

If the student has a burning anxiety for Liberation from his known weaknesses, if he is meek and ready to follow the prescribed path and the necessary discipline, then the Teacher is asked to initiate him into the path of knowledge.

These qualities are, no doubt, quite essential but we must also note that they are all external attributes of daring and readiness to act. Since spiritual seeking is not the march of an army, a mere outward discipline in itself will not suffice. It requires of the student some mental and intellectual qualities, and therefore, it is insisted that he must be well disciplined in his sense impulses and equally well-balanced in his mental make-up.

Even if a man is well restrained and his mind does not get agitated with low thoughts of sensuousness, the philosophy being so subtle, it is not possible for a layman to understand it immediately, in all its deep significance. If the Teacher is impatient and has not the kindness to repeat even for the hundredth time, if need be, with equal love and consideration, the student will not be benefitted by the Teacher. So the Teacher should take up the job of initiating the student with extreme kindness. He should not forget that he himself was once a seeker and had his own quota of doubts and difficulties. If the Teacher is not divinely kind and godly in his sympathies, the relationship between the Teacher and the taught will be strained and the student will never find proper guidance for his progress on the spiritual path.

The word kṛpā has, unfortunately, no corresponding word in English. It is not merely 'kindness' nor is it a superficial sympathy. At best, we can say that it is an attitude of sympathy cooked in kindness, honeyed with love and served on golden platters of understanding. A man of bad temper and extreme impatience, lacking in sympathy, tolerance and kindness cannot ever become a true Teacher, no matter what his claims to nobility and depth of experience are.



श्रीगुरुरुच

मा भैष विद्वंस्तव नास्त्यपायः संसारसिन्धोस्तरणेऽस्त्युपायः ।
येनैव याता यतयोऽस्य पारं तमेव मार्गं तव निर्दिशामि ॥ ४३ ॥

śrigururuvāca

*mā bhaiṣṭa vidvāṁstava nāstyapāyah saṁsārasindhostaraṇe'styupāyah,
yenaiva yātā yatayo'sya pāram tameva mārgam tava nirdisāmi.* (43)

43. *The Guru said, "Fear not, O learned one! There is no danger for you. There is a way to cross over this ocean of change, I shall instruct you in the very path by which the ancient ṛsis walked to the beyond."*

The perfect disciple, having duly reached the Master's feet, expresses his fears that he will never be able to grow out of the disturbing concepts of time and space which provide for him experiences of unending sorrows of finitude. Things change in their relationship to both time and place. Objects remaining the same, they, with reference to different conditions of time and place, react upon the same individual differently. These pluralistic experiences produce agitations in the mind and that is indicated in verse 40 by the word, 'saṁsāra duḥkha'. When the student reached the Master, he despairingly requested him, 'Condescend to save me, O Lord! and describe in full how to put an end to the misery of this relative existence.'

The Teacher now gives the answer to the student's question. Psychologically, when a questioner is extremely upset because of some fear or agitation in his mind, he is not in a mood to receive any philosophical idea, even when elaborately explained. Therefore, a sympathetic Teacher, if he knows what he is about, will first of all, pacify the student and give him hope and spiritual solace. Then alone would he become fit to receive the logical conclusions arrived at by a fully rational philosophy. Most fittingly then, the Master with paternal consideration and love, assures the student that what he fears, is only a myth.