



Sat Santokh S. Kahlsa
Poems and Prayers

This Body

A Gift

Sitting in my morning

The Divine presence

What about the Angry

We are so far

Late night - Last night

There you are

Tired today

Old Habits

The Fallen

Each moment

Sahej

Milarepa and Ramakrishna

I would like to know God

Unconditional surrender

I learned to surrender my doings

Late in life

Sometimes

This Body

This body
Is
Not
What it was

But
When I was young
I could not
Listen
Or feel
Your pain
Our pain

And now
Thank God
I can

A Gift

A Gift
From Thich Nhat Hahn
That I only
Just now
Awoke to

I have long admired
Ramakrishna
Milarepa
But
They both
Disparage
Service

Lauding
Only
Deep connection

I felt
Left out
In my desire to
First and foremost
Be of service
While also
Aspiring to

Be one with
The One
Or
At least
One within myself

But
Thich Nhat Hahn
Did both
Elegantly

Honoring the life
He led
I am free
To follow
Along
That path

And do it
My way
As well
As I can

Sitting in my morning

Sitting in my morning
Sacred space
And listening
I hear:

“I don’t need
Bowling
Worship
Austerities
Self-righteousness
Or guilt

Instead:
Serve your fellow beings

If they have fallen
Lift them up

Make forgiveness
An active daily practice

Stand firm
For your fellow beings
For truth, integrity
And conscientious consciousness.”

The Divine presence

I used to think
When I chanted a
Name of the Divine
That I was evoking
The Divine presence

Then I thought
This is absurd

If there is a Divine
Then it is ever present

Then I understood
That I was
Doing a process
To awaken myself to
The Presence

Which explains to me
Also
What worship is about

What about the Angry

What about the
Angry
Hateful
Misogynist
Xenophobic
Racist
Ones?

I have come to understand
And appreciate
What Jesus said

“Father
Forgive them
For they know not what they do”

For this is so
Now
As it was then

The long consequence
Of punitive parenting
Passing down
Generation after generation

Let us
Turn this global cancer
Around

Beginning with fearless
Loving Awareness

And raise our children
With kindness and compassion
To open
The way

We are so far

We are so far
From what
We can be

O sisters
O brothers

Were you hurt?
Cruelly treated?
Abused?

Don't pass it on

Late night - Last night

Late night
Last night
New Year's Eve Kirtan
In loving company
Sangat

Almost too buzzed
Buzzed with love
That is
Not the other stuff
Almost too buzzed to sleep

Nevertheless
This morning
On not much
In the way of sleep
Alive! Awake! Ready!

The presence
Of the Divine
Astonishing
Huge

Much gratitude.

There you are

Oh
There you are
Sat Santokh

Not hiding
Anymore

I didn't know
That
I was

I didn't know
That
I am

Who I
Wanted
To be

Tired today

Tired today
Body somewhat achy

Not much energy

Why waste it
On that
Which does not serve?

Old Habits

old demoting
habits
die hard
like trick
birthday candles
that won't
stay out

The Fallen

I have seen
Far too many
Teachers
Who have fallen

It is easy
To join them
In this folly

But knowing now
That not-falling
Is also possible

I prefer
Then
To rise

Each moment

I aspire to live
Each moment
As well as I can

I wish to learn
To make
Each Moment
An offering

Each moment
An offering

Each moment
As well as I can

Each moment

Sahej

The time has come
For a shift
It seems

To follow the Path
Of the enlightened ones

Allowing myself
The Gift

Of living
In my Grace

Milarepa and Ramakrishna

I am drawn to the great
Realized beings
Milarepa and Ramakrishna
But they have dropped
And forsworn duty

I would be to them
A limited being
In my presumption
In my trying
To better the lot of humanity

I can learn non-attachment
Or, at least, aspire to it
But total one-pointedness of mind
Which they each in their own way
Readily manifest

What practice shall I do
From whom can I learn
Enlightenment
While yoked to service

I would not trade
The path I trod
Even for that

I would like to know God

I would like to know God
In the way that Arjuna
In the Bhagavad Gita
Saw Krishna

Being overawed and overwhelmed
With beyond question
Almighty thereness

It's not that I'm not grateful
I am
I know it is a privilege
And blessing
In the midst of all the ways
Humanity suffers

To have a daily practice
And experience
Something sacred
Each morning
As I meditate
And pray
To what?
To whom?

Each Morning
I call upon
Guru Ram Das
Holy Mother
Divine Father
Infinite Creator
With form
Beyond form
Within me
Beyond me

Trying to cover
All the bases
because I do
Not know

I would like to know God
In the way that Arjuna
In the Bhagavad Gita
Saw Krishna

Unconditional surrender

I know about
And aspire to
Conscious living and unattachment

But I do not know how to do
Unconditional surrender
Complete unattachment

Children and grandchildren
Loved ones
The human condition
Pain
Illness
Suffering
And fear as well

I understand that
Caring is not
Necessarily attachment

I have no fear (I know of)
Within myself
Of dying
Only eager curiosity
About what's next
If anything

Though I do fear
Passing before I'm ready to leave my loved ones
And before completing the work
(I believe) I came here to do

As we age
I see dear friends
Taking on this disease and that
Myself as well
Infirmities of various kinds

How do we do
Unconditional surrender
Complete unattachment

It is a
Not-knowing place
Though I'm open
To learning

I learned to surrender my doings

I learned to surrender my doings
Accomplishments and endeavors
To my Guru
A servant of the Divine

I felt myself
My children
My wife
And many loved ones
Being safely carried across the world ocean
In his hands

But my beloved granddaughter died
Days before her high school graduation
Trust shattered

My life work
My book
Which I see as
An antidote to the illness of our times

I told myself it would be an offering
That I would be unattached
But fear crept in
Am I on my own?

I began to push the river
Forgetting to be in the flow

A shock came
In the form of
Expected support seemingly gone
A moment and more of despair

But I am an old soul
So, I woke up
Remembering
Nothing comes from running after it

But
Only
From
Allowing

I surrender once again

Late in life

Late in life
I return
To the great pleasure
Of writing little
What I allow myself to call poems

In which
I express
What is not
Otherwise
So easy
To articulate

Sometimes

Sometimes
I'm not
Who I am

So
What to do?

Write a poem

Then
I am
Who I am

Sort of
More or less

Or
At least
Better than before



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