directly — then you can ask this question to Him yourselves!”

“Talking with God?! Is it possible for ordinary people? Only the great Messiahs and prophets could speak with God!”

“Ask those who live in this house! And at the same time, let them help you master these new morning exercises,” — Master replied with a smile.

... The exercises were simple and surprisingly enjoyable! The young men mastered them with ease! Feelings of joy and purity in the soul after them were retained for a long time!

And when the older disciples showed and told how best to do all this, the young men were amazed that all this can be learned so easily! And that meant it is possible to master maybe even more! For example — to learn to hear and directly understand God! For this, we should transform ourselves as souls — and live such a wonderful life, as the disciples of Master live in this house!

On Desires and Happiness

One day a guest came to the Master's house for advice. He was a distinguished and rich man. He brought refined treats. And there was a festive table for everyone who lived in the house.

To the simple yet delicious food, which was always served in the Master's house, the delicacies, brought that day by the guest, were added in abundance.

The guest knew that both Master and his disciples were strict vegetarians, and therefore the treats that he brought were appropriate.

Our young men from poor families, who only recently began to live in the Master's house, were so amazed by this luxurious treat that they could not stop eating, barely listening to what Master was saying.

Such an abundance they had never seen: they had previously lived in poverty all their lives.

And they ate as much as they could! The food was so delicious! And, in fact, no one considered, how much they ate! And no payment was charged for the treat!

The rest of the disciples and the guest were engaged in conversation more than the meal.

Master in conversation, glancing several times at the beginners, hinted that excessive food can be damaging, even if it is clean and nutritious. But the young men were so fascinated by the treats they had never seen before that they missed these words and continued to focus on delicious delicacies.

Master spoke with the guest and disciples about whether the satisfaction of earthly desires brings happiness:

“Earthly desires lead the lives of many people for a long time.

“Yes, there are natural needs: such, for example, as a desire to eat; and they must be satisfied. But life only to satisfy our own selfish desires — does not bring happiness!

“If a person experiences joy only from getting pleasure of something material — then he or she easily gets used to this way of life. For example, the habit of having fun with wine drinking can lead to drunkenness. Man wants more and more joy — and, as he or she gets used to it, he or she uses more and more spirits. So it happens also with other substances that temporarily change the state of consciousness. And, if a person begins to want to receive more and more pleasure in this way, then he or she becomes a prisoner or even a slave of these desires. Such man can no longer resist drinking, smoking, gluttony, or other ways to appease oneself.

“How much people invented to get satisfaction from the material — you can not count! This is not only food made from the bodies of killed animals, not only stupefying and destroying the ability to think up things that can be either drunk or smoked, or taken otherwise.

“Objects of passionate desires are also jewelry made of gold and precious stones, palaces, ships, lands... And, if one wants for oneself more and more such, it always leads to sad outcomes.

“And this never leads to true happiness! Only a brief moment of satisfaction... — and a new desire seizes the soul!

“True joy can be born only from love, directed *from* the spiritual heart — *outside*: to other beings! It comes from the presence of God in the spiritual heart!”

“But, if a person is not yet ready to renounce the material world, what is to be done?” — the guest asked the Master.

“That’s exactly what we are talking about.

“Pleasures from delicious food and drink, from a clean and beautiful home, from harmonious sexual relations — are not harmful at all. They even give benefit, if moderation and harmony are observed.

“Agree that such satisfaction is incomparably better than poverty and a constant feeling of dissatisfaction because of it!

“There is also nothing wrong with having and bringing useful desires and intentions. But all such goals and desires should be pure and directed to benefit for this particular soul, as well as for other beings.

“And, if the implementation of such intentions brings good and joy not to oneself, but to other people — this makes a person even more happy!”

... Looking carefully at his guest, Master continued:

“There is nothing destructive or sad, if man, for example, inherited huge treasures or power. But it needs to dispose of what has been received — reasonably and for the benefit not only to oneself but for many.

“After all, everything, we own here, is temporary. It is given to us to improve ourselves and help others.

“It is not easy to use wealth wisely. But this should be learned.

“If you want, I will tell you, friends, the parable of the ‘lucky’?”

... All, anticipating the interesting, asked Master to begin.

“Once upon a time, there was one man who always and in everything was lucky!

“If he played cards or dice, he always won. If there was a disaster, he alone remained unharmed, while people around him received wounds and injuries. And everything, whatever he wanted, was very quickly implemented!

“For a long time, this man rejoiced at his luck and thanked God for patronage.

“But one day he thought about those who lost, when he won, about those who were injured when he was unharmed, about those who were close and yet could not find what they wanted...

“Good luck continued to fall on him, as from a cornucopia, but now it no longer pleased him the way he was before.

‘Maybe my luck can be used more profitably than just winning cards or dice, or achieving fame and success for any of my whims?’ — he thought.

“And the man decided to change his life!

“He came to the ruler of that country and said:

‘Apparently, I was born under a lucky star! I’m lucky in everything!

‘Great ruler, give me any difficult task — and I’ll try to fulfill it!

‘It’s not good that luck, falling on my lot, gives benefit only to me, and not all worthy!’

“... And he began to serve the good of the ruler and the whole country — as the ruler and his associates understood it.

“For a while, the ‘lucky’ was happy that he had found a worthy use of his life.

“But then he began to see and hear that winning in the war for one country — brings misfortunes to people of another, or that, because of his luck and success in the affairs of the state, some people get benefit — but others suffer from disaster and misfortune...

‘God, Who has created and loves all beings, does He want what I do? For what has He given me luck?’ — he thought...

“And then the ‘lucky’ left the civil service and decided to find the Sage who would explain to him: how best to spend the rest of life?

“Many people tried to stop him: ‘Are you not happy with your beautiful position in society and are you tired of your luck? It is said that people are not looking for good — from the good! Why are you otherwise, when all desirable is given to you so easily?’

“But the man decided to continue searching for the meaning of his life.

“He walked from one teacher to another — until he has found the True Teacher.

“The ‘lucky’ asked Him:

‘Why is my life full of luck, but the more I get, the less satisfying is what I achieve? Perhaps the purpose of my life is in another, if luck has ceased to satisfy me?’

‘You were righteous in your past life and did a lot of good then. Now you are reaping the fruits of those good deeds. That’s where your luck comes from!

‘And in this life you, from some time, wanted to share your luck and happiness with other people. And so success did not leave you!’

‘What is it for?’

‘Perhaps, in order for this moment to come — and so that you would have the thought: where should be directed my main efforts in this life?’

‘There is the true happiness, which is called Nirvana, Liberation, or Enlightenment. This happiness consists in obtaining the Unity with the Divine Consciousness. Then, when you achieve this, your help to others will become wise.’

“‘Lucky’ decided to test his luck on the Path to the Divine — and stayed with the Teacher.”

“And what happened to that man? Has he attained the Perfection?” — the guest asked Master.

“He studied — and became the real Teacher himself!

“He, Who has cognized the Highest Happiness, always seeks to give it to others!

“But this, unfortunately, does not happen often. Usually — only illnesses and other misfortunes lead people to understanding how they should change their lives...”

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At night — because of the excess food — both young men had stomachaches...

One of them said to the other:

“It is for shame to Master: could not He have guessed what would happen to us?!”

His friend answered:

“We ourselves are to blame... We should not have attacked food so greedily! But Master during lunch just said that everything should be respected in every way. And about food — he also spoke!”

“But he did not tell us that!”

“Why do you think that he did not want to warn us specifically?”

... The next morning they were pale and could not eat anything.

Master gave them a drink of decoction from medicinal plants.

He did not scold them, but said:

“It’s not enough to hear useful advice! But it is necessary to apply it in practice in your life!

“Do you know about the great Chinese Sage Lao Tse? He said: ‘Excessiveness in everything — brings trouble!’”

“No...”

“Then, I think, you should read something in our library.

“If you continue yesterday’s conversation about desires, then the most useful are the desires to know and act.”

Master asked one of the disciples to take the young men to the library. One of the rooms in the Master’s house was reserved for this. There on the shelves were stored in a special order books and manuscripts in different languages.

Seeing such a huge number of books, the young men were upset:

“We will not have enough life to read and understand all this! And then — time to implement the Teachings in practice will not be at all!”

“You do not have to read everything. But there are some books that every man must know, if he or she wants to cognize the Truth. It is important to have knowledge about different religious directions and to study the best books that set forth the Teachings of God. And it is very useful that the Teachings were set out in different books — in different words.

“And still — it is necessary to know a little about the device of the human body: about its internal organs, also about what diseases are and how they should be treated.

“Today you will have a very successful day for starting such training! Because of the frustration of digestion, you will not have enough strength to practice meditation.”

“How do you know what happened to us?”

“It’s very easy to see from your pained appearance. And today I have prepared for you, at the request of Master, a decoction, which is good and quick to help in such cases.

“But do not worry too much about what happened: after all, the experience of mistakes teaches us just like the advice of other people. The main thing is to try to avoid repeating mistakes twice!”

How to Choose Master — and Doubts

One day, Master invited the young men to go on a mission to a neighboring city to give his friend books and manuscripts.

“This walk will be very useful for you,” — Master said.

... When they were looking for the home of the Master’s friend, they asked the locals how to find it.

One man they met told them how to find that house.

Many people in those places considered the friend of their Master as one of the wise.

The man who showed them where to look for the house, also knew him, but did not share respect for the spiritual Masters.

He asked the young men such questions:

“Do you also decide to join the spiritual life? Native! I want to warn you: you’re wasting time!

“Once, when I was young, I was indulging in such dreams... I dreamed of achieving the spiritual Perfection, I believed that I would comprehend the Higher...

“Who, in youth, did not burn with exalted desires and aspirations? Who was not overwhelmed by the dreams of the great ‘Straight Path’?

“It was with me too. I even found a mentor. We meditated year after year. It seemed that just a little more... — and the desired Enlightenment would be achieved... But alas...

“And time went by! Meditations have ceased to please us, and they have become a routine of everyday life in which nothing has changed day after day, year after year... Everything was the same as in the world: only — hard work, which, moreover, did not bring either progress, or satisfaction!

“But, with age, I grew wiser: I have realized that in my unattainable aspirations I almost wasted my whole life in vain!

“And that mentor and his disciples — up to this day — are searching for the ‘Higher’ all the time of their lives! They continue their monastic life in the hope of some ‘Enlightenment’, depriving themselves of pleasure and any entertainment!

“I realized that I was missing *real life* in empty dreams of the unreal and beyond...

“These tales of spirituality are only a consolation for those who have not been able to achieve anything in life! So they build illusions about the ‘spiritual Path’ and say that this is the meaning of life...”

“But what about God? How is love for God? Did your mentor not teach you this?” — the young men were surprised.

“It’s all just words!

“And who told you that people, who call themselves spiritual Masters, are right? They themselves? And look: how many are they — these ‘Masters’, each of which teaches that only he is right! And every one of them disagrees with the others, because they consider their own teachings to be absolutely true!

“And why have you, naive, decided that you should devote your lives for God? What for?

“Look: some preachers say that God Himself wants people to come closer to Him through worship

and veneration, while others teach meditation and say that only in this way souls are perfecting, some others speak about cognition of God, others, on the contrary, say that God can not be cognized and people should only offer sacrifices to God and pray for His mercy... And there are even those who teach that you need only to believe that we are already perfect — and this will be namely Perfection!

“And which of them is right? Who knows what God wants from people — in reality? These teachers?... Or, maybe, God wants a very different thing: us to live here and just enjoy life?

“And do you believe in such ‘Masters’? Live with mine — and find out what really has a price!”

“And what about the Great Teachers Who have attained the Enlightenment?”

“That’s what they say — their so called achievements! And who told you that this is true? What can they — unfortunate ones — say when their whole lives are wasted? And those, who worship them, also make fairy tales about their miracles: because it is customary to worship something ‘holy’!

“Listen to my advice: live and enjoy, while you are young and healthy! Give up wasting time on nonsense and serving those who declare themselves ‘cognizant’!”

... The young men were confused... Doubts touched their minds...

Yes, their Master speaks beautiful and lofty words that seem fair and true. But how can we know, whether the Path that he talks about is true? What if they have found not a real Master? And what if all their efforts on the spiritual Path are not true and will not bring good results? And what if suddenly their

Master himself is mistaken and will lead them to a deadlock?

“How to verify that we are not mistaken? How can we know that our Master knows the Path to the cognition of the Divine Consciousness? He does not demonstrate miracles that would prove His Divinity, but only speaks words that seem wise to us. We did not even listen to the other Masters and did not compare his words to what others teach...”

... So, immersed in doubts, they talked until they came to the right house.

*** * ***

A friend of their Master joyfully met the young men who were still in doubt and confusion.

He invited them to wash and rest after a long journey, and he himself began to prepare the meal.

When the host and his guests were seated at the table, the young men ventured to ask their questions.

“Tell us, did you study only from one Master or listened to the speeches of different mentors?” — they asked.

“Oh! I had to see a lot of them in this life! I tried to learn from different preachers!”

“And how did you choose the Master whom you believed?”

“I chose not the Master, but God,” — after a pause for a while, he answered.

“In my wanderings, I always observed people who worshiped God in different ways, performed rituals, practiced various methods of immersion in meditation...”

“I looked at the crowds of admirers who caught every word of the mentor, admired him, and then heard of another guru — and fled to practice other methods to achieve Enlightenment, which supposedly would make them Perfect...”

“I watched the faces, the light in the eyes of the meditators, the worshipers — and of those who taught them. I looked at how the words of the mentors and their students corresponded to how they live, say, keep silent, act in their lives.

“These observations taught me a lot: I have realized that the main Teacher for all is God! He is ready to help anyone who sincerely aspires for Him. And He helps in accordance with the sincerity of a particular person and his or her willingness to comprehend every new step of the Path.

“I was convinced that only heart love allows one to gradually develop the ability to feel the Guidance of God.

“It is God Who helps man, which has rushed to Him, to find that what corresponds to the readiness of the soul. God teaches us to doubt and choose, learn from our mistakes and failures, love and show our loyalty, follow worthy mentors and leave those who mix Truth and falsehood, or only make profit on their followers!

“For example, now you are full of doubts as to whether your Master is good. You want to hear from me the confirmation that you made the right choice, learning from Him, and not from the others.”

“Yes... And how did you know?”

“It’s not difficult — to understand other people.

“But my opinion will not make your choice right or wrong. Your choice is your decision based on

your life experience! And, therefore, you should obtain namely this experience!

“Here — look: here is a variety of food in front of you. Now you will eat what you like, that is, what you choose. From this food, there will be energy for life — both bodies and souls. This food will *become you*.

“That’s the same — with spiritual food: it is transformed by the person who uses it. To one — it brings benefits aplenty, to others — less, and to some — it goes to the detriment. It depends on the choice of what we want to absorb from spiritual knowledge — and make our own knowledge. It depends also on the ability of each soul to realize the desired, and from diligence in mastering the received. Everyone chooses what seems to him suitable and desirable.

“Learn to think not lightly about the advice and teachings of others!

“And, including, do not take my words just for granted! Learn to distinguish between the good — and its opposite! Even your doubts will help in it!

“Do not follow even the most famous Master — just from imitating the crowd of his students!

“Gradually, gaining experience, each man learns to distinguish between useful — and harmful for directing the way of development that he or she has chosen...”

“You speak so wisely! Why do not you have students?”

“When my advice is useful to people, God leads them to me, just as he led you.

“But I do not consider myself to be someone who has the right to tell others — how to live. I have seen too much in my life of those who, by their vio-

lence and ‘compulsion to righteousness’, pushed people away from the Truth. And also, I saw a lot of those who self-confidently preach the truth and lie — mixed. The words about Truth are intertwined so closely with misunderstanding and with lie — that it is not easy to understand!

“One wise mentor suggested to spiritual seekers to be like ants who only can choose sugar from a mixture of sugar and sand.

“I myself follow that, what I feel with my heart to be the Truth, and I try to understand the guidance of God in everything. Over the years, I have learned this.

“I’ve seen a lot of mentors. It’s impossible to follow many of them at once. This is similar to the fact that it is not possible for a person to sail across the sea at once on several boats, even if they are sailing to the same place. Tinkering between the ways and trying one or another from the many practices — is so far only learning to distinguish.

“Anyone, who seeks the spiritual Master, should choose — as if choosing the captain, to whom this one is ready to trust in everything. A boat cannot make a successful journey, if the sailors do not follow the commands of the captain and are not obedient to his leadership!

“To choose that captain, who will lead the boat to the desired goal without getting lost on the way, without stranding, without crashing — it’s not easy. But in the team of such an ‘ark’ — it is easier to achieve the desired goal.

“It is also important to remember that Master, Who has reached the Goal, does not at all make His

disciples Enlightened. He only indicates the methods of perfecting.

“It is only in the world, visible with the bodily eyes, — if a certain vessel has reached the opposite shore, then all, who have been on it, have arrived.

“In the spiritual world, things are different. Usually the great Master manages to ‘take with Him’ only a few disciples. And the rest receive help only on a certain part of their personal developmental path. But with the next birth in the bodies — they have more opportunities. They can then very successfully continue and complete their evolution, or even become themselves gradually Masters who help others.

“Personally I — am not ready to entrust my spiritual progress to another man. I myself build my ‘boat’... Perhaps someday, I will want to recruit my own team... But, for the time being, I’m not ready to take responsibility for the fates of other seekers.

“Here — you brought me new books of your Master, and this for me is a great joy! I will read them with pleasure, and they will give me an opportunity to explore and build my own Path to the Goal, to comprehend the Divine Consciousness, Which is Uniform, despite the differences in names and religious teachings. But I do not call anyone to follow me, to do the same as I do.”

“Have you ever regretted that — instead of worldly pleasures — you have chosen the life of a spiritual ascetic?”

“There are people, for whom, what you call worldly joys, is the apex of their dreams. Such people do not yet need to master in-depth meditations. It is appropriate for them to live according to the laws of kindness, listening to their conscience, rejoicing in

everything beautiful in life, and striving to bring feasible help to surrounding people and other beings. It is better, if a person is just a baker who likes to bake bread, or a potter who enjoys his work — than an unfortunate imitator of those, who have dedicated their lives to the spiritual, serving God!

“If the monastic life does not bring joy and satisfaction in the comprehension of God, then the road that you have chosen is not yours, or you entered it prematurely!

“It is much more joyful for God to look at those who are happy from their feasible help to people and other beings in all goodness — than to those who fan their lives in fanatical sermons or bitter prayers!

“But those, who are already overcome by spiritual thirst, — they are striving for another! I myself have never regretted my choice. But this does not mean that you will not regret your choice too.

“Think for yourself: do you need God? Do you want to live for Him, not in a momentary rush, but all your life until the last breath? Do you want to master that, which you need for understanding and feeling Him always?

“If such knowledge is not dear to you, if souls do not burn with love for Him, — then you do not need to continue trying to learn it!”

“Oh no! We so like the practices that we learn! We really felt that there is a Living God — and it’s so cool! We want to cognize Him, to come near to Him!”

“Then why you have so many doubts?”

“It’s clear, we got infected with them, talking with one gentleman, when we were searching for your house. We were overwhelmed by doubts not about having to go through the spiritual Path, but

about the fact that we are going correctly... We are still so inexperienced, we only recently started to learn!”

“I think I know who you are talking about. His story is very sad but not original. His self greatly grew and strengthened, he ceased to feel love and God’s Presence in his life. He did not want to see in himself those problems and vices that were intensifying in him! And so, he began to struggle, with all his strength, to prove to himself and others that everything around was wrong! And now, he is disappointed with everything in life and tries to find for himself at least some excuses and consolations. That’s why, he condemns everyone and tries to forget himself in momentary pleasures! Unhappy, in offense at the whole world, — he now preaches that there is no sense to work on the transformation of the soul!

“But also appreciate how much good the meeting with this person and his speeches have brought you! You were thinking — due to it — about many so important things!

“So everything that comes into your lives, according to the Will of God, you can use for your progress, purification, for the cognition of the vast world in its entirety and other souls developing in it!”

* * *

The young men returned to the house of their Master joyfully after a conversation with His friend.

One of them said:

“Look: we have received confirmation from God in the fidelity of our choice!

“And our Master — He foresaw all this! Do you remember, what He told us? He already knew in advance how useful this journey will be to us! Do you remember how He said that those, who have attained Enlightenment, do not necessarily have to demonstrate their Divine Abilities to other people? And the older disciples of our Master more than once mysteriously smiled when they talked about His skills! Now I understand that He does not demonstrate His Divine Abilities to attract disciples and bring up faith in them! He teaches us all — the love for God and the ability to perceive the Divine Guidance. He teaches us to think on our own, not blindly believe Him or anyone else.”

“Yes, how wonderful it is! And this friend of Him, whom we were visiting, after all is studying from our Master, although he does not live with Him! If such man, already so wise, looks for advice and instructions from God through the books of our Master, then how lucky we are that we are close to Him and can learn from Him every day!

On the Value of Time

One year has passed since the young men began to live in the Master’s house.

Here was the certain order of an average day.

They got up — with the dawn. After hygienic procedures and a light breakfast — time was spent for spiritual work. Sometimes these were lessons of Master or one of the older disciples. For the remain-

der of the morning, the disciples themselves repeated the tasks previously received from Master.

In the afternoon, they usually worked in the garden and the vegetable garden, or by reading and re-writing books.

Some disciples, who came to Master from other countries, translated the texts into their native languages.

Our young men, at first, liked this life in the Master's house very much. They were filled with rapture from the first touches of Divine Love, Which they could sense from the simple initial exercises for opening the spiritual hearts.

... In the beginning, they followed everything with inspiration! But then... they began to be lazy.

To good — people get used quickly... And sometimes it happens that the good things in life... become ordinary — and then they stop appreciating.

When all the other disciples went to their rooms to perform daily meditations, our young men sometimes preferred to sleep. And no one scolded them for it and did not check how they perform the exercises!

And sometimes one of them began to boast about imaginary achievements in meditations — to show the others how successful he is!...

When everyone worked in the garden or in the kitchen, it happened that this work seemed “not spiritual” — and they only pretended that they tried but got tired, and, if possible, they avoided this work. Such a “dirty work” — they thought — was not needed for “spiritual ascetics”!...

They took for granted that they had nutritious food and shelter. And — they forgot about gratitude...

Master watched them sadly, but did not hurry to admonish them. The good that a person will do under duress was unlikely to benefit the souls! So he believed.

Master sometimes washed the dishes himself after a common meal or undertook to fertilize and dig the vegetable beds when the young men pretended to be very busy with more important matters...

Master was waiting for a convenient moment to explain how sad the fate of those who stopped in their spiritual development due to laziness and narcissism. And also — of those who have ceased to make efforts to transform themselves — into the souls shining with love.

And after all, if a person does not perform the normal affairs of good in everyday life or performs them with unwillingness and disgust, — then what spiritual work can be talked about?

The young men were sometimes embarrassed by the Master's strict views, but did not rush to look for the cause of his discontent *in themselves*.

Boredom began to appear in their lives from satiety with well-being and because of the extinction of love...

* * *

In one of these days, when the young men were especially lazy, an old man had come to the Master's house.

He walked, heavily moving his legs, hunched over, like a heavy load of past years and life's prob-

lems and of disappointments, weighed him to the ground.

This man has not achieved much in life, and what he managed to find — it became just a load of new worries, and it did not bring him happiness.

One of the Master's disciples said to the young men, looking at this man:

“Yes, when the life is lived almost to the end, — only then many people start to think about the fact that they did not live it the way it was necessary to. But they have nothing to help already... Here — the old man came to Master for advice and help, and what can you do when death is already ‘knocking at the door’? Look: it’s so sad — and rejoice that you still have strength and time!”

... And Master spoke with this old man for a long time, and when the guest left after the conversation, his eyes shone with hope. Even his gait was easier, he straightened, as if he had managed to lose load, which bent him to the ground, in which the body soon will rest...

“Tell us, what did You tell this old man?” — the disciples asked Master, being surprised by the change that happened in the visitor.

Master invited everyone who was interested in this conversation to discuss this topic:

“Despondency is often inherent in old age. In old age, a person can not entertain oneself with hopes for the future, because this ‘future’ has already come close, and it is such, as man built it for all his or her life. And what awaits after the death of the body — usually people do not know, and this frightens them.

“In old age, a person can no longer console oneself with dreams: ‘I will have time to accomplish this, I will make it, I will reach it!’ Both diseases and bodily infirmities are added to that...”

“We thought that such a person could no longer be helped. But You — as if resurrected in him youth and hope! What did You say to him, Master?”

“The fear of the unknownness of posthumous existence makes many people — young and even elderly — try to not think about the inevitability of death of the body. When the death of the body occurs to another from their environment, then people try to drive away the thought that death awaits their bodies. ‘It will not happen to me soon!’ They try so to console themselves.

“And, having lost all hopes for the future, people begin to indulge in regrets about the past, blaming themselves and others for ‘everything is so bad’...

“Sadness and despondency are the best way to squander in vain also that little residual time, to lose the last forces in negative emotions...

“For each person — young or old — the principle should be relevant: there is no spare time in life, there is no time for idleness, laziness, and meaningless vain cares!

“The death of the body does not always come in deep old age. Therefore, every day should be ‘expensive’, filled with joy from the spiritual transformation of oneself and the accomplished deeds of good in relation to other beings.

“It can be small and simple — at first glance — deeds, and not always it should be just meditation. If all deeds that help people are done with love, then

this is already a great good in the sense of a favorable fate formation! Such a person, including, creates around him or her a space of love, peace, joy, harmony. All surrounding beings feel this, even if they do not understand the reason why they feel good! And all the fruits of the work of such a person carry in themselves particles of the energy of love, like the fruits of plants, saturated with sunlight!

“There are *feasible opportunities* to transform oneself — for any soul.

“That’s what I tried to tell the old man. Also I told him that beyond the threshold of death of the body — man-soul does not die. Also — that righteous intentions, the desire not to harm anyone and do only good deeds — even in the last days of life — change the posthumous existence and the fate which will be in the next earthly life.

“We have talked a lot with you about the formation of destinies.

“And here is the understanding that the conscious aspiration to God, to Good, and Light — even at the end of life — can be very significant, helping the person to gain an understanding of how to build his or her life now!

“You can always start living in the ‘moment now’ and try to use every moment of life productively, no matter how many of such moments are ahead: many or few.

“It is important for each of us: to do the best that we can — right now! Do it with joy and full dedication, investing love and soul power in the creation of harmony, peace, beauty, purity, kindness, and wisdom!

“This is appropriate in large cases and in the smallest, at first glance! Even with our emotions — which are the states of the soul — we create what we give to this world, to all beings around. We create and give away either a space of joy and harmony — or anguish, discontent all around, condemnation, and suspicion...

“And it always depends on us!

“And all this is always known to God!

“Did you pay attention to the fact that senility, despondency, laziness, lack of will, and other manifestations of extinction can begin much earlier than the time when the matter of bodies grow old?

“Sometimes already at a very early age, there is a stop in the development of the soul. After completing studies at school, having created a family, having gained a certain ‘position in society’, or imagining oneself ‘the successful spiritual ascetics’ — people very often cease to develop themselves intensively, they lose purpose in life and live only ‘by inertia’... This is the beginning of senility.

“When the speed of the development of the soul fades away — then the body also grows old before its due time.

“There are also opposite examples, when the intensity of spiritual life does not stop even when the time of death of the body has come. There were scientists and physicians who, even in the process of the body dying, monitored what was happening, and tried to give this experience to other people.

“It is worthy before God: to share with others the wisdom and love! If life is lived this way — then old age and death of the body do not terrify!

“It makes sense to accumulate just such indestructible by death treasures of the soul! Because *then* the man-soul becomes composed of these qualities — Love, Wisdom, Purity, Power!”

... The young men that evening came to Master and with repentance told of everything that they understood about their vices that day.

“Forgive us!

“How, as it turns out, we quickly got used to the good and stopped appreciating what we get from You!

“How easily we forgot about the joy of labor for the sake of others!

“How inconspicuously the usual execution of exercises was deprived of emotions of love for God!

“How imperceptibly for ourselves, we began to perform meditations only in order... to be proud of our skills!

“We will try to improve!”

“Yes, it’s good that you understood this yourselves, without waiting for My reproaches or ‘blows of fate’, with which God reminds of the value of incarnate life, about the importance of heart love, without which even the most ‘prosperous life’ is empty and has not a lot of sense... And then — even the most correct techniques of meditation are not useful, but they only nurture egocentrism and self-conceit!”

Sculptor

Once a famous sculptor came to visit Master, whose works were admired by so many.

He told Master:

“You probably do not remember me. We met only once, when I was still a teenager. But your words have changed whole my life. And I remember that our conversation verbatim.

“I consider myself as your pupil and I dream to learn from you in the future. It was you, who taught me the basics of mastery in my work, even though I later learned from many sculptors.

“And the sculptor showed Master a fragment of a vessel — a small crock:

‘I’ve kept this thing since!’

“But I’ve never taught anyone to sculpture,” — Master said with a kind smile.

... Then the sculptor told Master and His interested disciples, gathered around, the story from his life:

“Since childhood, I’ve been very eager for God. In those parts, where I lived, during the great religious holidays people brought their gifts to the temples. We lived very poorly, but I, the child, wanted to do something for God too!

“And so, I brought a bowl to the temple, which I made of clay myself. This my creation was very imperfect. But I tried so hard! I tried to put all my love for God into my work! I so wanted my gift on the holiday — also to be pleasant for Him!...

“Then I still did not understand that God does not need material gifts! And I dreamed my cup to be accepted by the servant of the temple.

“But that minister refused to accept my gift. Moreover, he ridiculed me:

‘Do not insult the temple and God with your pathetic offering! Do you really think that this curve and

worthless stuff might be interesting to anyone? You insulted God and us, clergymen, with such a 'gift'! Do you really think that God can like this?

“And with these words, he threw to the floor and broke the cup into pieces and angrily began to trample them with his feet.

‘Get that garbage out of here!’ — he shouted at me.

“... I collected the fragments and went away...

“I then thought that he trampled all my love, trampled me like a soul, destroyed all the best in me...

“I walked with my head down and could not hold my tears...

“All the people had fun on the square in front of the temple... And it seemed to me that I was banished, punished, forever deprived of hope... As if everything good in me was broken, like a tender sprout, — rudely and cruelly...

“Suddenly you appeared near, Master. You told me then:

“Don't be sad! Of all the gifts, which were brought to the temple today, your cup was most liked by the Divine Teacher, to Whom this temple is dedicated! And He poured a drink from the Light into it — and drank it and treated Those Who knew the essence of the truly Holy Gifts.”

“How do you know?” — I asked.

“You answered:

‘I was there and I saw it. And I also drank from your cup.’

“How is this possible? That cup was broken into small pieces?!”

“In the non-material worlds, where the Light and Compassion reign supreme, it is impossible to destroy that what has been created with love. Even imperfect verses and prayer songs can be heard there, if they are uttered with a pure heart filled with reverence and love.

“For God, is important the state of the soul in which the gift is created. After all, there are no material objects in that world! Only non-material images can be manifested there in the Light — on the approaches to the *Depths*, in which there is no division into names and forms.

“But, if someone wants for other embodied people to be happy from using the beauty of human creations, then it makes sense to master the corresponding direction of art. The more perfect is what was done, the more joy and benefit it will bring to people!

“God is the Highest Perfect Consciousness. It consists of Multitude of Souls, Who have reached the corresponding level of the Perfection — and therefore have merged in Oneness with Him.

“And whole the Creation exists just to give people and other beings the opportunity to cultivate, to learn the Perfection.”

“... Oh, how important it was for me to hear this! Like a life-giving balm healed a wounded soul!

“We then went for a long time on the market and looked at the beautiful in the creations of artisans, talked about beauty and harmony in objects and in souls.

“You told me then that my cup was beautiful exactly due to the love with which I did it, but its appearance was far from the perfection.

“Although there is an opportunity to do material — also beautiful. It must be done so that harmony and grace delight the eyes, and the love, with which the thing has been made, nourished souls.

“We then approached the market square, and you bought delicious pies.

“Oh! I remembered all this forever: Your wisdom, Your kindness, and even the taste of those pies...

“You then said that the woman, who baked this food, did it with love. She used both good flour and fine apples for filling, and her ability to bake on fire was in the measure. It was a wonderful taste! And in this food, there is good for both the body, and the soul. Including, the particles of love energy of that woman filled us, when we ate her products.

“But it would not be enough for us only her love, if, for example, apples were not tasty, or if the flour was rancid, or if the pies were raw or burnt. Is it so?

“Simple, at first glance, the ability to cook food, allows to improve in this art. Similarly — and in any work that brings good to the surrounding beings, you can strive to achieve more and more excellent results. In this case, the creator of each work should consider it multifaceted, looking at it from different angles.

“Serving other people with one’s work, helping them in all good, one perfects oneself — as the soul.

“Then — this perfection can be continued with the help of special meditative techniques, but you will find out about this later.

“Yes, it’s good when people are surrounded by beautiful things, nutritious food, when clothes and homes are clean and beautiful!

“But, most importantly, it is the beauty and perfection of souls! It is our main work for God, which we can do every single day of our lives!

“Each of our actions can bring harmony, beauty, kindness, love, peace to the world! It can be both words and deeds, and even kind thoughts and emotions. Through this — the souls become more perfect and help to improve those who live around.

“Look — how are beautiful these flowers, birds, grass, trees! These are the perfect creations of God!

“But... here is a trunk of a living tree mutilated by an ax... And here is a bouquet of flowers thrown to the ground... These flowers died before time — instead of producing seeds and giving life to other beings as beautiful as they are...

“... It makes sense to improve ourselves in all goodness, what we do, in everything that we give to the world, including all kind beings around us.

“Through this, including, we ourselves — as souls — are becoming more and more perfect — to approach the Perfection of our Creator!

“Any work for the good of people and other kind creatures can help the development of beauty and perfection of souls — both ourselves and them!

“Namely, this is the main task for which we all are on the Earth!

“We pass — after life here, in the material world, — to life without bodies which we leave. There — we sum up before God, as if we are naked from all outer covers — such as we have become during the

time of schooling in the *school* of life here, in material bodies!”

“... Since then, I have longed to fulfill, what I heard from You, — in my life. This allowed me to work with great inspiration! I also tried to teach my young students the same.

“But I remembered that you did not tell me everything that time. Now I again ask you to teach me how to approach the Divine Perfection!”

“Well, I’ll be happy to help you to take the next steps on your Path!” — Master answered joyfully.

On Disputes

The young men, trained by Master, at first, usually had a similar opinion about everything that they heard from Him and read.

But gradually — as their outlook expanded in the process of acquiring new knowledge and developing independence in thinking, — they sometimes began to disagree in their opinions and assessments of events or written material.

And it began to happen that their disagreements in opinions began to grow into heated debates, which sometimes ended in insults. Usually friends soon reconciled again, but such situations were repeated again and again... Once they turned to Master with a request to judge in future: which of them is right in the next heated debate.

Master answered them in an unexpected way:

“Do you know that the excessive insisting on your opinion in a conversation is a manifestation of the vice of violence?”

“Violence over the thoughts of another person, forcing others to think the way I think, is one of the very negative manifestations of egocentrism!”

“Have you thought about this?”

The young men were silent in embarrassment. They did not evaluate their verbal arguments from this perspective.

Master continued:

“To express a point of view that is different from the interlocutor’s opinion, it is possible only in a state of love and respect for that person. And you should also understand that the interlocutor has the right to disagree with your opinion.

“Because we all here want to be like-minded in the main principles that unite us, it is very important to learn not to invest the power of negative emotions in such disputes concerning an insignificant point.

“We should insist on our correctness only in exceptional cases! But you have acquired the habit of arguing on insignificant problems and topics.

“Only in those cases when mistakes of your friend can seriously harm him or her, or other people — it is necessary to show firmness in the statement of your position. This confidence in the correctness of such words and actions will be confirmed by the approval of God, which you will learn to feel.

“If you learn the habit of arguing over trifles, then, when it comes to really important matters, your opinion will not be heard and taken into account. The habit of always objecting to the interlocutor is very bad!

“A reluctance to listen to another point of view, as well as an attitude to an opponent, who thinks differently than you, as to an enemy or a fool, — this shows the extreme degree of your egocentrism!

“Develop a habit of self-observation, self-control!

“Sometimes the desire to object to the interlocutor is not manifested in words, but only in the accumulating mental and emotional objection. This accumulation of the negative inevitably leads in the future to conflict situations. Take note of your own such shortcomings!”

“But what should I do if I really do not agree with him?” — one of the young men asked.

“God gave people free will! This includes the freedom to think and evaluate what is happening — in accordance with the level of development, on which the soul is. This freedom of will of everyone should be respected!

“Only if the thinking of the interlocutor seems to you harmful and dangerous for others — it makes sense to try to stop or correct a friend. But all this should be done in emotions of peace, love, and respect!

“If you cannot respect and love those people, with whom there are protracted conflicts, — it makes sense to stop this communication. And even in this case there should be no contempt, disgust, and hatred. It’s just that people separate and get each in his or her lives new lessons from God — according to how they will live on.

“Violence in the field of thinking is very interesting and it should be deeply understood and studied.

“It is important to develop in oneself, including, the ability to admit one’s own error, the ability to ‘surrender’, to permit the ‘clever self’ to be defeated, to recognize oneself as wrong. We must also learn to look at the problem or situation — through the eyes of the interlocutor, learn to understand how he or she thinks. It is also important to be able to calmly and reasonably express your opinion. This is what you need to learn during such discussions. All this develops the ability to think independently and, at the same time, to understand others not superficially.

“It is useful to be able to do this — not only for zealots who have risen on the spiritual path. This is also important for a harmonious life together in families or in other small or large communities of people.

“And even in the relationships between states, it would be very useful and could be named as a wise policy. It is a pity, however, that politicians and diplomats usually use the ability to understand the train of thought and recognize the far-reaching plans of actions of interlocutors — only to deceive opponents and to obtain conformation in ‘victorious superiority’ over... the allies.

“Very often bloody wars between peoples are due to the ambitions and disputes of politicians who do not want to see the situation wider than the interests of one or several persons, do not take into account the possible disastrous consequences for the remaining very many people. Such politicians also do not think about the great gravity of the karmic consequences that they themselves bring into fates in their present and future incarnations.

“We must understand that if some people are of large volumes of consciousnesses and have great

willpower, then their thinking and convictions influence very much small souls. Such leaders easily begin to control the thinking of the crowds, subordinating, paralyzing with their brute strength other people's weak ability to think and distinguish critically.

"It's sad to see when such leaders use their power to subordinate to themselves the thinking of other people — for their own material gain or fame...

"The same can be observed in relation to some religious leaders.

"That is why on the spiritual Path it is so important to learn to monitor and suppress the desire to subordinate the thinking of other persons even in insignificant manifestations."

"Why, Master, did not You immediately forbid us to argue with each other?"

"One should develop in oneself the ability to think, to understand others, to have one's own point of view — but not blindly obey the opinion of others, even those who have influence and authority. I'm not happy if my students just take everything that I'm saying or everything that they read in my books on blind faith — and do something in one or another way not because they agree, but because of fear of being among those of whom I am not satisfied.

"Now, I hope, you saw the situation multifaceted — and not simply due to obedience will act faithfully, but you will be able to develop in yourselves the qualities of love, care, and wisdom while mastering the abilities to think, speak, and listen independently."

[The translation will be continued.]