

## Meditation & Near-Death Experiences

Near death experiences suggest that the soul exists after physical death and that the soul can enter into states of higher consciousness and divine realms. Through the process of meditation on the inner Light and Sound of God, these states can be experienced in this lifetime without the trauma often associated with near-death experiences.

# Welcome

Every satsang should begin with the reading or reciting of an introduction to Science of Spirituality, which briefly welcomes everyone, explains the purpose of Science of Spirituality and Satsang, and gives a brief introduction to Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj.

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*Here is a sample Welcome message:*

Welcome to our Satsang, or spiritual program, which is sponsored by Science of Spirituality, a non-denominational organization dedicated to Love, Unity and Peace.

This program is held under the direction of Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj, a spiritual Master who teaches the Sant Mat method of meditation on the inner Light and Sound of God.

Each week our group gathers to meditate together, reflect on the words of the great spiritual Masters, and spend some time with others who share the goal of leading a spiritually enriched and fulfilling life.

# Introduction to the Theme

This segment introduces the satsang theme and sub-themes and sets up the readings and other features that follow. The introduction is spoken by the presenter using his/her own words.

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Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj has often said that “*feelings, emotions, and inferences are all subject to error. Seeing is above all.*” Spirituality, he tells us, is a direct experience of our soul with God, and that we need to see and experience for ourselves the truths that lie within us.

Reading about the mystic experiences of the great saints of the past may help us in our initial search, but true faith is based on experience.

There may be times in our lives when we ask ourselves how can we know for sure that we are soul, and that the soul exists after death?

Although the world’s religions testify to the existence of the soul and to its immortality, in our scientific age, many seek scientific proof. About 30 years ago there began a new area of study in the West. It was research in the area of Near Death Experiences or NDEs.

Of this phenomenon Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj says:

## **Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj:**

Do near-death experiences prove the existence of the soul? They are proof to the people who have had them. Their accounts attest passionately to the existence of a life beyond; in fact, many say the experiences had a vividness more real than their earthly life.

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Until this recent explosion of interest in near-death experiences, few had any recognition of themselves as soul. We have identified so

heavily with our body and mind, that we have forgotten our true essence. Soul is of the same essence as God. God is all love, joy, and peace, and our true nature is also love, joy, and peace. If we can re-identify ourselves with our soul, we will be able to experience this divine Light and love within us. We will also recognize our immortality. Death of the body will no longer hold any fear for us, for we will see during our lifetime what lies beyond.

*Inner and Outer Peace Through Meditation,*  
Chapter 8

## **Continuation by Satsang Facilitator:**

When we compare the spiritual experiences of the great saints and mystics with those who have had near death experiences, we find amazing correlations. Both talk about the presence of a tremendous Light filled with love; they talk about experiencing themselves as soul without the encumbrance of a physical body. They also talk about hearing a celestial music that fills them with peace and happiness.

In our satsang today we will hear what the great saints and mystics have to say about the near-death experience, and how meditation can help us verify the existence of our soul and God.

Our first selection is a video excerpt from Sant Rajinder Singh Ji’s talk to the International Association for Near-Death Studies which he gave in Evanston, Illinois in the spring of 2003.

# Video Feature

**Video instructions** Show the following video at this point in the program. The video can be found on Science of Spirituality Satsang Themes DVD series.

## **Introduction to the video (to be spoken by the Satsang Coordinator)**

None. Covered in the introduction.

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### **Satsang Themes DVD**

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<b>Master</b>	Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj
<b>Volume</b>	9
<b>Satsang on this volume</b>	1
<b>Chapter</b>	1
<b>Length</b>	3:46
<b>Original DVD Title</b>	125 – Meditation and Near Death Experience

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# What is an NDE?

**Source:** Inner and Outer Peace through  
Meditation

Chapter 8

*excerpts by Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj*

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## **Satsang Facilitator:**

In this reading, Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj describes different phases of an NDE and how these phases correlate with the inner mystic voyage.

## **Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj:**

Previously, any study or discussion of the afterlife in mainstream society was limited to the domain of religion. No mention of it was made in schools, in the media, or even in the hospitals. If people had any experiences, they kept quiet for fear of being labelled “mentally ill” or as having had hallucinations. But once doctors and scientists began finding cases of near-death experiences and documenting them, they found it happening to such an overwhelming number of people they could not dismiss the evidence any longer. Personality assessments revealed that the people having these experiences were normal, reliable individuals. The investigations of the doctors showed startling similarities which crossed the boundaries of nationality, religion, and social backgrounds. People who came from different religions and from different countries, who had never heard of near-death experiences, were describing the same incidents. Today, these experiences have been given great attention by the media and have become a popular topic of conversation within medical circles. This has opened up our thinking to new dimensions which occur concurrently with our own physical world.

With this increased interest in near-death experiences comes another study. People are beginning to wonder whether it is possible to

reach these realms beyond without having near-death experiences. If these worlds of Light are occurring simultaneously and people are continually entering them through near-fatal accidents, then why can't we enter them at other times?

This question may be new to modern scientists, but it is not new to many in the East, to New Age thinkers, or to those who study yoga and meditation. In fact, having experiences of the beyond is one of the main purposes of meditation. Meditation proves an easy method to rise above the body easily and naturally. Students of this science have been able to have contact with the inner Light. This Light is not there only for those who pass through the gates of death at the end of their life. It is awaiting each one of us to discover it during our life as well.

Just as the inner Light is one of the main features of an NDE, it is also referred to repeatedly by those who rise above the body through meditation. Mystics and saints of various religions provide us with numerous references to the inner Light. Descriptions of divine Light and of heavenly realms are given in the Bible. Christ has said, “If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of Light.”

It was in the fifteenth century in India that great saints such as Kabir Sahib and Guru Nanak began teaching the practice of meditation as a science. They taught that the art of rising above the body to experience the beyond was a science that could be practiced by anyone, irrespective of one's religious background. Thus, they taught this method to both Hindus and Muslims alike. Their tradition has been carried on and, since that time, the practice of meditation has been given out as a method that can be followed by people of all religions and nationalities and from all walks of life. Through this method we can enter these spiritual regions and find peace, happiness, and bliss.

In this technique one can see the inner Light naturally, without having to have a near-death incident. It is a process that can be done daily in the comfort of one's own home. Many regularly see the Light within. Absorption in the Light helps them transcend the physical body and begin to explore the beyond. Through meditation one can travel into the beyond, and enjoy the same bliss and love as described by those who had near-death experiences.

All those who have had near-death experiences describe a world of Light. We must remember that these people are just entering the threshold of the spiritual world, and then they are sent back to their bodies to continue in life. But those who meditate can cross beyond the threshold and explore more of those inner regions. The Light which the people describe in the NDEs is merely the beginning. As one makes further explorations, one finds regions of Light even brighter and more ethereal. Here in this world, we could never imagine a light brighter than the sun. Those who have come back from clinical death describe a Light still more brilliant that does not hurt the eyes. Similarly, there are regions of Light yet brighter than those described by people who have had near-death experiences.

# Perfect Vehicle

**Source:** *Wonders of Inner Space*

Chapter 4

*excerpts by Sant Darshan Singh Ji Maharaj*

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## **Introduction by Satsang Facilitator:**

In our next reading, Sant Darshan Singh Ji talks about what it is like to travel into the inner spiritual realms. He calls this “travelling through inner space.”

## **Sant Darshan Singh Ji Maharaj:**

In undertaking any journey, the vehicle provides us with our means of transportation. It also defines how far and how fast we can travel. If we wish to cross the Atlantic or the Pacific Ocean we can not do so in an aircraft that needs to be re-fueled every thousand miles. And if we want to fly to the moon, even an intercontinental jet is of no use. Whatever energy a particular yoga harnesses for enabling one to progress spiritually, it inevitably sets a limit to the aspirant’s inner exploration, for these energies can only take us to their source.

On the inner path, as in life, the means can not be distinguished from the end. If we wish to reach the realms of pure spirit, we must use for our journey through inner space a vehicle which is subtle enough to penetrate those realms. In other words, we must use a vehicle which is itself purely spiritual. Any lesser means will at best take us to its own source and our journey would be left unfinished. It is here that the exponents of Surat Shabd Yoga have their most revolutionary answer to the challenge of all challenges—union with the Creator. The vehicle for the inner journey which they offer us is the vehicle of Naam, of Shabd, of the Word.

What better vehicle could one have for one’s journey through inner space than that of the divine Current which brought everything else

into creation? If we could latch onto it, we could reverse the process by which we descended into this life and return to our very Source. If we could use this as a roadway or a causeway, we could be certain of reaching the point from which the Nameless came into name and form. That is why Nanak said, “Whosoever boards the vessel of Naam reaches his ultimate destination.”

The first thing to be grasped then is that Surat Shabd Yoga—that school of mysticism which seeks to realize its objectives by connecting the attention to the Word or Shabd—selects for its vehicle for inner travel an energy which is purely spiritual in its origin and can take us to our supreme goal. By comparison, other forms of yoga can at best lead us to intermediate goals. They use energies which are not purely spiritual in nature and limit the extent to which one can explore within.

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There is a story which brings home the difference between Surat Shabd Yoga and other forms of yoga. Once a great saint lived a quiet life near the bank of a river. A yogi, hearing of the saint’s greatness, visited him. He came not so much in humility as in pride. He was a master of the traditional forms of yoga and could not believe that the great saint was spiritually superior to himself. Nothing is hidden from the eye of a Master. The saint knew why the yogi had come, but he entertained him with great humility and courtesy. It was morning, and the yogi wished to enter into debate without losing any time. But for years, the saint had gone each morning to pray at a temple across the river. “I am not learned enough to dispute with you,” the saint said, “and I am sure I have much to learn from you. However, can’t our discussion wait until I return from the temple where I daily pray at this time?”

Reluctantly, the yogi agreed. The two men walked to the river bank. As the saint began moving toward the ferry, the yogi asked, “Do

you mean to say you are going to take a boat to get across this stretch of water?” When the saint nodded in the affirmative, the yogi protested, “But I was told that you are a man of great spiritual power. What is the use if you can not even cross this river without the help of a boat?” The yogi wanted to use his yogic powers to move across the water, and he set about preparing to do so. Meanwhile, the saint took the ferry and went across the river. After his prayers, the saint returned as he had come, on the ferry, and found the yogi just completing some practices on the river bank. “Have you been to the temple?” asked the saint. “No,” said the yogi. “But I have just completed the preliminary practices for walking on water.”

This was the moment for which the saint had been waiting. The Masters are embodiments of humility, but none can surpass them when it comes to speaking the truth directly and plainly. He told the yogi, “You spoke with such vehemence about the greatness of your yoga, but I find that it is not even worth half a penny.” The yogi was filled with anger. “How dare you say such a thing!” Whereupon the saint replied, “You have wasted years and years of your life mastering these yogic powers. But the results of your practices are of no value, for my ferryman can do as much for me for half a penny, and in less time!”

If we have to travel across a whole continent, we can still do so by foot—but then, how many would be willing to endure such an ordeal! It would be better by far to travel by rail, and infinitely better to travel on board a jetliner. In like manner, we can use different means of travel to explore inner space. But in this age of supersonic jets and rocket propulsion, the inner vehicle ideally suited for our travel is that of Naam. We can board it by following the path of Surat Shabd Yoga, and it will take us to our ultimately destination—our True Home—in the quickest possible time.



# Video Feature

**Video instructions** Show the following video at this point in the program. The video can be found on Science of Spirituality Satsang Themes DVD series.

## **Introduction to the video (to be spoken by the Satsang Coordinator)**

In the following excerpt from the same talk, Maharaj Ji explores the concept of creation and the mystic experience.

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<b>Satsang Themes DVD</b>	
<b>Master</b>	Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj
<b>Volume</b>	9
<b>Satsang on this volume</b>	1
<b>Chapter</b>	2
<b>Length</b>	5:49
<b>Original DVD Title</b>	125 – Meditation and Near Death Experience

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# The Silver Cord

**Source:** The Secret of Secrets

Chapter 3

*excerpts by Sant Darshan Singh Ji Maharaj*

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## **Introduction by Satsang Coordinator:**

In this reading, Sant Darshan Singh Ji Maharaj describes how the soul travels within while remaining connected to the physical body. This connection is referred to in mystic literature as the “silver cord.”

## **Sant Darshan Singh Ji Maharaj:**

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.

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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.

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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, tranquillity, peace and immortality, according to the various phases and stages through which the disciple is passing.

# Video Feature

**Video instructions** Show the following video at this point in the program. The video can be found on Science of Spirituality Satsang Themes DVD series.

## **Introduction to the video (to be spoken by the Satsang Coordinator)**

Continuing with the same talk, Maharaj Ji describes the transformation that comes into the lives of those who cross the threshold from the physical to the divine.

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<b>Satsang Themes DVD</b>	
<b>Master</b>	Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj
<b>Volume</b>	9
<b>Satsang on this volume</b>	1
<b>Chapter</b>	3
<b>Length</b>	9:52
<b>Original DVD Title</b>	125 – Meditation and Near Death Experience

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# Transformation through the Inner Journey

**Source:** Inner and Outer Peace Through  
Meditation  
Chapter 8

*excerpts by Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj*

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## **Introduction by Presenter:**

In today's final reading, Sant Rajinder Singh Ji talks about the transformation we undergo when we experience the divine realms within.

## **Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj:**

As we meditate and come in contact with the source of all love within, we begin to radiate that love to others. We have read about the incredible transformation that people who have had near-death experiences have had. Their brief contact with the Being of Light, and reviewing their life, makes them realize instantaneously what is important in life. They realize they cannot take anything with them from this physical world. The only thing that goes with them is their soul, and the record of their thoughts, words, and deeds. They see how important it is to be loving and helpful to others in this world. They find that the little things in life that created stress and tension do not seem to be important when they realize that this physical world is not reality, but an illusion, and when they realize their real self is not the body, but the soul. Thus, they mend their ways when they return to life. They realize that there is a great purpose to life, and that purpose is to be able to realize our true self and to realize God. They realize the value of loving relationships with others and of being of service to humanity in this world. They start caring for other people and trying to bring joy into the lives of others.

We undergo this same transformation in meditation. Love begins to radiate from us to all humanity. As we come in continuous contact with the Light and love within, that divinity begins to spread out from us to all those we meet. We begin loving all those around us, and others derive great peace and solace from our presence. We start developing love for all creation. We become gentle and loving to all, including the animals and lower species of life. Just as we would never think of injuring anyone in our family, similarly, we become non-violent and loving to all in the grand family of God. We become the abode of all ethical virtues.

If each of us learned the art of meditation, this world would be filled with people who are peaceful and kind. There would be an end to wars and conflicts. We would each attain inner peace and happiness and help radiate it to all those around us. We would not only have peace within, but we would also have peace without. We could then state as Sant Darshan Singh had said in one of his verses:

*I have learned to cherish all creation as  
my own,  
Your message of love is the very meaning  
of my life.*

The saints and mystics come to share the Light, the peace, and happiness they found with all humanity. They come to show us the Light so we can experience more happiness, tranquility, and peace than we can ever dream of. We do not have to wait until death to experience the worlds beyond. We do not even need a near-death experience and all the physical trauma that it brings to find the inner Light. It is waiting within each of us this very moment. Through meditation each one of us can find it.

# Closing Meditation

Close satsang with ten minutes of meditation. Start the sitting by reading Maharaj Ji's Jyoti meditation instructions below.

*by Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj*

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Meditation is a process whereby we withdraw our attention from the outer world and concentrate it at the seat of the soul. Through this method of concentration, we can transcend physical consciousness, experience ourselves as soul, and explore higher spiritual regions.

To practice meditation, we sit in any pose that we find most comfortable in which we can sit for a long time without moving. We should sit with enough distance between us so that no part of our body touches anyone, as this would disturb our concentration.

We should close our eyes gently and look straight ahead, focusing our attention in the middle of the darkness lying in front of us. That which sees the darkness is not our physical eyes, but is the third or single eye located between and behind the eyebrows.

Continue to gaze into the middle of whatever lies in front of you. Those of you who are initiated should mentally repeat the five Charged Names given to you at the time of initiation. Repeat those names slowly, with the tongue of thought. For those of you who are new here, please repeat any name of God with which you feel comfortable. Mentally repeat the name slowly while gazing in front of you. This repetition will keep the mind occupied and prevent it from wandering.

When light or inner vistas appear, continue focusing your attention into the middle of what you see and continue repeating the Names of God.

We hope you enjoy this meditation sitting. It will be for 10 minutes.

# Closing

*Closing comments, reading, etc.*

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Replace this text with a brief closing.

A closing generally includes:

- Thank everyone for coming
- Restate the mission of Science of Spirituality (Love, Unity, Peace)
- Explain other local programs
- Announcements
- Invite everyone to next meeting
- Share the topic of the next meeting:  
    **”Divine Love and Selfless Service”**

**To be read before or after announcements,  
at the Satsang Coordinator’s discretion:**

Let us close with these words by Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj from *Man! Know Thyself*:

“We must adopt and accustom ourselves, during our lifetime, to Nature’s process of the withdrawal of the spirit current from the body, while still in a conscious state. This may be done with the help of a Master, and may be accomplished without any suffering or trouble whatsoever. This is not only a possibility but is a remarkable fact. Our joy will know no bounds when we come into possession of the secret that has baffled man for so many centuries. We become supermen, having possession of a key to peace and heaven, the life of which we had till then only read about in sacred scriptures. Arise, therefore, and awake!”