

The Silver Cord

The silver cord is the most delicate connection of the physical body with the higher planes. It comes along with us when we assume the physical body, and when we finally have to leave it, the silver cord is broken. Its span of life is the same as that of our physical body. While Saints leave their bodies regularly at will during their lifetime, you will find that other persons - with few exceptions - do not leave their bodies during their earth lives. Other persons cannot leave their bodies at all.

So in the case of earth-earthy people who never get the opportunity of being at the feet of a Saint, who have never known what it is to die while living, the silver cord remains untouched, and it functions only once, and that occasion is what we call death. But in the case of those who have learned the art of dying while still alive, and who in fact may die many times a day, the silver cord continues to function regularly because they temporarily leave the body, go to the higher planes, and still maintain a connection with it. They come back into the body any time they want. It is very subtle and very delicate; the silver cord is the sublime connection between our physical body and the higher planes. Most people never learn how to die while living. They do not learn to die so that they may begin to live, and, in their case, this cord remains untouched. This cord is never used, and it is broken suddenly at the time of death. It is most unfortunate.

The silver cord is like a cord on a lyre or a stringed instrument which has only one string - we have such a musical instrument in India which we call ektara. Sometimes our Beloved Master used to sing to its accompaniment. He sang very rarely, but I had the good fortune of hearing him singing to the ektara. The word ektara means an instrument with one cord. As a musician plays on it with his finger, he starts with a very delicate touch, very soothing and low-toned, and gradually the tempo goes on increasing until it reaches a climax when even the movements of the finger playing on the instrument are not visible. The tempo and the motion of the finger are so fast that you cannot see where the finger is.

Our Beloved Master had written a play, and he proposed that a full length film should be made of it featuring Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj. He had completed the script, with the approval of Hazur, including the scenario and the songs. As you know, the scenario involves the entire production, and he had even indicated the background music to be used. But, unfortunately, that proposal never went through. In this film our Beloved Master had a very important role to play which involved singing also. He practiced for quite a while singing those songs on the ektara.

I was telling you that the silver cord which is never touched remains in waiting all the time, the first time it is struck becomes the last time because it is struck hard with the rod of the Angel of Death, and it breaks. How very unfortunate! The silver cord is meant to be played upon; the silver cord is meant to produce melodious symphonies. This sacred cord is meant to enchant us with rapturous music, but in the case of most people who do not have the good fortune to reach the lotus feet of a Master, it does not produce any music. Its very existence does not serve any purpose, and its end is so abrupt, so heartbreaking, so painful, so torturous and so jarring that we can only pity its lot. Whereas in the case of others who have the good fortune of being at the lotus feet of a God-personified man, a Godman, they, at least sometimes, rise above body-

consciousness. And whenever they rise above body-consciousness, that silver cord is touched by the most delicate and most subtle finger, and it produces a life-inspiring sound of music. If the disciple is a little more lucky and rises above body-consciousness quite often, the same cord produces more rapturous, more enchanting tunes. And in the case of Masters, who are commissioned from God to take back Home the separated human souls which have been undergoing stress and strain, trials and tribulations for trillions and trillions of years, it is being played upon by the Godly Finger every moment.

Our Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji would sometimes tell us that the condition of a Saint is just like the bird in Indian mythology which is blessed with the divine gift of flying from earth to heaven in the twinkling of an eye. Every time a Master Saint goes above body-consciousness this cord produces Celestial Music, as it is touched by the Heavenly Finger. And, as you know, if a musical instrument is being used regularly it remains in form, it gives out ecstatic melodies. But if a musical instrument - in this case that with only one cord - is lying unused in some stray, dark, unperceived place, then in due course of time it gets rusty and brittle.

Kabir Sahib has said that we are sleeping all the time and we wake up only when the rod of the Angel of Death strikes our heads. So in the case of the unfortunate people falling into this category, this cord is struck only once by the cruel rod of the Angel of Death, and the cord breaks with a jarring sound, and that jarring sound symbolizes the pain, the anguish, the restlessness and convulsions which are connected with the physical death of an ordinary mortal. But in the case of Saints, and even in the case of their disciples who rise above body-consciousness and soar into the higher planes through the grace of their Master, the instrument always remains in working order. And since it is in working order, every time the Divine Finger touches it, it becomes more and more subtle and refined, and at the time of the final touch, without any pain, it just lets loose with its absorbing music. That music alone gives us bliss, tranquility, peace and immortality, according to the various phases and stages through which the disciple is passing.

In the case of the first category of persons it gives pain and torture, which is symbolized by the jarring sound. But in the second case - of course, varying in different degrees - it produces enchanting music, and then having served the purpose for which it was created, it merges itself into Eternity with a melody in accordance with its own spiritual attainment.

Even in the case of a disciple who has not been able to leave the body at will, the moment he is initiated the Eternal Music gets into his veins, into his very pores, although it may be unperceived and unheard. And although the disciple has not been able to leave the body during his lifetime, the Master who is God-personified and is the fountainhead of all music, showers his grace on his disciple at the time of his physical death. Our Hazur used to tell us that the seed of initiation, once sown, never goes to waste. It must yield fruit, and that fruit is immortality, that fruit is becoming one with God, that fruit is merging the soul with the Ocean of All-consciousness.

It sometimes happens that a person who is ill may go to a doctor and leave the prescribed medicine on a shelf, but he starts recovering without it because the doctor has examined the patient and felt his pulse; his touch was so reassuring, so sublime that there was no need for the medicine. Anybody who has been initiated into the Mysteries of the Beyond may well be compared to such a person whose pulse has been felt by a compassionate doctor, for at that time something sublime has been infused into the disciple.

Even if the disciple might apparently leave the Path, the Master is all compassion and all grace; he is all the time sitting within the heart and soul of the disciple. When the call to leave the

body finally comes, what comes into play is the compassion and the grace of the Master no matter what the disciple has done during his life. And the Master, through his grace and his compassion, gives the sublime touch to the silver cord which produces a rapturous melody. In that state of ecstasy, in that state of bliss, the disciple finally leaves the body and goes to the higher regions of Light and Music; then the silver cord ceases to function.

Just see how clearly this has been described in the Bible:

*Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl
be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the
wheel broken at the cistern.*

*Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was:
and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*

(Ecclesiastes 12:6-7)