

~Other Speakers S-Z: Sadhu Sundar Singh:**First Vision**

Once on a dark night I went alone into the forest to pray, and seating myself upon a rock I laid before God my deep necessities, and besought His help. After a short time, seeing a poor man coming towards me I thought he had come to ask me for some relief because he was hungry and cold. I said to him, "I am a poor man, and except this blanket I have nothing at all. You had better go to the village near by and ask for help there." And lo! even whilst I was saying this he flashed forth like lightning, and, showering drops of blessing, immediately disappeared. Alas! Alas! it was now clear to me that this was my beloved Master who came not to beg from a poor creature like me, but to bless and to enrich me (2 Cor. viii.9), and so I was left weeping and lamenting my folly and lack of insight.

Second Vision

On another day, my work being finished, I again went into the forest to pray, and seated upon that same rock began to consider for what blessings I should make petition. Whilst thus engaged it seemed to me that another came and stood near me, who, judged by his bearing and dress and manner of speech, appeared to be a revered and devoted servant of God; but his eyes glittered with craft and cunning, and as he spoke he seemed to breathe an odour of hell.

He thus addressed me, "Holy and Honoured Sir, pardon me for interrupting your prayers and breaking in on your privacy; but it is one's duty to seek to promote the advantage of others, and therefore I have come to lay an important matter before you. Your pure and unselfish life has made a deep impression not only on me, but upon a great number of devout persons. But although in the Name of God you have sacrificed yourself body and soul for others, you have never been truly appreciated. My meaning is that being a Christian only a few thousand Christians have come under your influence, and some even of these distrust you. How much better would it be if you became a Hindu or a Mussulman, and thus become a great leader indeed? They are in search of such a spiritual head. If you accept this suggestion of mine, then three hundred and ten millions of Hindus and Mussulmans will become your followers, and render you reverent homage."

As soon as I heard this there rushed from my lips these words, "Thou Satan! get thee hence. I knew at once that thou wert a wolf in sheep's clothing! Thy one wish is that I should give up the cross and the narrow path that leads to life, and choose the broad road of death. My Master Himself is my lot and my portion, who Himself gave His life for me, and it behooves me to offer as a sacrifice my life and all I have to Him who is all in all to me. Get you gone therefore, for with you I have nothing to do."

Hearing this he went off grumbling and growling in his rage. And I, in tears, thus poured out my soul to God in prayer, "My Lord God, my all in all, life of my life, and spirit of my spirit, look in mercy upon me and so fill me with Thy Holy Spirit that my heart shall have no room for love of aught but Thee. I seek from Thee no other gift but Thyself, who art the Giver of life and all its blessings. From Thee I ask not for the world or its treasures, nor yet for heaven even make request, but Thee alone do I desire and long for, and where Thou art there is Heaven. The hunger and the thirst of this heart of mine can be satisfied only with Thee who hast given it birth. O Creator mine! Thou hast created my heart for Thyself alone, and not for another, therefore this my heart can find no rest or ease save in Thee, in Thee who hast both created it and set in it this very longing for rest. Take away then from my heart all that is opposed to Thee, and enter and abide and rule for ever. Amen."

When I rose up from this prayer I beheld a glowing Being, arrayed in light and beauty, standing before me. Though He spoke not a word, and because my eyes were suffused with tears I saw Him not too clearly, there poured from Him lightning-like rays of life-giving love with such power that they entered in and bathed my very soul. At once I knew that my dear Saviour stood before me. I rose at once from the rock where I was seated and fell at His feet. He held in His hand the key of my heart. Opening the inner chamber of my heart with His key of love, He filled it with His presence, and wherever I looked, inside or out, I saw but Him.

Then did I know that man's heart is the very throne and citadel of God, and that when He enters there to abide, heaven begins. In these few seconds He so filled my heart, and spoke such wonderful words, that even if I wrote many books I could not tell them all. For these heavenly things can be explained only in heavenly language, and earthly tongues are not sufficient for them. Yet I will endeavour to set down a few of these

First Vision

heavenly things that by way of vision came to me from the Master. Upon the rock on which before I sat He seated Himself, and with myself at His feet there began between Master and disciple the conversation that now follows.