



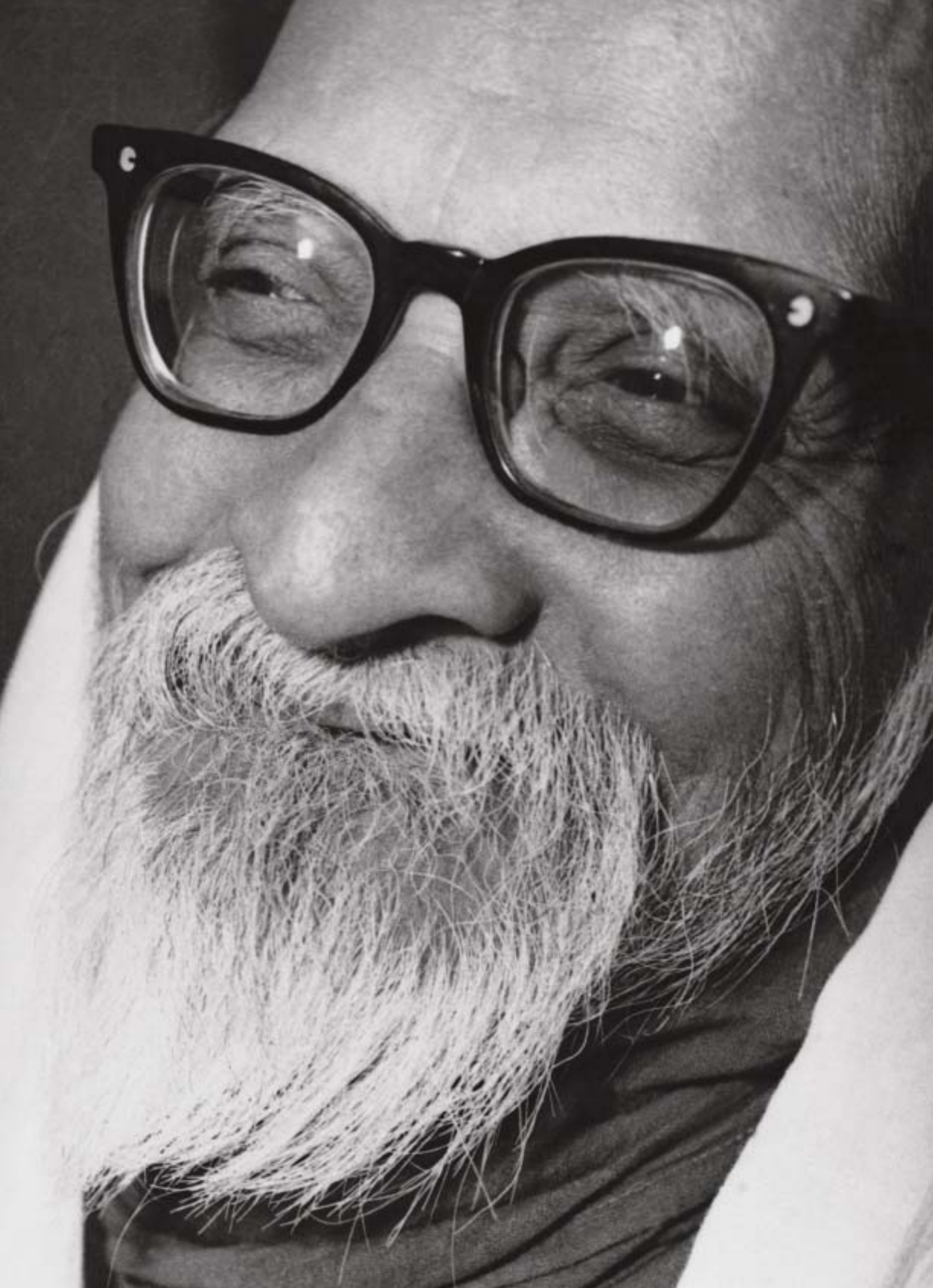
# Vinoba Darshan

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Photographs  
Gautam Bajaj

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PARAMDHAM PRAKASHAN









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अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा

**Search for the  
Absolute**

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चरैवेति चरैवेति

**Move on, Move on**

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शांतं शिवं अद्वैतम्

**Peace, Benevolence,  
Oneness**

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## My thoughts ...

Vinobaji was among the initial few who joined Gandhiji's *ashram* in Ahmedabad (1916). In accordance with Gandhiji's wishes, he shifted to Wardha in 1921 and began to look after the *ashram* there. Later, Paunar became his *karmbhoomi* (place of work). The early years in the *ashram* were spent in intellectual and spiritual pursuits as well as constructive work. Gandhiji had chosen him as the first *satyagrahi* of Individual satyagraha in 1940, and had brought him into the limelight (page 31).

After Gandhiji's passing, there were some communist insurgencies in Telangana (Andhra). On the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1951, while Vinobaji was walking around that disturbed area, he received the first donation of land for the poor and landless people. This was the beginning of an unprecedented peaceful movement called the *Bhoodan-yajna*. Vinobaji walked on foot for miles and miles all over the country for 13 long years. He asked for, and received, more than 4 million acres of land from landowners, for distribution among the landless.

Coming back from Telangana Vinobaji spent the rainy season in Paunar ashram and on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1951, started his 1350 kms. *padayatra* (journey on foot) to Delhi. I, too, had an opportunity to join the *padayatra*. My mother (Smt. Anasuya Bajaj) had handed me a small box and had told me to take photographs during the *padayatra*. I was twelve then. It was a box camera, costing nineteen rupees in those days. There were two rolls of film along with the camera, each worth two rupees and twenty five paise. Thus began my association with photography.

Two and a half months later, when we reached Delhi, an acquaintance of my mother helped me

buy an Agfa 3.6 folding camera for a princely sum of two hundred rupees. I used this camera for many years. While returning to India after completing his studies in Germany, my younger brother Ashok spent all his savings on a Rolliflex camera for me. Later, Ashok presented me a 35mm Ashai Pentax as well.

The majority of photographs in this book have been taken between 1951 to 1982. They include photographs of the *padayatra* and *ashram*. Inexperienced as I was, in the beginning, I gave some negatives of special significance to friends, which were never returned. As a result, I resolved never to give negatives to anybody. While on the *padayatra*, I would get the films developed and send them to my mother. She kept them safe. In fact, she did not part with them even when my father asked for them. The films were developed in the cities and towns that we crossed. Substandard chemicals used in these places have contributed to the poor quality of prints. I have managed to put together photographs that survived all this. In addition, I have also been able to collect a few photographs from Shri Kanu Gandhi and Shri Mohan Parikh. Some photographs have been obtained from the collections of other friends, where the name of the photographer is not known. *Vinoba Darshan* has thus been made possible by the cooperation of various friends – known and unknown. I am grateful to all of them.

No photograph is available of Vinobaji's mother. She did not allow herself to be photographed. It was her belief that getting photographed was detrimental to one's inner lustre. She would say, "The physical body is transient. What is the point in having it photographed? It's much better to have pictures of the gods." Many years later, Vinobaji's younger brother, Shivaji Bhawe, drew



a line figure of his mother. That is the only available likeness of her, and that has been included in this collection. Similarly, only a couple of photographs of Vinobaji's father are available. Vinobaji himself would never pose for photographs. Once, a friend asked for permission to photograph him. Vinobaji replied, "You can steal a photograph."

Very few photographs of Vinobaji himself are available from the period prior to the *Bhoodan padayatra*. Vinobaji felt that photographs of any person ought to be put up only after his passing. Once in Vinobaji's room someone put up a few big pictures of Vinobaji. Vinobaji refused to enter the room unless the pictures were removed. Sometimes, individual visitors or group of people would request for a photograph with him. Vinobaji would remark, "Last act of the drama!"

★

In 1952, during the *padayatra* in Bihar, thousands of people were listening to Vinobaji with rapt attention. The dais had been made by placing three platforms, one on top of the other, Vinobaji sat on the top platform. A few children sat below it. It made a quaint picture. I wanted to capture this on camera (51), so I got up and started taking photographs. This distracted Vinobaji and the audience. Abruptly, Vinobaji's voice was heard on the loudspeaker, "Who is the fool disturbing the meeting?" Having been reprimanded in public, I promptly sat down. Following this incident, I avoided Vinobaji for a couple of days. He, however, had completely forgotten about the incident very next moment.

In 1964, Vinobaji had a ear problem, due to which he would lose his balance. Sometimes he would feel giddy even while sitting. He needed support to walk. Once, when I was trying to photograph him, he said, "You will prove to be a true photographer if you continue taking photographs of me, instead of supporting me, when I lose balance and fall." And then he burst into laughter. Laughing long had become a one point programme for him in his later years. Life for him was nothing but sublime joy.

The *padyatra* was full of unique experiences. We once had to cross a river on an elephant. There were times when we had to wade through chest-deep water, holding each other's hands,



balancing our bags on our heads. We walked through crowded cities and deserted jungles. Swift rivers, flowing with full force, had to be crossed using trunks of trees as bridges. In the jungles of Koraput, we had to cross the same river eight times in a single day. Occasionally we had to camp out in the open under the canopy of twigs and branches as there was no village in sight for miles together.

Floods in Assam, with submerged roads and fields, meant that we had to go from one village to another by boat. We sometimes had to directly step into the boat from our lodgings. In Bihar, due to floods, Vinobaji had to address a gathering from a boat. The thousands who had come to listen to him were also seated in hundreds of boats. It was pure joy in Kerala among the backwaters and coconut trees. In Tamilnadu, we walked between lush fields of rice. Sometimes, having lost our way in pathless jungles, we would just walk on. We had walked continuously from four in the morning till four in the afternoon, the day we reached Kotadwar.

Once a speeding bicycle collided with Vinobaji from behind. He fell down and injured his knees. Even then the *yatra* could not be stopped. He continued the *yatra* in a bullock-cart. However, in places where a bullock-cart could not be used, he was carried on a chair. This way, we crossed the Shivalik hills. Sometimes he would start running with the children – making it difficult for the elderly to catch up with him. Once an elderly gentleman tripped on his *lungi* and fell down while trying to run along.

At the confluence of the three seas in Kanyakumari, with the rising sun as witness, he took an oath to keep walking till he had strength in his limbs(103). In Assam there would be day long journeys on the river Brahmaputra in boats. Vinobaji would be roaming on the decks for hours (137). It was sheer joy to keep marching on through relentless rain (110-111), chanting verses from Vedas. Assam is famous for downpours. During these downpours, Vinobaji would never try to keep himself away from the rain. While thousands of people in his audience stood around with umbrellas, he would let the rain soak him through. He would say that it was God's blessing pouring down upon him (142-43).

Among the tribals, he would hang their drum round his neck and sing merrily along with them (93). Walking in the valleys of Kashmir and crossing the snow covered Pir Panjal mountains at an altitude of 13,500 feet is another indelible experience. In Bihar, the bundles of *Danpatras* (declarations of donations) had to be brought by truck. The bundles were stacked to form a dais from which Vinobaji made his announcement for *JillaDan* (gift of a whole district) (166-167). ... I remember number of such events of the *padayatra*. Only a few of them have been captured on film.

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Over thousands of years, there have been many *padayatras* in India. However, I doubt if there ever has been one with the specific aim of alleviating a pressing problem of the poor; with the innate capacity to generate a moral and spiritual environment, and to equate revolution with peace.

Vinobaji stated that the aim of his life was *Jeevanam Satya Shodhanam*. This refers to a search for the truth incorporated in the entire universe and the effort to make it materialize. This involves experiencing oneness with all creation. *Ahimsa* (non-violence) is the path to follow in order to experience truth. *Ahimsa* also implies an experience of love for the whole universe. *Ahimsa* is love and only love. ...

It is difficult to perceive love unless it is expressed in some form or the other. It becomes tangible when it manifests itself as concern for the poor; an effort to unite hearts; and an expansion of the circle of compassion to include the whole of humanity and the universe. Without a firm foundation on the bedrock of compassion, the problems of the poor, the under-privileged, the sorrowful or the exploited remain unsolved. Without compassion, neither can a non-violent society be established, nor can the hope for peace in the world be realized.

This was the inspiration behind Vinobaji's life and work. Even Gandhiji's main idea behind *Swarajaya* (Independence) was truth, non-violence and the upliftment of the poor and the downtrodden. Vinobaji picked up the threads of this legacy and walked on for thirteen years. Brahavidya-Mandir was born out of the



*padayatra*. It was this desire to unite hearts that motivated Vinobaji to study the holy texts of various religions and enabled him to extract the essence from each of them (250-51).

My effort in compiling this book of photographs has been to present a *darshan* (vision) of Vinobaji's *tapasya* (religious penance), joyfully undertaken for spreading the message of compassion, and for uniting hearts.

This pictorial book has three sections. The first section covers his childhood, up to the year 1950. The second section deals with the *Bhoodan Yatra* and the third section is about his years in *Brahmavidya-Mandir*, the Paunar Ashram.

Vinobaji's life was a life devoted to *Karmayoga* (the way of selfless action). The first phase of his life can well be classified under *Karmayoga based on intense spiritual Sadhana*; the Bhoodan phase under *Karmayoga born of Compassion*; the last phase under *Karma in Akarma* (action in inaction) – peaceful, silent, subtle *Karmayoga*. From another angle, the first phase of his life can also be called *Gyanayoga* (path of wisdom), the second, *Bhaktiyoga* (path of devotion) and the last *Dhyanayoga* (path of meditation). However, Vinobaji himself, never differentiated between *Gyana*, *Dhyana*, *Bhakti* and *Karma*. His experience of life was One, Unified, Undifferentiated, Whole. Therefore these sections are only broad categories.

From Vedic times to the present age, the role of Indian saints and sages has always been to lead society towards liberation. We witnessed the same vision behind Vinobaji's entire work. In the *Soot Pachisi* – 25 points of spinning (72), the 25<sup>th</sup> point is – spin for realization of God.

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The words in this book are Vinobaji's. However, in some places, the editors have described the pictures. These descriptions are given in *italics*.

We have chosen not to keep the copyright of Vinobaji's pictures, as he always exhorted us to renounce ownership. Anyone can make appropriate use of these pictures. However, we would appreciate, if we are informed.

Apart from the photographs, a number of people have helped to put together this book. Jain Irrigation Systems of Jalgaon assisted with the primary layout; Sujata Bajaj and Vinaybhai with the presentation of photographs. The 'end papers' are drawn by Sujata and the cover is designed by Vinaybhai. Ushaben has been associated with this book from conception to completion. She has been particularly responsible for choosing Vinobaji's words to go with each picture. We are also grateful to Shri Parag Cholkar, Yasminben and Prabha Desikan for presenting the Hindi version in English.

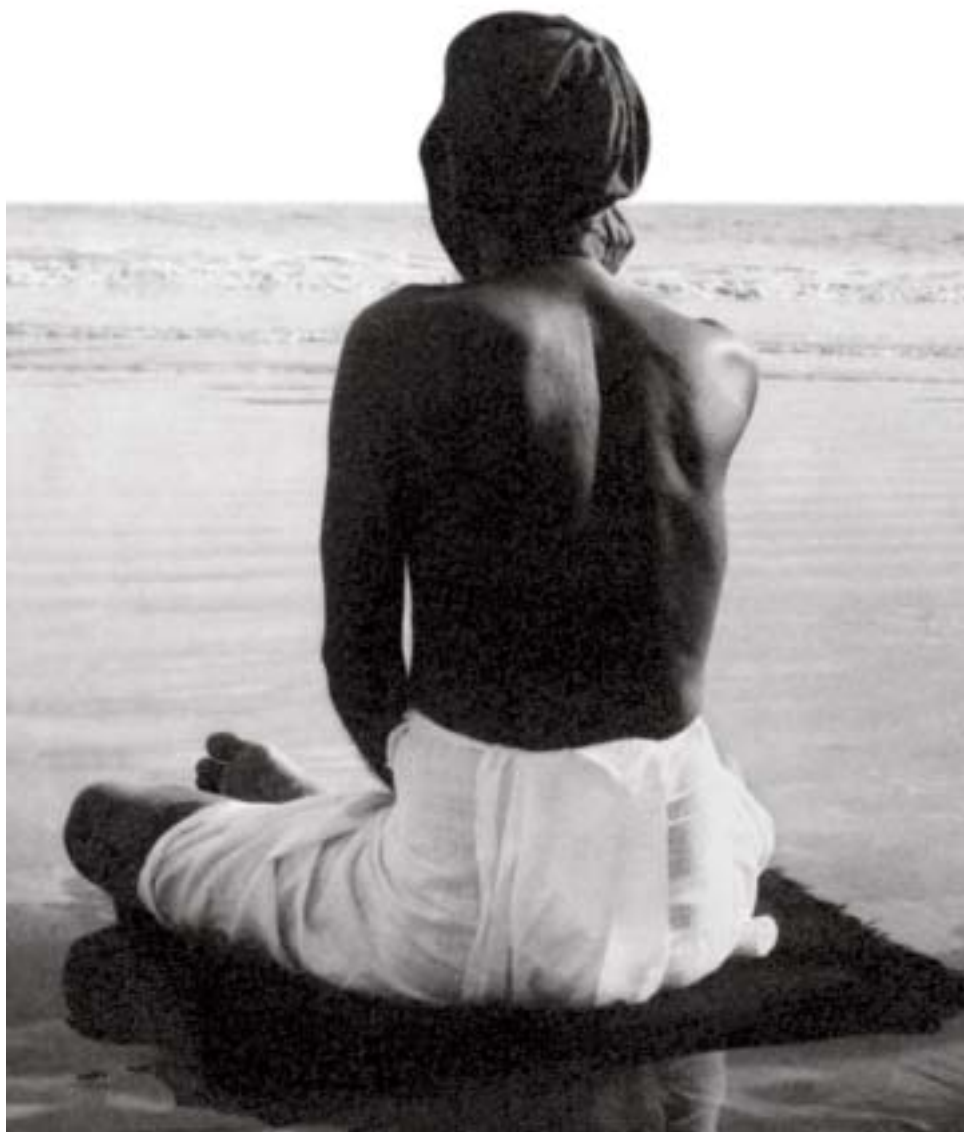
What belongs to the people is dedicated unto them.

**Gautam Bajaj**

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हम ईश्वर से  
प्रेम से  
सर्व सत्त्व





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# **Athato Brahmajignasa**

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## **Search for the Absolute**

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Childhood, Renunciation, Ashram life, Constructive work

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At ten years of age, I resolved to follow the path of *brahmacharya* (celibacy and spiritual quest). Even at that tender age, I had considered leaving home. However, to ensure that I did not leave home ‘raw’ or half-baked, I prepared myself by study and meditation. I also tried to make my body a fit instrument for spiritual discipline.

I had a great respect and devotion for my parents. But love and attachment for them could not dissuade me from leaving home. Everything else paled before the force of the spiritual quest.

Truth leads us to the Lord. The search for the Truth is the *raison d’etre* of life. I had composed a couplet that reads – *Brahma satyam, jagat sphoortih, jeevanam satyashodhanam*. (*Brahma* is the Supreme Truth that has pervaded the cosmos. The world is its manifestation. The mission of life is the search for this Truth). That is what life means to me.

*Gagode – a tribal hamlet with 80-85  
huts, situated in the midst of hillocks,  
near India's western coast.*







*The house built of bricks and mortar, at the centre of the village, belonging to Shambhurao Bhave, the Inamdar (a kind of landlord) of the area and a very devout man. In this house, Rukmini, his daughter-in-law, gave birth to Vinayak on September 11, 1895. The first nine years of Vinayak's life were spent in the pious company of his devout grandfather.*



*Paternal grandparents : Shambhurao and Gangabai*



*Maternal grandfather : Balwantrao Vaidya, who had an ear for music*





*Father : Narhar Bhawe. He was in the service of the native state of Baroda in Western India. In 1904, Vinayak left Gagode and accompanied his father to Baroda.*



*The house at Baroda*

My father gave me plenty of beatings when I was a boy. He would be sure to discover some kind of mischief or disorderliness in my day's doings – there was always some reason for a beating. It had become a daily routine. But one day he did not beat me. The same thing happened the next day, and the next, and the day after that. He never beat me again. I found out the reason behind it later, when I read Manusmriti (the code of Manu). Manu has said, 'When your son reaches the age of sixteen you should treat him as a friend.' On the day I entered my sixteenth year he stopped beating me. As the beatings stopped I became more responsible in my behaviour. I realised that the beatings were to point out what was wrong with my behaviour and nature. It was a kindness on his part, and I am grateful to him for that. Memories of my father are deeply etched in my heart.

Very scientific in everything he did, he strictly regulated intake of food. He was by nature very self-reliant, punctual and self-disciplined. Being a *yogi*, mathematician and scientist, there was regulation and moderation in all his habits. He also carried out a lot of experiments with dyes. During his later years, he studied Indian classical music with a Muslim musician, and would practise as much as eight hours a day.

God blessed me with such self-disciplined parents. In 1913 both of them took a vow of celibacy. Mother was 37 years old at that time and father was 39.



*Colourful handkerchief printed with alphabets, made for children by Narhar Bhawe*



माता रुक्मिणी वरुण  
देवीकां कुछ आर्ति  
। चित्तलेखन - जगद्वंशी  
(आ. बा.)

Not a single photograph of my mother is available. Whenever she was asked to pose for one, she would reply, 'The physical body is transient; what is the point in photographing it? We should have photographs of the gods instead.'

श्रीगुरुदेव जगत्पति नमो नमो नमो नमो  
नमो नमो नमो नमो नमो नमो नमो नमो  
पके पत्रन को मुक्त आका  
क जि काग कि भई अ प पमा  
ये पतल के कि मु क गीज की  
मृगुन बाग अ का भ मे का  
न वे मे उ व रे मे च ति अ मे का  
ज न ह म का ता व ठि धु ज  
का गि दे वी क ते पा मे  
चो भि दे पर मे रा मे  
प डे पे ल न

The only letter written by Vinobaji's mother with a pencil

The fragrance of my mother pervaded her surroundings. At her passing, many people remarked that we had lost a great *yogini*.

My mother was illiterate. She would finish her household chores by noon and then would worship the Lord for about fifteen minutes, forgetting everything around her. At the end she would bow before the Lord and pray, 'O Lord of this boundless universe, forgive me for my faults!' while tears ran down her cheeks. It was as if she was in direct communion with the Lord.

My mother, Rukmini, was a great devotee. She was an ordinary housewife, busy all day long with her work, but her mind dwelt continually on the Lord. She lived in this world, but the world was neither in her mind nor on her lips. I have read the books by many of the great sages, filled with the wisdom of spiritual experience. However, if I were to put all that on one side of the scale, and on the other, what I learnt of practical devotion from my mother, the second side would have the greater value.

Some of my mother's words that have had a great influence on me are :

- One who gives is a god, one who hoards is a demon.
- Remember, small is sweet, much is mischief.
- Food sufficient to fill the stomach, cloth to cover the body – that is all we need.
- If there were no saintly souls to give the world the strength of their austerities, how could it survive?



We were a group of about ten to fifteen friends. All of us had a desire to do some social service. In 1914 we formed a *Vidyarthi Mandal* (Student Society). We would study various subjects and have discussions and talks on them. We put together a good library with about 1600 books. It was in this Student Society that my public life began. Many of the friends I made in it have remained my friends for life and have never left me. When I left home, friends like Raghunath Dhotre, Babaji Moghe and Gopalrao Kale also left home and joined me. They stayed with me all their lives.

Yet, my real friends are quite different. Saints like Namdev, Jnanadev, Tukaram, Ramdas, Nanak, Tulsidas, Kabir, Narsi Mehta, Shankardev and Madhavdev are close to me. Besides them, Shankaracharya, Ramanuja, Mahavir, Buddha, Vyasa, Valmiki, Shuka, Jesus and Mohammed too have been my bosom friends. I have therefore never felt lonely.

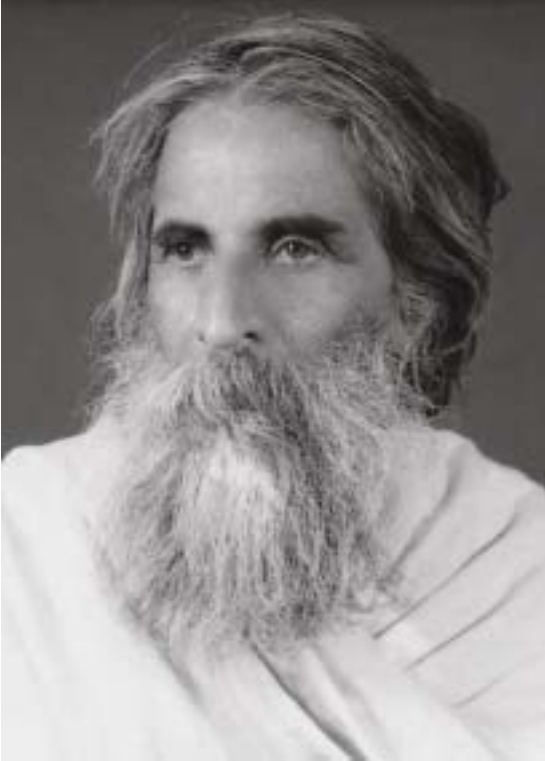




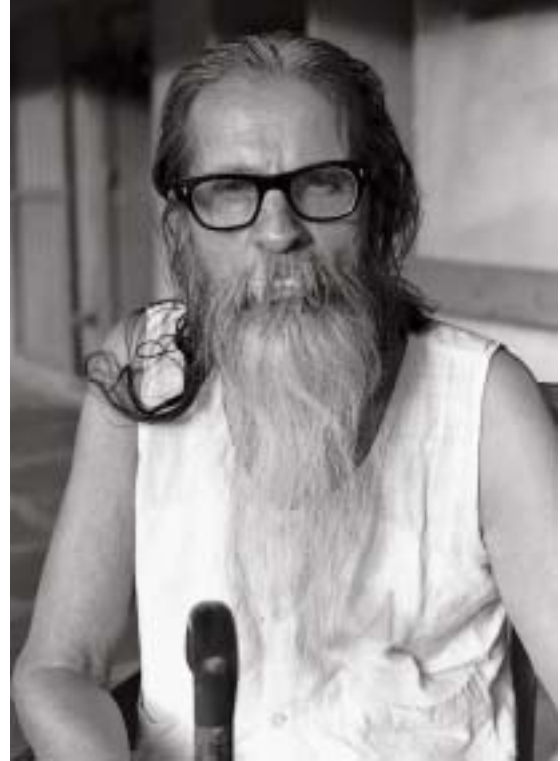
After I left home, both my younger brothers did the same. They joined me within two or three years and they too remained celibate.

Balkoba is younger to me by five years. Shivaji is younger to him by three years. Both of them have devoted their lives to the spiritual quest. I feel blessed to have such brothers.

*Balkoba is a great gift of God to me. He is as pure as a flower. He looks after me like a mother. – Gandhiji*



The spiritual awakening that I find in Balkoba is rare in this age. There are some men in whose company impure thoughts can never enter your mind. Balkoba is one among them.



Shivaji is going around continuously propagating the message of the Gitai (The Marathi translation of the Sanskrit Gita). He is always busy studying the Gita and Gitai. He has always been inclined towards the pursuit of knowledge. The Gitai has made him introspective.



I was greatly attracted to the statue of Lord Buddha in the Jubilee Gardens at Baroda, because the thought of leaving home was already in my mind. I often went there, in order to contemplate and reflect upon the image of Buddha. It had a great influence on me.

The desire to leave home began to gain momentum in 1912. For four years, I tested myself rigorously before making my final decision. ...In those days, one had to go to Mumbai for the Intermediate Examination. I set off from Baroda for Mumbai, but left the train at Surat and took the train for Varanasi. I wrote to tell my father, 'Instead of going to Mumbai for the examination, I am going somewhere else. You may be assured that wherever I go I shall set my hand to nothing that is wrong.' That day was March 25, 1916.

At the time of leaving home, I was firm in my mind that my life would be devoted to *sadhana* – the spiritual quest, along with social service. I was clear about the philosophy and mission of my life.



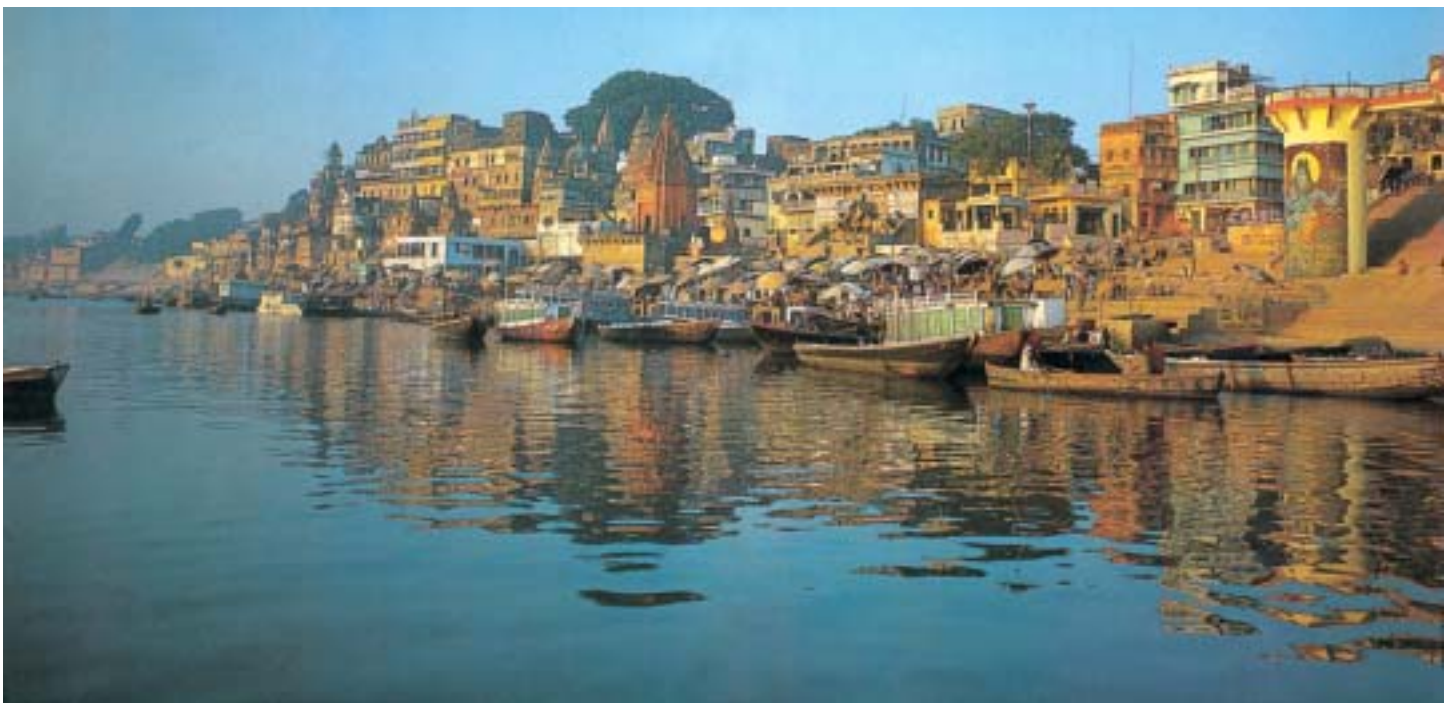


In my pursuit of Spiritual Reality, I left home and arrived at Varanasi. I found a place to live on the third floor of a house at Durga Ghat. One of my two companions went back home after a short time; the other remained with me, but he died there.

Initially I used to go to a charitable kitchen for my midday meal, where I would get two paise (about 3 paise of the current rupee) as *dakshina*, according to the custom. They were enough to buy a supper of curds and sweet potatoes.

I also taught English in a private school for an hour or so, and earned four rupees in two months.

Every evening, I spent an hour by the side of the river Ganga. Sometimes I sat in meditation or in deep thought, sometimes I composed poems, which I then consigned to the river. ... I spent two months and a few days at Varanasi and then turned my steps towards Bapu (Gandhiji).





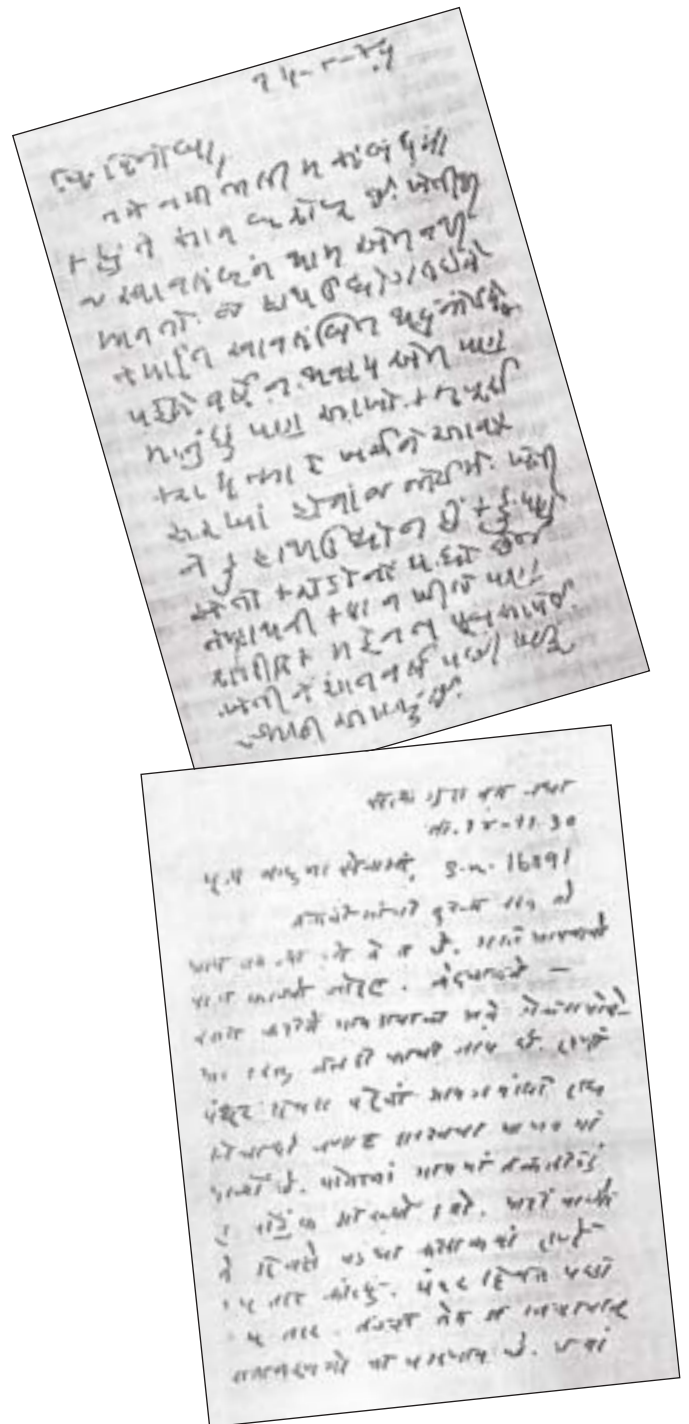
*Gandhiji's hut at Sabarmati Ashram*



*Vinobaji's hut at Sabarmati Ashram*

When I reached Varanasi, a speech that Gandhiji had delivered there was the talk of the town. In it, he had spoken a great deal about non-violence. I read the speech and started corresponding with him. Finally, he wrote, 'Your questions about non-violence cannot be settled by letters. It is life that will convince you. Come and stay with me for a few days in the Ashram.' So I went to him. That day was June 7, 1916.

I was attracted by the rules of the Ashram. 'The object of the Ashram', it was mentioned, 'is service of the country in such ways as are consistent with the welfare of the world as a whole'. Eleven vows were listed as necessary to attain that object : Truth, non-violence, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession and so on. This struck me as very surprising.



During my boyhood I had already been attracted by the revolutionary spirit of Bengal and the peace of the Himalayas. Eventually I neither went to Bengal nor to the Himalayas. I went to Gandhiji, and found in him both, the peace and the revolutionary spirit. Here was a man, I felt, who aimed at both political freedom and spiritual development together.

I met Gandhiji and was enchanted by the unity in him between the inward and the outward. It was Gandhiji who initiated me into *karmayoga* (yoga of selfless action). I learnt much from Gandhiji. What I learnt brought clarity to my thinking, particularly about absolute moral values.

From the time I met Gandhiji, I have devoted my life to carrying out his orders. There was a time when I used to dream of doing some act of violence and sacrificing myself at the altar of the country to win acclaim. Gandhiji drove that demon out of my mind. In the Ashram I felt myself growing, day-by-day and year-by-year.

In my life, I have received the greatest help from three people – Shankaracharya, Jnanadev and Gandhiji. For philosophical thought, it was Shankaracharya, for devotion, Jnanadev and for selfless action, Gandhiji.

Letters written by Gandhiji and Vinobaji to each other in their own handwriting

*Vinoba is one of the few pearls in the Ashram. They do not come here like others to be blessed by the Ashram, but to bless it, not to receive but to give.*

– **Gandhiji**

*Your son, Vinoba, is with me. He has reached the spiritual heights, for which I had to put in years of patient labour to reach. (From Gandhiji's letter to Vinobaji's father, written in 1916).*





२०/११/२०१०  
 जी. वि. वि. वि. वि.  
 ५५० १५० ५५०  
 ३३३३३३३३ /



At the earnest request of Jamnalalji Bajaj, Bapu decided to open a branch of the Satyagraha Ashram at Wardha, and directed me to take charge of it. So with one fellow-worker and four students, I started work there on April 8, 1921.

कोशा-न न कदा दूरे दया भोगी वसे वसो  
 'को-मासे' न कदा कोशी सुख-दुःखे सम-वे १३  
 भवे भवे जो भोगी भवे दूरे-कोशा  
 न. कोशा न. कोशा न. कोशा न. कोशा १४  
 १३ १३

*Gitai in Vinobaji's handwriting*

It was my mother's faith in me, which made me translate the Gita into Marathi. I began the work on October 7, 1930 and finished it on February 6, 1931. I gave the name 'Gitai' to the translation.

The world may forget all that I have done, all the service that I have rendered; but it cannot forget 'Gitai' and my 'Talks on the Gita'. These works will continue to serve and benefit the world. When I wrote the Gitai and delivered the talks I was in a state of *samadhi* (a state of consciousness that transcends the physical world).

In my boyhood, I was fond of composing poems. When I found them satisfactory, I would recite them two or three times and then offer them as a sacrifice to the God of fire. When I was at Varanasi, I would immerse the poems in the river Ganga. I do not think that I, or the world, lost anything thereby. In fact, I believe that Gitai is a gift of the God of fire and Mother Ganga.



*The building of Mahila Ashram where Vinobaji wrote 'Gitai'*

I spent five years of my life in jail between 1923-1942. I had to do a lot of things there – cooking, rope-making, weaving, grinding, and even the hard labour of breaking stones.

I experienced a real Ashram life in jail. A few clothes, a tumbler and a bowl – that was all I had. What better place could there be for following the vow of non-possession? Bathing, eating, working according to rule, going to bed and getting up by the bell – it was a perfectly regulated life! The vow of ‘control of the palate’ had, of course, to be practised everyday. There was also plenty of time for thinking and reflection. Spiritual discipline of the Ashram life can therefore be continued in the jail.

*His spirit is pure as an angel; in scholarship, philosophy and religion he has reached the topmost heights. Yet, so complete is his humility, so simple and straightforward his nature, that no official who does not already know him can discover what a great man he is. He does the tasks allotted to the C class of prisoners in which the jailer has put him; he sits breaking stones, no one can guess what physical torture he silently endures.*

– C. Rajgopalachari



Vinobaji in Dhule jail

**‘Talks on the Gita’ is the saga of my life, and it is also my message.**

At the instance of my fellow inmates in the Dhule jail, I agreed to give regular talks on the Gita and started to give a talk every Sunday. Sane Guruji wrote them all down, word for word. I cannot describe in words the state of my being while delivering these talks. If God ever speaks through human beings, then these are the words spoken by Him through me. While giving these talks I never felt that it was I who was speaking. The listeners, too, did not feel that it was Vinoba who was speaking.





After I joined Gandhiji, I did many kinds of work. I used to spin and weave for hours. I paid attention to all the processes of *khadi* (handspun and handwoven cloth) production and carried out experiments on them. Once I began the sacred exercise of spinning four hanks of yarn daily in order to arrive at a fair wage for spinners. It used to take eight and half to nine hours.

From 1932 onwards, we began going from village to village, trying to be of service to the people. After two or three years, we came to the conclusion that a concrete plan for service ought to be chalked out for the neighbouring villages. We therefore established Gramseva Mandal in 1934 and drew up a scheme for the whole of Wardha tehsil (subdivision of the district). *Khadi*, upliftment of the Harijans (untouchables) and such other activities were started in a few selected villages.

During our visits to the villages, we noticed that leprosy was rampant. We thought that this problem could not be ignored. Our friend Manohar Diwan was inspired to take it up and a leprosy centre was opened at Dattapur in 1936







I look upon myself as a manual labourer. That is why I spent thirty-two years of my youth, which are considered the best years of a man's life, in that kind of labour. I undertook activities which human society cannot do without, but which in India are looked down upon as low and mean – scavenging (removing human excreta), weaving, carpentry, agricultural labour etc. I am a manual labourer by vocation, though by birth I am a *Brahmin* – one living a life of *Aparigrah* (voluntary poverty) and *Brahmanishtha* (devotion to the spiritual quest). Whatever I did, I did for deeper and wider realization of the Self.

I studied Economics in 1924. To make my studies realistic I lived on two annas (13 paise) a day, as that was the average per capita income of the lowest stratum of Indian society at that time. Now, what does this austerity and penance have to do with the study of Economics? I hold that we can properly digest any subject only when we adapt ourselves to it, and harness our faculties and senses accordingly. So I matched my standard of living with my study of the theory of Economics. That study benefited me a great deal, and only the useful part of it was retained by my memory.

One of the chief causes of the inequality, crises and misery in society today is money. Money corrupts our social life. The saints, for the sake of spiritual discipline, always prohibited the use of money. Today it is necessary to prohibit it even to purify our normal social life. So we began the experiment of *kanchan-mukti* (doing without money) on January 1, 1950 at Paunar.

Greed for money has made the life, even in our villages, miserable and dependent. If the villagers could satisfy their basic needs in the village itself, they will be freed from the slavery of money. Money is unreliable and deceitful by nature. Self-sufficiency of the villages with respect to food, clothing, housing, education, health and security is indispensable for a non-violent society.



When Jamnalalji opened the Laxminarayana temple at Wardha to the Harijans, I had gone there. My gaze fixed itself on the idol for some fifteen minutes. It was as if, I was in a state of *samadhi*.

There was once a theft at the Laxminarayana temple. Jamnalalji told Gandhiji about it. Gandhiji said, 'It is good that The Lord is relieved of the bondage and the thief got money. Both must be happy!' Jamnalalji replied, 'If God is happy, the robber is happy, and Gandhiji is happy then I, too, am happy.' The idol was then divested of its riches and was adorned with *khadi*.



In 1938 I was in poor health. Gandhiji pressed upon me to go to some place to regain health. I agreed to go to Paunar (six miles from Wardha). Gandhiji told me to leave behind the whole load of work and not to worry or think about any work. So when the car taking me to Paunar reached the bridge on the river Dham, I repeated to myself three times : 'I have renounced, renounced, renounced.' I thus reached Paunar with a fully relaxed mind.

Paunar village was on one side of the river Dham and the place where I stayed was on the other. So I named it 'Paramdham' (Literally, beyond the Dham; but it also means 'the Ultimate Abode'). My health steadily improved there.



One day, in Paunar, while I was digging, I struck something hard in the ground. It was a big stone. It turned out to be a fine piece of sculpture; the subject was the reunion of Rama and Bharata after fourteen years of separation. In 1932, while giving a talk on the Gita in Dhule jail, I had said that had I been an artist I would have painted the scene depicting this loving reunion. This sculpture was just what I had then expressed in words. I took it as a gift from God, and therefore installed it in a shrine.

### Who is Vinoba?

*He is a Sanskrit scholar. He joined the Ashram almost at its inception. He has taken part in every menial activity of the Ashram from scavenging to cooking. Though he has a marvellous memory and is a student by nature, he has devoted the largest part of his time to spinning. He has revolutionized Takli spinning and drawn out its hitherto unknown possibilities. He has abolished every trace of untouchability from his heart. He believes in communal unity with the same passion that I have. In order to understand the best of Islam, he studied the Quran in the original Arabic language. He has an army of disciples and workers who would rise to any sacrifice at his bidding. He has never been in the limelight on any political platform. He thoroughly believes that non-violent resistance is impossible without active participation in constructive work.*

– Gandhiji



*The first satyagrahi chosen by Gandhiji for individual satyagraha*

One fine morning in 1940 I got a call from Bapu, asking me to meet him. I went over at once. He said, ‘I am in need of your help. I don’t know whether you are free or not, but we have to start individual *satyagraha* now. I want you to get ready for it, if you can free yourself from other work without much trouble.’ I replied in jest, ‘In my eyes, your call is as imperative as that of *Yamaraj* – the god of death. I don’t even need to go back to Paunar.’ .... During this *satyagraha* I was jailed thrice and spent about 21 months in different prisons.



*With Gandhiji at the Faizpur Congress*





*The first satyagrahi in the Individual satyagraha, with Jamnalalji Bajaj*



*The satyagraha begins*

I started *Satyagraha* from Paunar village where I was residing. In a few days I was jailed. I was also imprisoned during the 'Quit India' movement. In all, I spent around five years in jail. I did a lot of study during those days. I studied many languages. I looked through Marx's works. I used to study for 14-15 hours daily. In Nagpur jail, I would listen to the Quran on the radio to learn the proper pronunciation of Arabic words.





*With Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India, and Shriman Narayan, returning from the immersion site of Gandhiji's ashes at Purnar*



*With Pandit Nehru, Prime Minister of India. Also seen in the picture are Pt. Ravishankar Shukla and Mrudula Sarabhai*



*Flag-hoisting*

In the Ashram I used to keep myself busy throughout the day with some activity or the other. I spent thirty years of my life in quiet *sadhana* – in action, meditation, devotion and constructive work. During this period, I devoted myself to spinning, service of the cows, village service, propagation of *khadi*, farming without the aid of bullocks or machines (*rishi-kheti*) etc. I carried out the great experiment of *kanchan-mukti*. I am not a propagandist by nature; I am a humble seeker of Truth and a servant of the people. My quest has been for the purification of individual and social life. I derive joy and satisfaction from constructive work alone.

माध्वीर् गावो भवन्तु नः





*With Kishorlal Mashruwala, a close associate of Gandhiji*

There are few people in the world who have a pure heart and have become dispassionate by the grace of God – I count Kishorlalbhai as one among them.



*Nagari script is simple and scientific; yet it is not perfect. To remove its shortcomings and to enable it to have wide acceptance, Vinobaji made certain modifications in it and named the modified version 'Loknagari'. A typewriter with Loknagari alphabets was also put together. Quite a few books were published in this script. Vinobaji also used this script in his correspondence for many years.*





After Gandhiji's death, in 1948 at the instance of Pandit Nehru, I agreed to spend six months, on an experimental basis, in the service of those made homeless by the partition of the country. I worked hard. It did have some results. However, I could not find the thing I was in search of. I did not feel that the power of non-violence could become manifest through such rehabilitation work.

*Addressing a public meeting from a jeep*

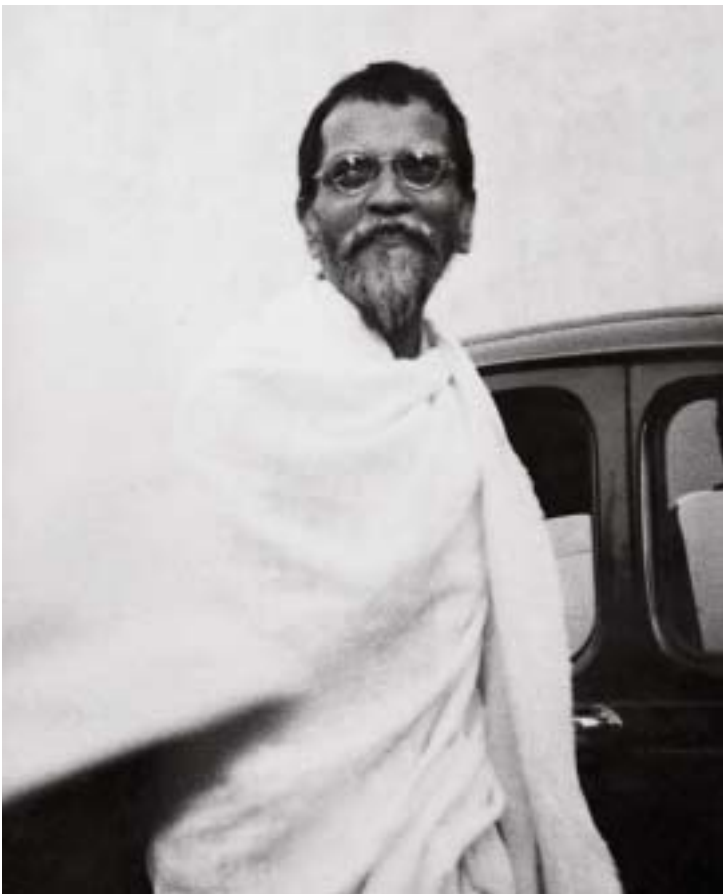
*Among the Meos*





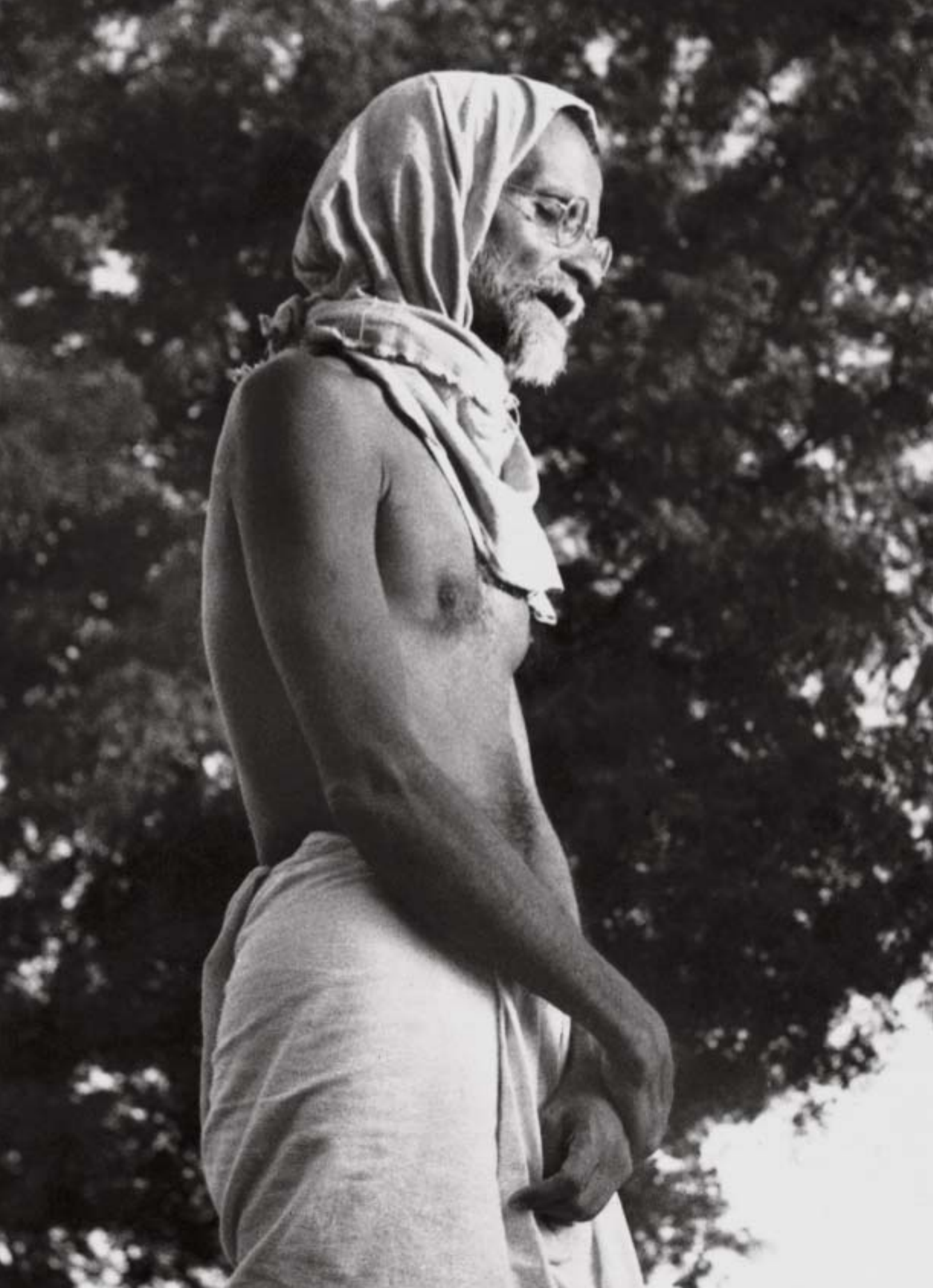
*In the dargah at Ajmer*

In those days there were many conflicts between Hindus and Muslims. The Muslims of Ajmer felt they were in danger. So I stayed there for seven days, and visited the holy dargah everyday. That place is regarded as the Mecca of India. The Muslims welcomed me with great affection. At my instance, both Hindus and Muslims prayed together. The Muslims showered much love and trust on me, and every one of them came and kissed my hand.









Whatever God wills me to do will be done. I cannot draw a plan for myself; nor am I inclined to do so. If I could become an instrument in His hands, that is more than enough. I have no separate individual will of my own; and I do not want to have one.







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## **Charaiveti Charaiveti**

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**Move on, Move on**

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Journey on foot for Bhoodan

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My body has been used to walking since childhood. Walking has been a source of knowledge, creativity, energy and delight to me. When you walk in the open, under the boundless expanse of the sky, your heart too becomes naturally large and expansive.

When a man is lying down, his whole body touches the ground. When he sits, a part of his body touches the ground, the rest remains in the sky. When he stands up, only the soles of his feet touch the ground. But when he starts walking, only one foot touches the ground. The lesser the contact with earth, the greater is the contact with heaven. That is why the scriptures say – *Charaiveti Charaiveti* (move on, move on).

When we look down towards those who are less privileged and less fortunate, we feel compassion. When we look up towards those who are more privileged and fortunate, we feel envy. Just as water always flows downwards, so should our compassion flow towards those who are less fortunate than us. True compassion does not let a man sit still. It is such compassion that drives me to move. Neither knowledge, nor renunciation can do that. My driving forces are empathy and compassion.

Going on foot brings one closer to nature and to people, than any other form of travel.



*On the way to Hyderabad*

We are going on foot to Hyderabad, a distance of three hundred miles. We will be walking fifteen miles a day, on an average. You may ask, what kind of madness is this? We are doing this to meet the people, to listen to their difficulties, to establish relations with them.

At the instance of Gandhiji, I engaged myself as best as I could, for about thirty years in constructive work. I did not feel like going out anywhere. After Gandhiji's death I had to travel, but that was mostly by car or by rail. I felt that I would not be able to achieve my goal using these means of transport. How can these speedy forms of travel, which are not conducive to depth of thought, but rather perturb the mind, be used for spreading the message of non-violence? For me, provision of temporary relief to the people was not enough. What I was seeking, as a soldier of peace, was a technique to establish peace, which is essential for *Sarvodaya*. It occurred to me that I should travel about the country on foot. I seized the first opportunity to make a beginning, in this direction, in Hyderabad state. This provided me with a glimpse of the power of non-violence.



*Listening to the difficulties of the villagers*

*I do not want to know your religion or your views, but only what your troubles are. I want to help you to get rid of them. - Louis Pasteur (Vinobaji liked these words very much. He had written them down in his copy of the Upanishads)*



*Talking with Shri Ramachandra Reddy, the first land-donor*

Today the *harijans* (those hitherto considered untouchables) of this Pochampalli village came to see me. They said that if only they could get a bit of land, they could work on the land and so make a living. I told them to submit a petition which I would forward to the government. But a man who was present at the meeting offered to give the *harijans* one hundred acres of his own land. ... An idea was born in my heart. I could not sleep that night. The incident set me thinking. All night long I pondered over what had happened. Was it a miracle? Or, had it any deeper significance? ... I realized that the power pervading the cosmos was preparing for something new. It had given an indication. The opportunity must be grabbed. The next day, in another village, I asked for the gift of land with confidence. The villagers had come with garlands to welcome me. I told them that I do not want garlands; give me land. The people there were absolutely unprepared for such a demand. Yet, I received twenty-five acres of land as a gift. When two points are joined, we get a line. The first two gifts I received formed a line. ... Thus began the *Bhoodan-yajna* in Telangana.





*Walking pilgrimage in Telangana*

Whatever work I did in the *ashrams* or elsewhere, I have aimed at finding out how difficulties of every kind in the life of society, and in the life of individuals, may be overcome by non-violence. That is my main task. It was this mission that took me to Telangana.



*A public meeting in Telangana*

I have not come to beg; I have come to initiate you into something higher.

The word *Dan* (donation) is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Da', which has two meanings. One, to give, and second, to cut. To give a donation means to cut something from one's portion and give.

There are three ways of working in the world – violence, legislation and compassion. The way of violence can never be beneficial to anybody. Legislation cannot generate independent strength of the people. It is the path of compassion and love that we should take.

I want you to treat the *Daridranarayana* (Lord in the form of the poor), who is starving, as a member of your family. If there are four members in your family consider him the fifth member of your family and give Him His due.





At the age of fifty-five I started my walking tour. It was as if I had become a child again at that age. I have never considered myself an old man; nor a young man. I walked with the carefree spirit of a child.



*Entry into Delhi (November 1951). Viyogi Hari is at the extreme right*



I found great peace and inspiration at Gandhiji's memorial shrine at Rajghat (Delhi). I decided to stay there because of the feelings associated with it. Though God is to be found in every place, there are some places where His glory cannot be effaced. ... My stay of eleven days at Rajghat (November 13-23, 1951) was spent in His holy presence.



I held discussions with the Planning Commission at Delhi and put forward my ideas very clearly – No national planning is worthy of its name if it fails to provide full employment to all the people in the nation. National planning should accept the fundamental responsibility of providing employment to all. Work for all and food for all – these ought to be its basic premises, since these are the basic necessities of the people.

A member of the Planning Commission mentioned that this is not national planning; it is partial planning and somebody or the other would have to make some sacrifice. I retorted that if it were partial planning, then partiality should be for the poor! We should not sacrifice others; rather, we should sacrifice ourselves.





*A cyclist once accidentally knocked down Vinobaji, injuring his knee. But the mission did not stop. When even a bullock-cart could not be used, he was carried on a chair. Mahavir Tyagi, the then Central Minister of State for Finance, helped in carrying the chair. (December 1951).*











*Use of a bullock-cart when  
the injured knee made  
walking impossible.*



People ask me to which sect I belong. I belong to the community of mad men. I am crazy, and want to drive others crazy.

The walking pilgrimage during the first year was truly wonderful. I walked alone, and received 100,000 acres of land as a gift. I walked, without a care in the world. I remembered a line in one of Tagore's songs : 'Walk alone, O thou unfortunate one, walk alone!' I modified it a bit to suit myself : 'Walk alone, O thou most fortunate one, walk alone!'











*Padayatra* (walking tour) offers an opportunity for observation. It adds years to one's life. Someone once told me, 'The swiftest traveller is one who walks.'





मैं मिट्टी पाने आया रे भाई, मैं मिट्टी पाने आया  
जो कुछ तेरे पास नहीं है, देने-दिलाने आया रे भाई।



We have to establish equality in our country. No country can progress while keeping economic and social disparities intact. That is why one third of the land distributed during the Bhoodan movement was allotted to *Harijans*.



Our poor are not only landless, they are also dumb. I am pleading their case as best as I can. I always make it clear that I am not begging for land; I am asking for the rightful share of the dumb.

सुरम्य शांति के लिए जमीन दो, जमीन दो,  
महान क्रांति के लिए जमीन दो, जमीन दो।  
जमीन दो कि देश का अभाव दूर हो सके,  
जमीन दो कि द्वेष का प्रभाव दूर हो सके।  
जमीन दो कि भूमिहीन लोग काम पा सकें,  
उठा कुदाल बाजुओं का जोर आजमा सकें।



The first village I received as *Gramdan* (gift of the lands of an entire village) was in Uttar Pradesh. Its name is Mangroth. In *Gramdan* the whole village will become one family and the land will be shared by the whole village. *Bhoodan* was impelled by compassion, whereas *Gramdan* has, in addition to compassion, the idea of *Samyayoga* behind it.

I always repeat the *mantra* that like air, water and sunlight, land is also God's gift; and everybody has equal right over it.



बोल रहा है संत विनोबा करके ऊंची बांह रे  
ग्रामदान से बन जायेगा गोकुल अपना गांव रे









I am a mendicant. I attach little value to money. Even such things as organisations have no value for me. What, then, do I value? I value thoughts and ideas.



The compassion I feel is not for individuals but for society. I believe that when compassion expands to embrace the whole of creation, it acquires both depth and serenity which is not to be found in the manifestation of shallow love. Still waters run deep.

When a man takes a dip in the inner recesses of his Self, it lends a freshness to his life.



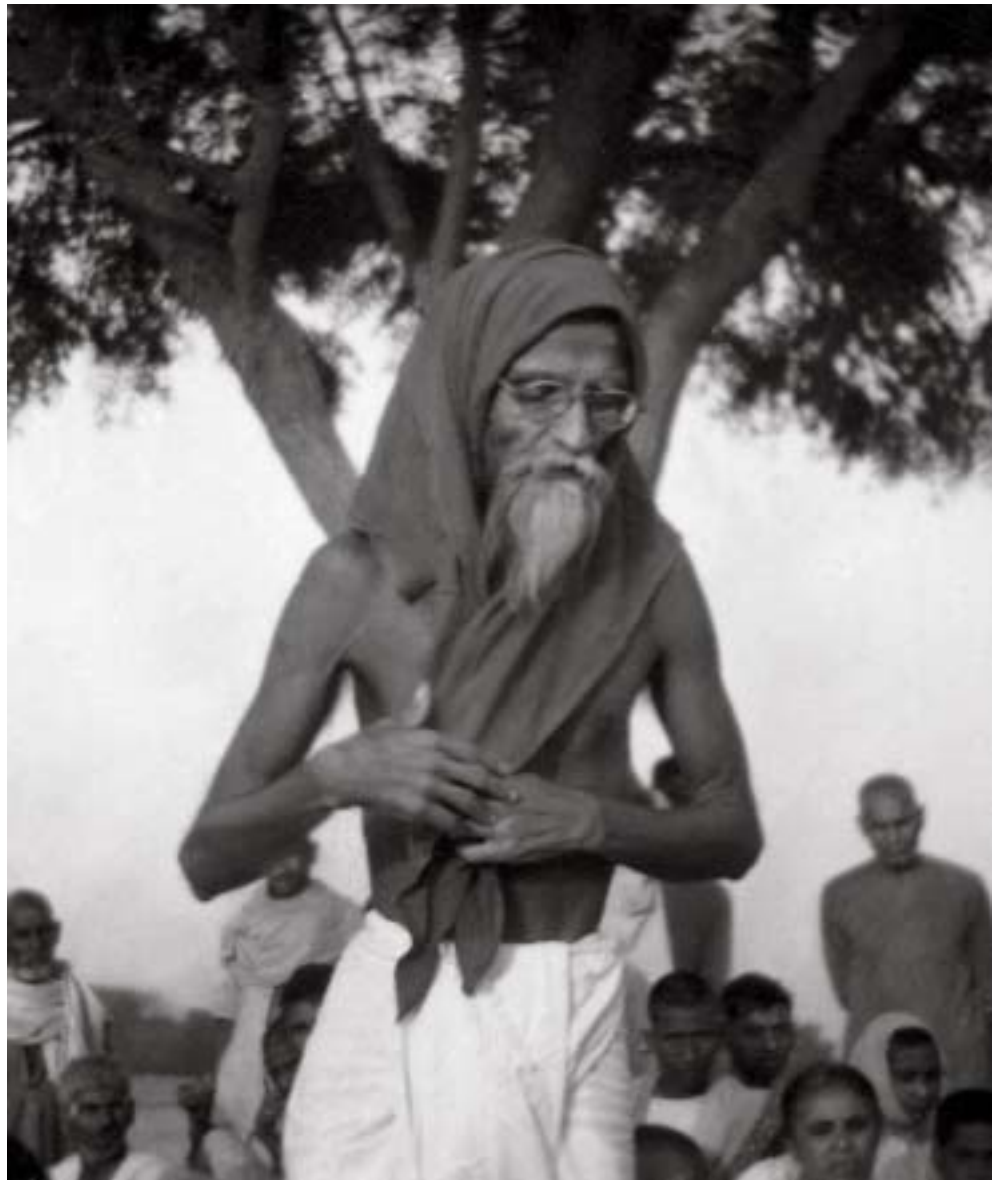




I have autographed millions of copies of the 'Talks on the Gita' published in several languages. (*The Talks on the Gita has been published in 24 languages and more than 100 editions. Over 25 lac copies of this book have reached the people.*)



नि ते ५० न/३  
वि न/६



Mangru, a half-clad labourer, insisted on donating five decimals (one-twentieth of an acre) out of half an acre of land he owned.

Ramcharan, a blind man, came to our camp at 11 in the night and went off after submitting the declaration of land donation. It was as if Lord Rama's *charans* (feet) had come to bless me.

Once an owner of three hundred acres of land came and offered to donate one acre. I explained to him that such a small donation would bring disgrace to him – “I desire enhancement in the reputation of all – the rich as well as the poor. Had I needed land for my *ashram*, I would have gladly accepted it; but I am here as a representative of *Daridranarayana*.” He understood my standpoint and unhesitatingly gave away thirty acres.

Many of the poor and the destitute have donated with devotion a fraction of whatever little they possessed. For me, it is a saga of unforgettable devotion. This *yajna* has motivated the poor for their emancipation, while urging the rich to purify themselves and renounce ownership rights.





आज इक फकीर की जो भूमि की पुकार है,  
पुकार है यह दीन की, यह देश की पुकार है।  
पुकार दीन-हीन की न अब भुलायेंगे,  
भूमिदान-यज्ञ हम सफल बनायेंगे।



The search for non-violence has been the mission of my life. Every activity I have started, every task that I have undertaken, has been, and still is, a part of that search.



In the initial stages of *Bhoodan* I would go from house to house. I worked for twelve hours daily during the Telangana tour. I would walk for three to four hours and talk for eight to ten hours. I would take a round of the village, have meetings and hold discussions with the workers. The whole day I would be busy. I myself would walk around and personally receive 50 to 60 acres of land per day there. ... In Bihar, I received approximately 3,00,000 declarations of donations, even though I hardly did anything myself. I would just give one talk in the morning and one in the evening. Sometimes there would be a meetings with the workers. Besides that, there were only 'walking seminars'. I would neither go from house to house nor ask for donations myself. The workers did everything.

संत विनोबा बोल रहा है सत्य और प्रेम की बानी,  
बैर से काम सदा बिगड़ेगा होड से होगी हानि।  
स्नेह की डोरी सबको बांधूं और  
स्वयं बंध जाऊं री मैया।





નિમનિત્ત કામ કરાવે /  
નિમનિત્ત

## Spinning : The 25 points

### Who should spin?

1. *Everybody* should spin regularly for half an hour every day. 2. *Teachers* should spin more. 3. *Students* should spin more till they achieve proficiency in it. 4. *All the workers* - ordinary as well as the leading ones - should spin. 5. *Women* should spin in the spare time after finishing household chores. 6. *Farmers* should spin in the spare time after doing agricultural work. 7. *Lawyers*, doctors and businessmen should spin for the cloth they need. 8. *Mendicants* should spin while taking the Lord's name. 9. *Everybody* should spin as much as they can.

### Why should one spin?

One should spin ...

10. ...believing it a religious duty. 11. ... to set an example to the people. 12. ... as a subject of study. 13. ... as a form of art. 14. ...as a means of concentration. 15. ...as a symbol of solidarity. 16. ...as the nation decrees so. 17. ...as an expression of sympathy with the poor. 18. ...as a form of light exercise. 19. ...as a hobby. 20. .. for one's clothing needs. 21. ...for making the sacred thread. 22. ...as a means of livelihood. 23. ...as a means of recreation. 24. ... for *swarajya* (freedom). 25. ...for realization of God.







This weak yarn is the yarn of love that binds us with the world. This is what the *Takli* symbolizes. It is a vote for the Sarvodaya ideology. Spinning is a beautiful form of worship for all the people in the nation.

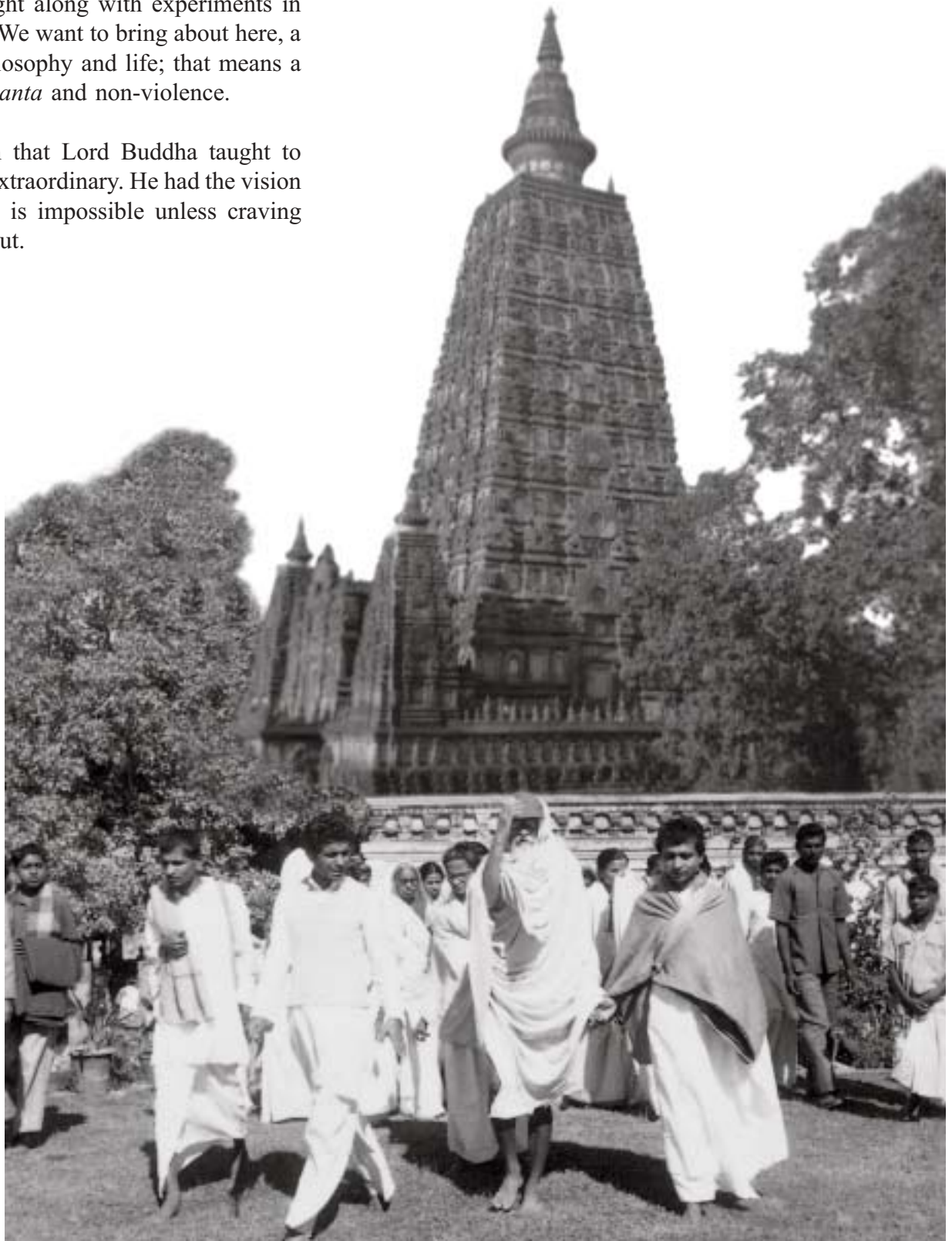
The spinning wheel is a symbol of non-violence, a symbol of the dignity of labour, a symbol of self-sufficiency and self-reliance, a symbol of identification with the poor.



Research should go on in the field of spirituality too; otherwise, progress would reach a dead end. The mind should be receptive to new thoughts. We should, of course, be firm on certain basic values, but for the rest, our mind should be open. To the extent that we can achieve this, we advance towards harmony and synthesis.

Indian culture and life have developed through the process of synthesis. I have therefore established *Samanvaya Ashram* at Bodhgaya, the place associated with Lord Buddha. I expect the ashram to undertake a study of the various schools of thought along with experiments in practical living. We want to bring about here, a synthesis of philosophy and life; that means a synthesis of *Vedanta* and non-violence.

The compassion that Lord Buddha taught to the people was extraordinary. He had the vision that compassion is impossible unless craving and hatred die out.



*Vinobaji at the  
Bodhgaya temple*





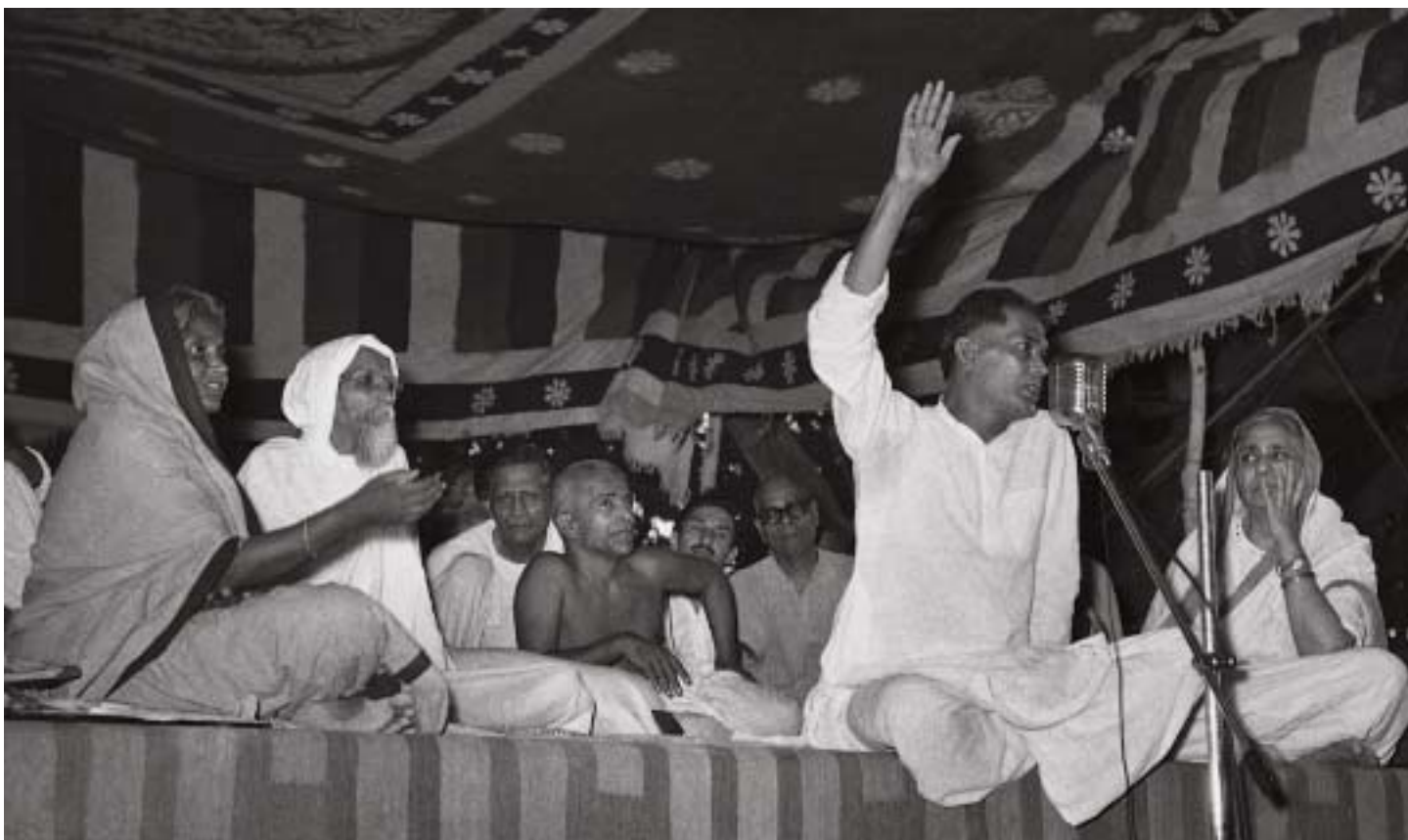


I often say, in amusement, that I rarely get an opportunity to have a look at my face in the mirror. It is not necessary. I see myself reflected in all splendour in all the faces before me.

*Vinobaji was about to start the pilgrimage in the darkness before the dawn when a woman came up to him and said, "I heard you yesterday evening and had a discussion with my family members. I own two acres of land and have only one son. So please accept my gift of one acre." Before Vinobaji could say anything she added, "I have one more request. I am donating a cow also. Kindly accept it."*

*With Jayprakash Narayan, at the meeting, in his Sokhodevra Ashram*





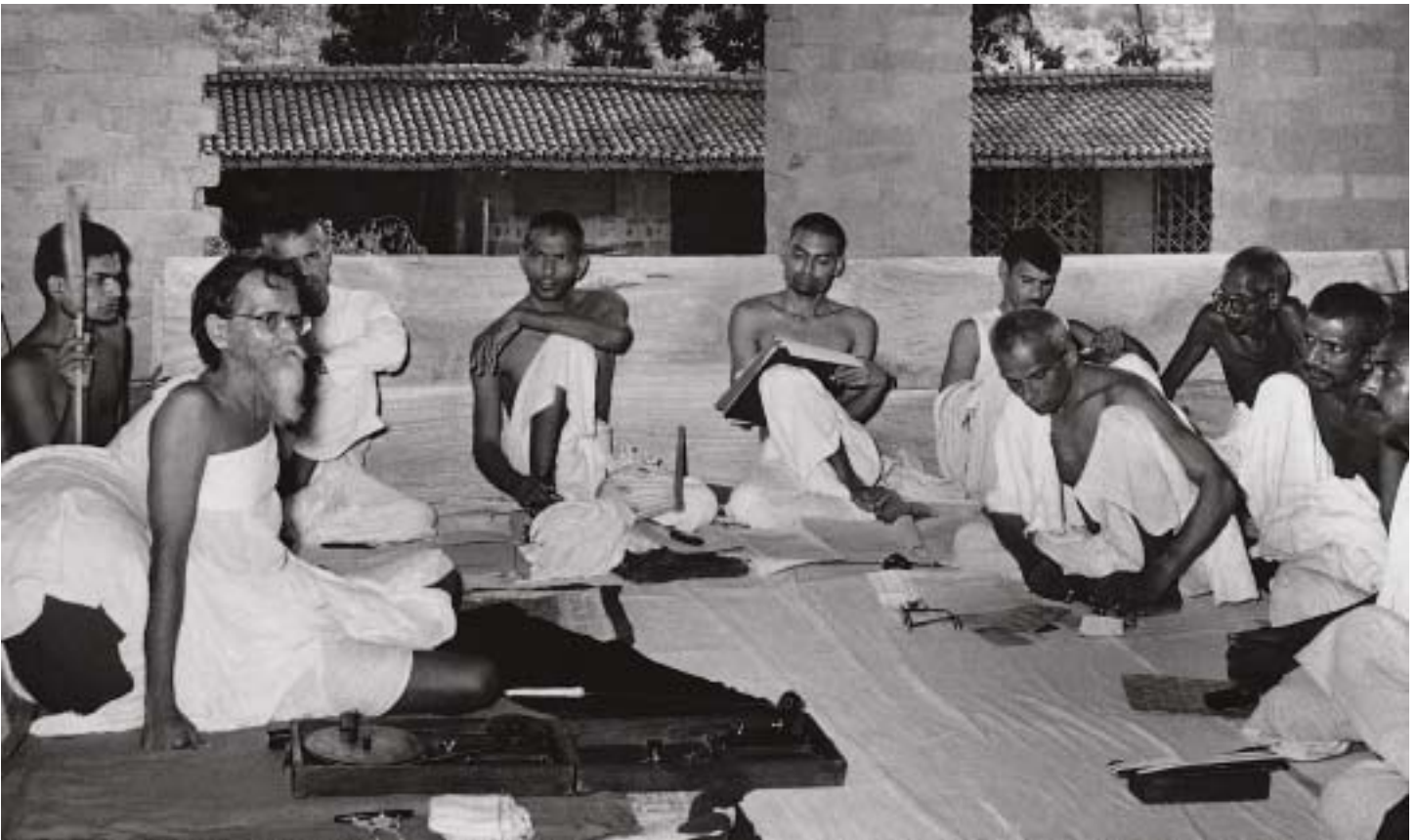
*Jayaprakash Narayan declaring his resolve of 'Jeevandan'*

*Bhoodan* (gift of land), *Sampattidan* (gift of wealth), *Shramdan* (gift of labour) – all these finally led to *Jeevandan* (dedicating one's entire life for the cause).



When Jayaprakashji declared his *Jeevandan*, it set me thinking that I, too, should do something. I, then, wrote him a letter - -'Shri Jayaprakashji, in response to your appeal, I hereby dedicate my life to the non-violent revolution, having its foundation in *Bhoodan-yajna* and centred on the village industries.'





Only those workers who have the spirit of renunciation as well as the revolutionary spirit will be able to continue in this movement. They will not last, if they lack one or the other.

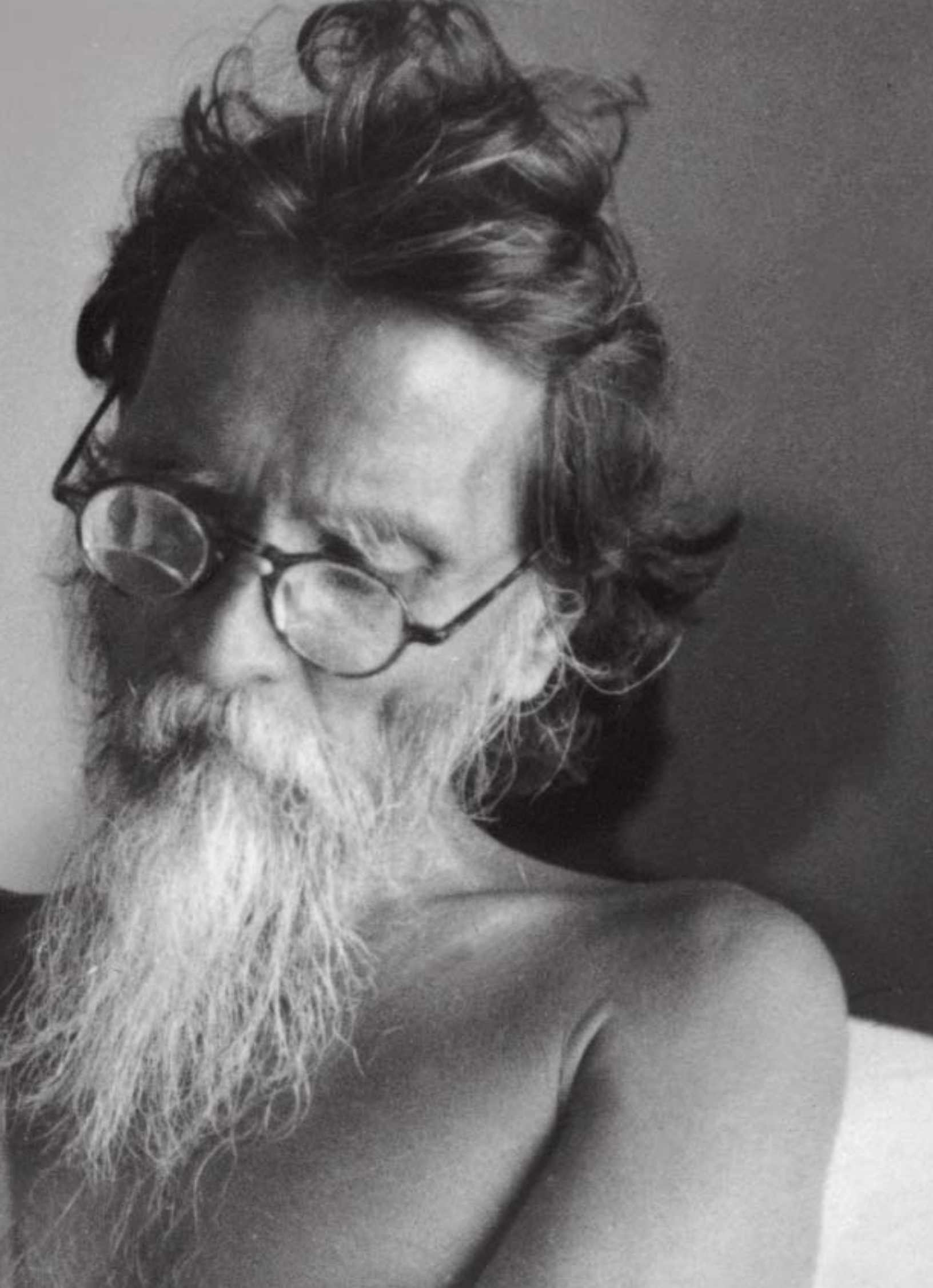


Today two powers are operating in the world : the power of violence and the power of the state. We seek a third power – the power of the people, which will be opposed to the power of violence and will be different from the power of the state. This power will have to be created.

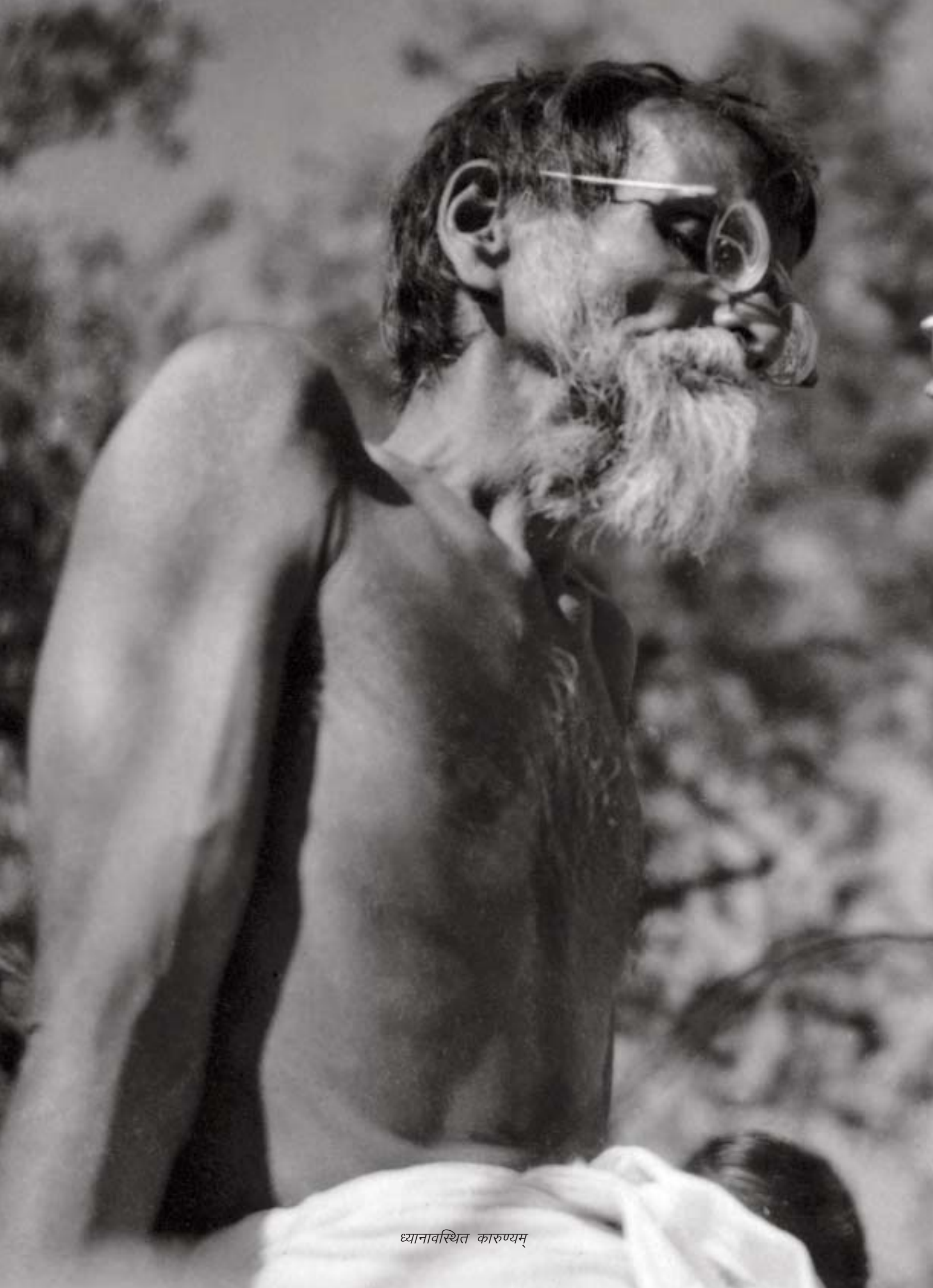
One who is always engaged in studies will be ever fresh. He will always have new insights, new ideas. He will never grow old. As his body gets worn out his memory and power of thinking goes on brightening.

Lord Buddha had said that just as the body remains clean when we bathe everyday and the house remains clean when we sweep it daily, the mind remains clean when we study everyday.







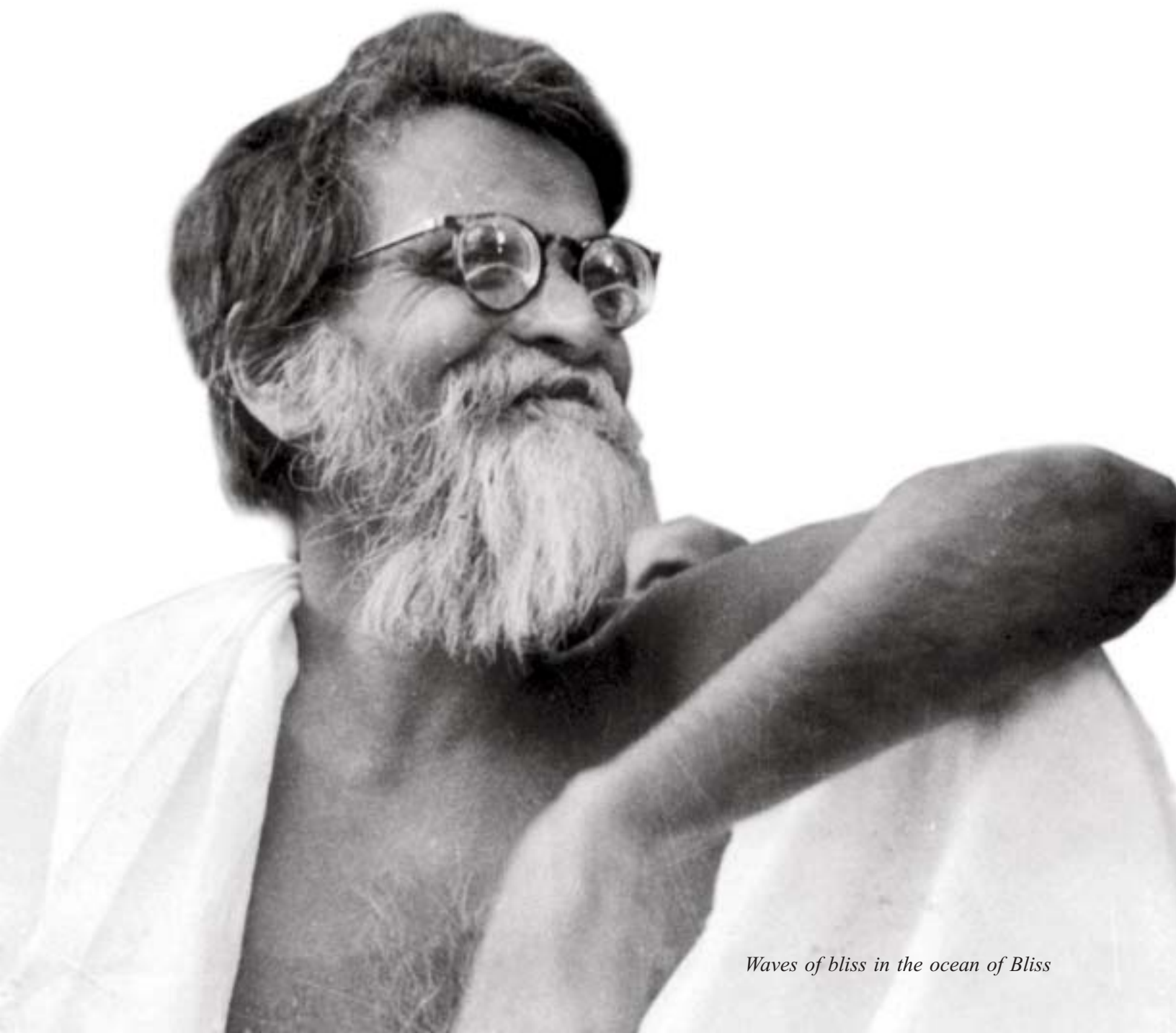


ध्यानावस्थित कारुण्यम्



I am constantly living in the presence of God. I do not feel that it is on my own strength that I am carrying out this walking mission for *Bhoodan*.

There is always communication with God going on within. I say – it is not my complaint that I have been given less than what my devotion deserves. Rather, I have received far more in return for the devotion I have been able to offer. That is why there is a deep sense of gratitude in my heart.

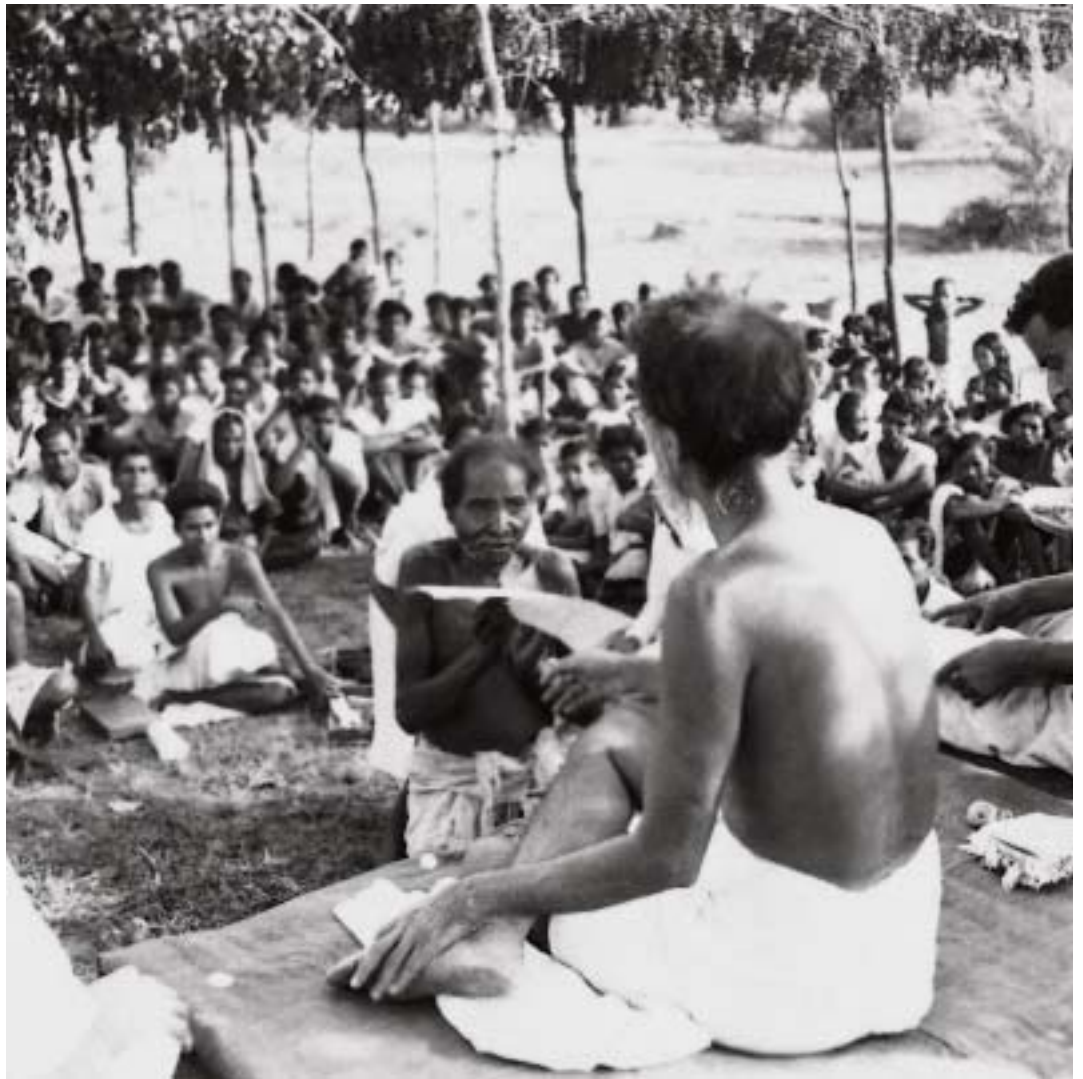


*Waves of bliss in the ocean of Bliss*





At Jagannathpuri, we had gone to the temple of Lord Jagannath with hearts full of devotion. But we had to return from its gate. We had a French sister with us, who was not allowed to enter the shrine. It would have been irreligious for me to enter the temple without her. I had said at that time that I had no ill feeling towards those who refused us entry. They were victims of the way their minds had been conditioned, and therefore helpless. However, this is an unfortunate incident for our country and our religion.



*Land distribution – giving the gift of land to a tribal*

Today, we have standing before us the hungry Lord. He milks the cows, but He does not get milk to drink. He works in the orchard, but cannot taste the fruits. He works in the wheat fields, but remains hungry. He has no roof over his head. Such a hungry, thirsty, homeless Lord is standing before us. He is saying : feed me, give me clothes, I am shivering in the cold.



*Tribals in Koraput attending a meeting*





*Land distribution*



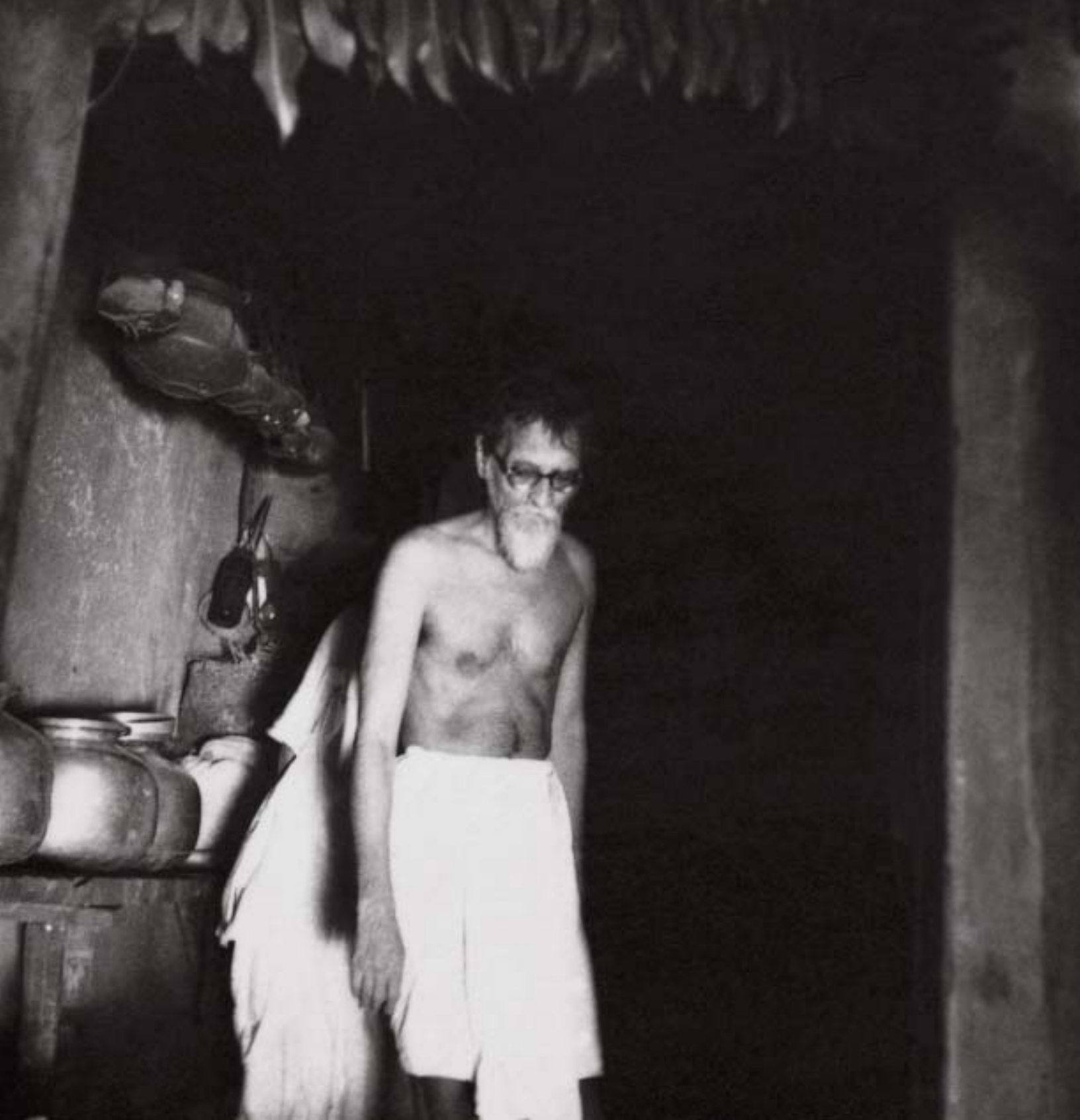
*In the Konark temple*





*The walking pilgrimage used to start at 4 a.m., when it would be pitch dark outside, with the chanting of the Lord's name*

God has created the beautiful darkness which enables us to experience contentment, joy and peace. We are able to see the bright stars in the sky. But people have set even the darkness on fire.



*In a tribal hut in Koraput where there is darkness at noon.*

*Next page –  
Meditation at sunrise during the padayatra*

Formula of life : **M<sub>2</sub> A** –

M<sub>2</sub> = Meditation two parts

A = Action one part









Meeting and a campsite made of twigs and branches in a tribal hamlet in Koraput.

साम्य-सूत्राणि

I (4)

- 1 अमीधेयं परमसाम्यम्
- 2 संवधेयं
- 3 प्रयोगवशात्
- 4 उद्बुद्धेयम्

II (6)

- 5 उदसीकृतम्
- 6 देहेन स्वधर्मः
- 7 मुक्तताया
- 8 मुक्तता समन्वयः
- 9 मन्ता-नोप
- 10 ११: प्रहारायः

We have a tradition of putting a body of thought in a few *sutras* (aphorisms), to serve as a treasure house for students. One can then ruminate over them constantly. I had been thinking, for a long time, of composing Sanskrit aphorisms on the 'Talks on the Gita'. In the course of our *Bhoodan* pilgrimage in Orissa we had to trek through dense forests for quite a few months. The solitude and the beautiful natural surroundings provided an ideal setting for fulfilling that desire, and the 108 *Samya-sutras* (aphorisms of equanimity) were composed. These aphorisms have taken shape after deep reflection. They can be likened to the *Yoga-sutras* of Patanjali. Though they are based on the 'Talks on the Gita', they can be treated as independent aphorisms and used as such for reflection.





*Beating the drum taken from the tribals who had come to welcome him*

We have to travel on foot if we want to identify ourselves with the people. There is no other way. When I travel on foot, the people trust me and talk to me unreservedly. They feel that I am one of their own.





Today we had to cross the river through chest-high water. Was it a pleasant experience for the body? Had it been personal work, one could have thought, it is raining today, I will go tomorrow. However, this is social work; and so it has to be done on schedule. All these workers who are walking on and on, even in the rains, are working with a sense of social responsibility.



Today's trek was especially beautiful. It was raining throughout the night yesterday. We had to cross rivers and streams nineteen times today.

*Crossing a river on the shoulders of workers*

As the time for prayer approaches, I feel a hunger for prayer.

I often compare prayer to bath, meals and sleep. Bath cleans the body, whereas prayer cleanses the mind. The body is nourished by food, whereas the mind is nourished by prayer. Sleep gives rest to the body and rejuvenates it, whereas prayer provides rest to the mind and rejuvenates it spiritually.



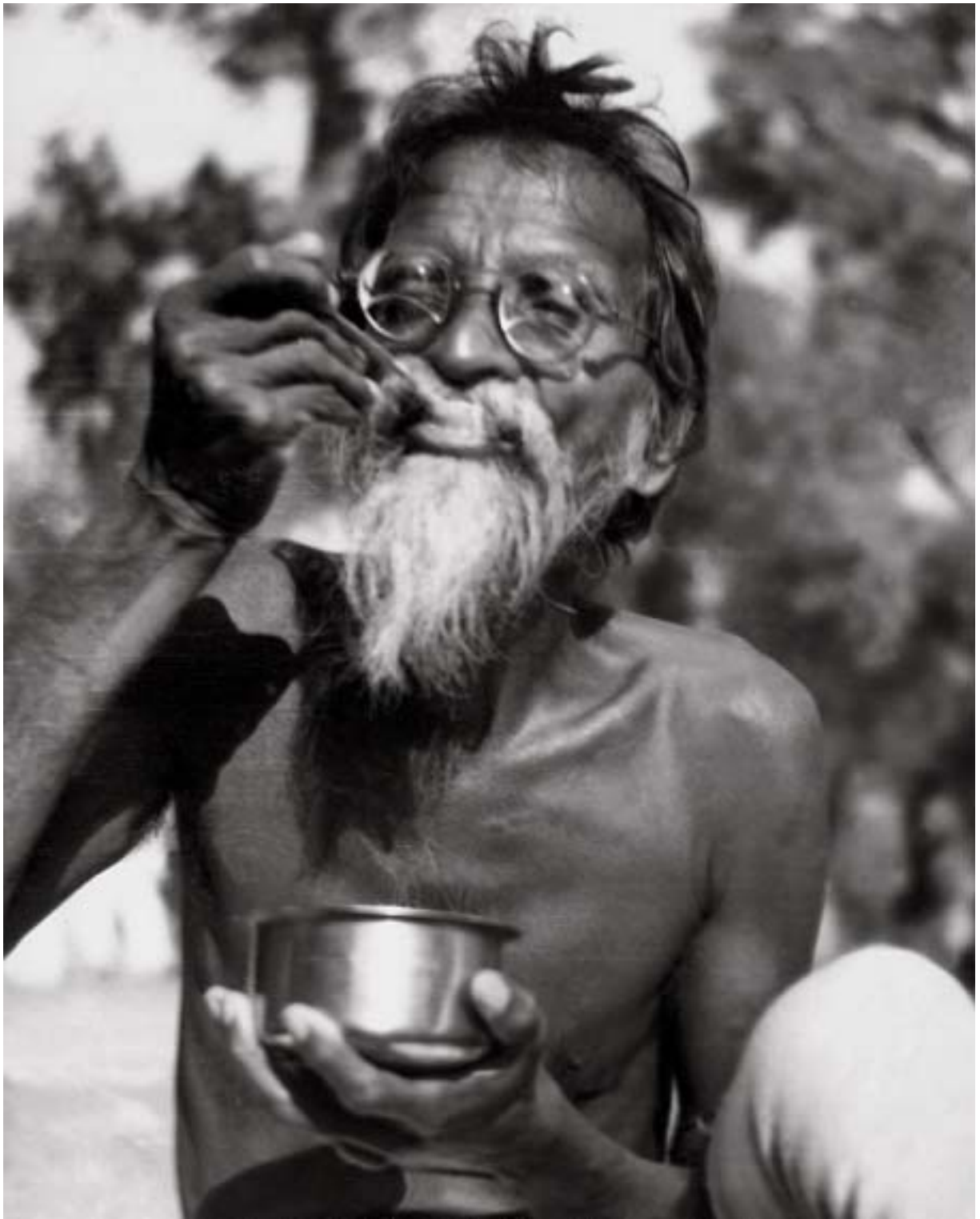
रामनामशुं ताळी रे लागी





जन की जर्जर झोपड़ियों में, जागृति-ज्योति जगाता  
गांव-गांव की गली-गली में मोहन मंत्र सुनाता





I have ulcers in my stomach. I have a *mantra* for it 'No hurry, no worry'. I have added to it the words '*Hari Hari*' – (*chanting of God's Name*). (*Vinobaji kept the disease under control by living on a milk-diet*)

*“Yavashcha me, tilashcha me, godhoomashcha me”*

– “Give me barley, give me sesame, give me wheat.”

Even more than this, has the *Rishi* (vedic sage) asked. After all, how big would be the stomach of the *Rishi*, who asks in this way? He who was asking was not one whose body measured three and a half cubits, but a soul who had become one with the universe. He asked for the community, for others; but nothing for himself.





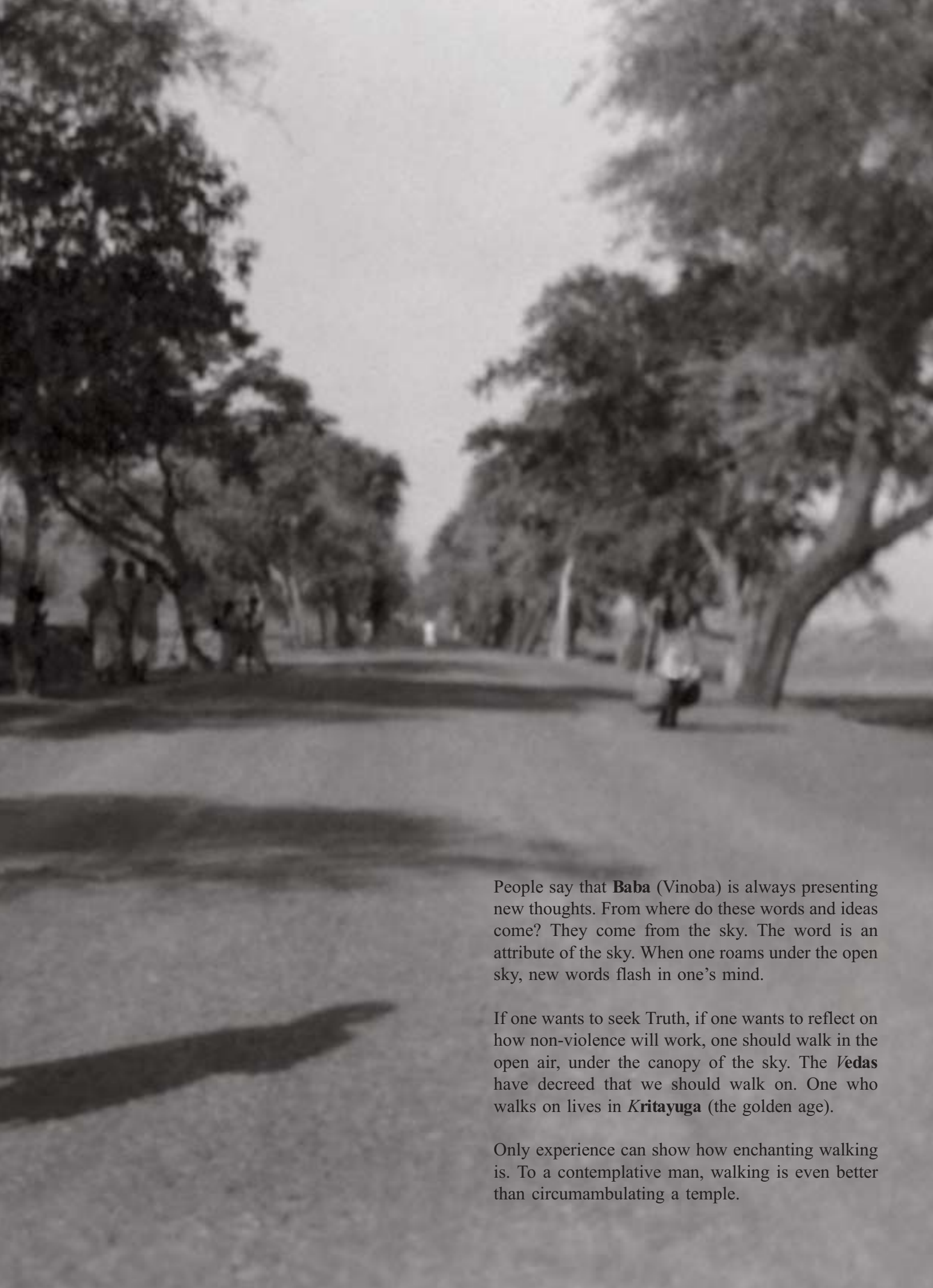
*A prayer-meeting in Tamilnadu (1956)*

What I really seek through this work is to arouse the divinity that lies dormant in man.

God reveals Himself in three ways – in common humanity, in the vastness of nature, in the spirit within the heart. These three together form the complete revelation of the Supreme.







People say that **Baba** (Vinoba) is always presenting new thoughts. From where do these words and ideas come? They come from the sky. The word is an attribute of the sky. When one roams under the open sky, new words flash in one's mind.

If one wants to seek Truth, if one wants to reflect on how non-violence will work, one should walk in the open air, under the canopy of the sky. The *Vedas* have decreed that we should walk on. One who walks on lives in *Kritayuga* (the golden age).

Only experience can show how enchanting walking is. To a contemplative man, walking is even better than circumambulating a temple.



*Walking pilgrimage in Chennai. Also seen in the picture are K.Kamaraj, Chief Minister of the state and Shri Aryanayakam.*

**Tamil** means sweet. The Tamil language is extremely sweet. Tamilnadu is a land of devotion. The special characteristic of Tamilnadu is that there is a temple in the centre of the village and the lives of the village people are woven around it.





The walking tour reached Kanyakumari. As the sun was rising, we watched the sea bathing Kanyakumari's feet. ... I renewed the pledge I had already taken, that this body will go on working ceaselessly, until such time as the political freedom of India gets transformed into the freedom of every village community.





The sea is roaring majestically all the time, as if chanting ॐ! ॐ! ॐ! (Om,Om,Om), reminding one of the Gita's exhortation - मामनुस्मर युध्य च (Remember Me and fight on).

***Kanyakumari ...where the three oceans merge***





From Tamilnadu the walking mission went on to Kerala. The establishment of *Shanti Sena* (Peace Army) was the most noteworthy event in the Kerala tour. **Bhoodan** had already emerged as a vehicle for the propagation of non-violence in society. I thought that the time was now ripe for the establishment of a Peace Army consisting of peace soldiers, one for every five thousand of the population. These soldiers should be thoughtful and active servants of society. Their normal task will be to serve the society in such a way that any outbreak of violence will be prevented. However, in case peace does get disturbed, their job will be to restore it.

*Supreme Commander of  
Shanti Sena*

We walked on, chanting the verses of the *Samaveda* – ‘The spring is lovely, the summer is lovely, the rainy season is lovely, the winter is lovely ...’













While walking in the pouring rain, I would chant aloud the *Vedic* verse wherein the sage prays for a heavy downpour, as a sign of the grace of God. 'Let there be no obstacles hindering our pace. God Himself is touching us through these thousands of raindrops. Therefore, our will power should also increase a thousand-times.' My experience has affirmed this.



The Vedas have decreed that we should walk on and on – *Charaiveti Charaiveti*. It has been said that if you sit still, your fortune too will stand still, but if you start walking, fortune will smile on you.







*Be it snowfall, scorching summer,  
or incessant rains  
Nothing can stop his feet.  
No, the saint just cannot rest  
for it is God's work  
that he has to carry on...*



*Crossing the backwaters on foot*







*Crossing the backwaters by boat (Kerala)*

*Workers dancing and singing with joy on the dais at the Kaladi (Kerala) Sarvodaya Conference (1957) as it pours heavily.*





*I have met a lot of good men, noble men, great men in the world. But when I think of Vinoba, I doubt whether such a man exists elsewhere in the world. His work and his pilgrimage has had a great influence on the head and heart of India. It is very difficult to assess the contribution of such a man. ...Vinobaji would certainly have a place of honour in any authentic history of India.*

**– Jawaharlal Nehru**

An All-Party Gramdan Conference took place at Yelwal (September 21-22, 1957). It unanimously supported the idea of *Gramdan*.

In this age of science, religion (sectarianism) and politics are outdated. Science and spirituality will take their place. Literature will have to build a bridge between the two. Spirituality will give direction. Science will accelerate speed.

Politics + Science = Total disaster  
Spirituality + Science = Sarvodaya, Heaven.

Thinking can be divided into four types –

1. Dogmatic (Traditional) – Sectarian.
2. Pragmatic (With an eye on results) – Political.
3. Rational (Logical) – Scientific.
4. Transcendental (Beyond the senses) – Spiritual.





My first step was to say, give a little land. Then I began to ask for one sixth of the land. After that I said to people, see to it that no one in your village is without land. Next, I began to tell them that there should be no private ownership of land and put forward the concept of *Gramdan*. I preached that like air, water and sunlight, land also belongs to everyone. Then I began to talk about *Gram-swarajya* (village self-government). I also propounded *Sampattidan*, *Shanti Sena*, *Sarvodaya-patra* etc.

*Walking seminar : With Dada Dharmadhikari, Vimla Thakar*







आ. व. 'रिश्' कहता ही नहीं।  
जय जगत्' कहता है।

अपना 'रिश् रिश्' जपते रहेंगे  
तो निरंतर लड़ाईयां चलती रहेंगी )

In Karnataka I began using a new *mantra* (slogan) – 'Jai Jagat' (Victory to the world) (November 1, 1957). Fifteen years earlier we had begun to use the slogan 'Jai Hind' (Victory to India). Now we have moved on to 'Jai Jagat'. The mental outlook is changing all over the world, very rapidly. Boundaries between different countries are going to be erased gradually. The possibility of the world becoming a single united family is increasing.

जय जगत् पुकारे जा, सिर अमन पै वारे जा,  
सबके हित के वास्ते, अपना सुख बिसारे जा।

Governments keep armies, people consent to it. We, too, need people's approval for the cause of non-violence. For this purpose I have put forward the idea of *Sarvodaya-patra* (January 1, 1958). Let every household have a pot and drop a handful of grain in it daily; and let the hand be the little hand of the youngest child of the family. The child will thereby learn to give something to society. It will also learn to keep away from violence as it knows that the grain is being given for the sake of peace, for the maintenance of *Shanti Sena*. Thus *Sarvodaya-patra* has a triple purpose. 1. It is a pledge not to have any part in acts which disturb peace, 2. It is a practical vote for *Sarvodaya*, 3. It is an education for children.

The day the idea of *Sarvodaya-patra* came into my head, I felt as though I had become a *rishi*, I had vision – *Rishir Darashanat*.

मैं नहीं तब तक खाऊं री मैया!  
मैं नहीं तब तक खाऊं।  
जब तक सर्वोदय-पात्र में  
धान मुड़ी ना पाऊं री मैया!



*Sarvodaya Patra*





The ideology of *Sarvodaya* that we have adopted claims to bring about a change of heart in the people. We have therefore to delve deeper than the saints of the past. Those saints primarily sought self-purification and rendered some such ordinary service to the society as could be done in the normal course. But we talk of social transformation, of transformation of the entire human life, of creating a new man; so we have to delve deep into the realm of spirituality.



I have always been contemplative. My contemplation has been focused on finding out the roots of the social change that we envisage.

On one side *Gramdan*, on the other a World Federation. In Gramdan the whole village is one family. In the World Federation all nations form one family (*i.e. Think Globally, act Locally*). That is why we say –

*Jai Jagat* is our mantra  
*Gramdan* is our technique  
*Vishwa Shanti* is our goal.



*In Pandharpur Sarvodaya Conference*



Our pilgrimage went on and on, from one region of love to another. Some days in the land of Tulsidas and Kabir and some time in the land of Buddha and Mahavir. From there, to the feet of Chaitanya and Jagannath, then blessed with the *darshan* of Shankar, Ramanuja and Basaveshwar, I have finally come to the feet of Jnaneshwar. I have now reached Pandharpur.

I have no words to express what I felt then, as I stood before the image of Lord Vithoba. Tears rolled down my cheeks for a long time. I did not see a stone image there; what I saw was the Lord Himself.

I had with me two sisters - one Muslim and one Christian. Both of them touched the Lord's feet. To enter a temple with people of other religions was an unprecedented event. It revealed the true nature of Hinduism.

Kaka Kalelkar has given us the *mantra* : *A-sarkari asarkari* (Non-governmental is effective).

Kakasahab was told that Vinoba did not know the ways of the world. Kakasahab replied, "Yes, it is true. But that is because he does not attach any value to them; the ways of the world are but a cipher to him."







*Climbing up the Panhala fort*

*Visit to Dhule jail (1958) where the Talks on the Gita had been delivered*







*With the Gandhians in Gujarat – Jugatrambhai, Babalbhai, Surendraji, Kanubhai etc.*



*In Vedchhi Ashram*

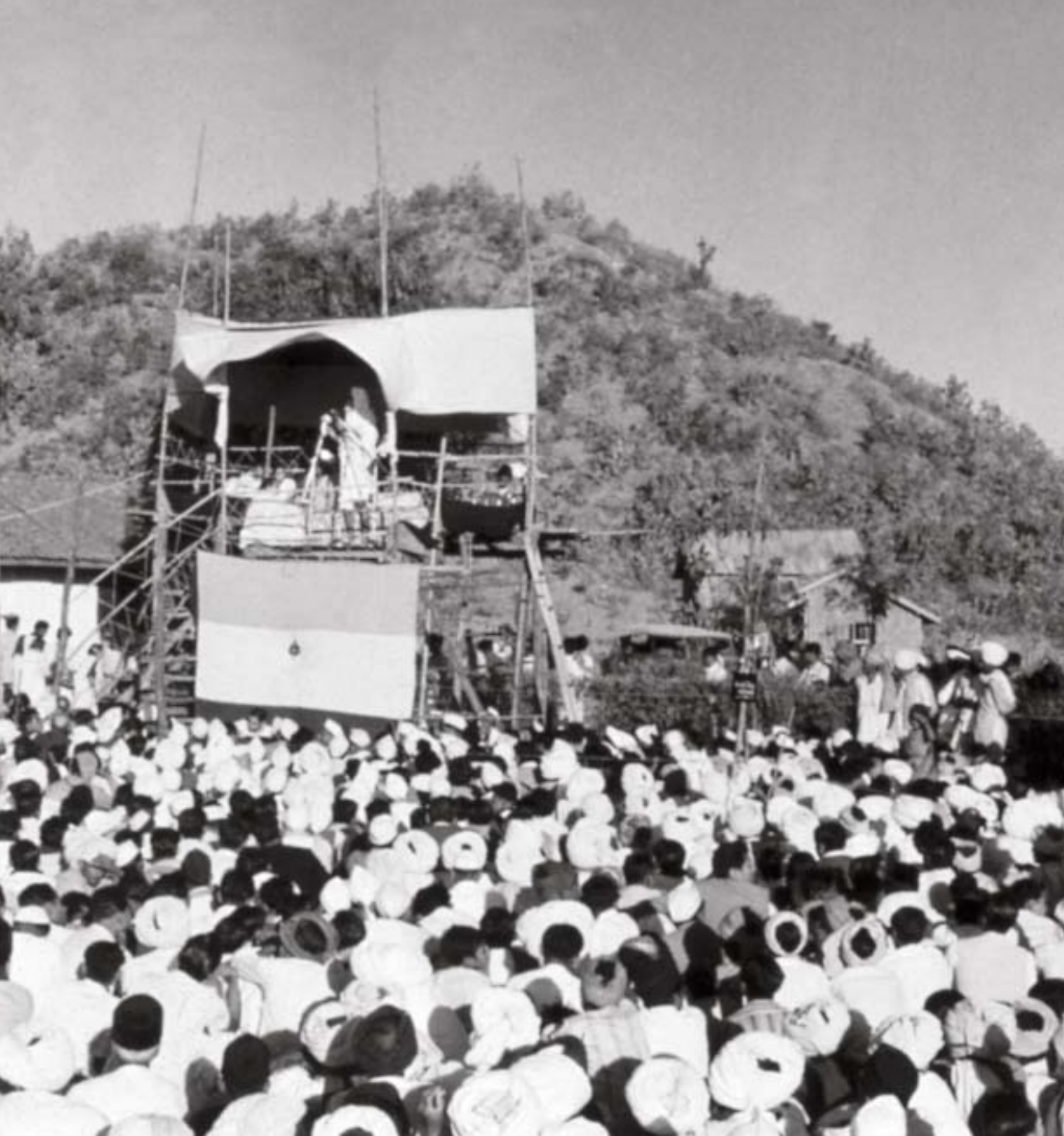


*Bathing in the open during the walking tour – Jayaprakash Narayan and Ravishankar Maharaj*



The Vedas say that the Lord is adorned with thousands of heads. He works with thousands of hands and thousands of feet - सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपाद् – I daily have this vision of the Lord in the form of the masses. This vision nurtures me. It is because of this vision that I am able to render service with this body even in adverse circumstances.

*The farewell meeting in Gujarat*









Had I not exerted my body rigorously, had I not developed the capacity for enduring cold, heat, rains, storm etc., I would not have been able to sustain myself in this *Bhoodan pilgrimage*.





*Walking on a railway track, in the absence of a road*







*Entering Sikar (Rajasthan)*



शांति के सिपाही चले, क्रांति के सिपाही चले  
लेके खैरखाहि चले, रोकने तबाहि चले।  
वैर-भाव तोडने, दिल को दिल से जोडने,  
काम को संवारने, जान अपनी वारने॥ शांति के...

*A rally of the Shanti Sena*





*This path is for the heroes..  
Where cowards don't dare tread*

In Kashmir, I suggested the concept of an ABC triangle – Afghanistan, Burma (Myanmar) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). If the countries within this triangle – Afghanistan, Burma, Ceylon, India, Nepal, Bhutan and Pakistan – form a confederation, there will be Peace.



*चलता मुसाफिर ही पायेगा  
मंजिल और मुकाम रे*







In Kashmir, I have come to see, to hear and to love.

It was the grace of God that made it possible for me to come here after crossing the Pir Panjal mountains in this old age. We were held up by rains and floods for six days at Mandi Rajpura. Nature's fury was daily taking a heavy toll of houses and human lives there.

A man came one day to give me land because his wife had told him to do so. She had seen a photograph in some newspaper which showed someone giving me a hand to help me over a difficult stretch of road. The picture made her feel that when a man takes so much trouble to help the poor, it would not be right to refuse him land. In my view, the stature of that woman touched greater heights than the Pir Panjal mountains which I had crossed at an altitude of 13,500 feet!





*With luggage slung over the shoulder,  
ready for the day's walk*



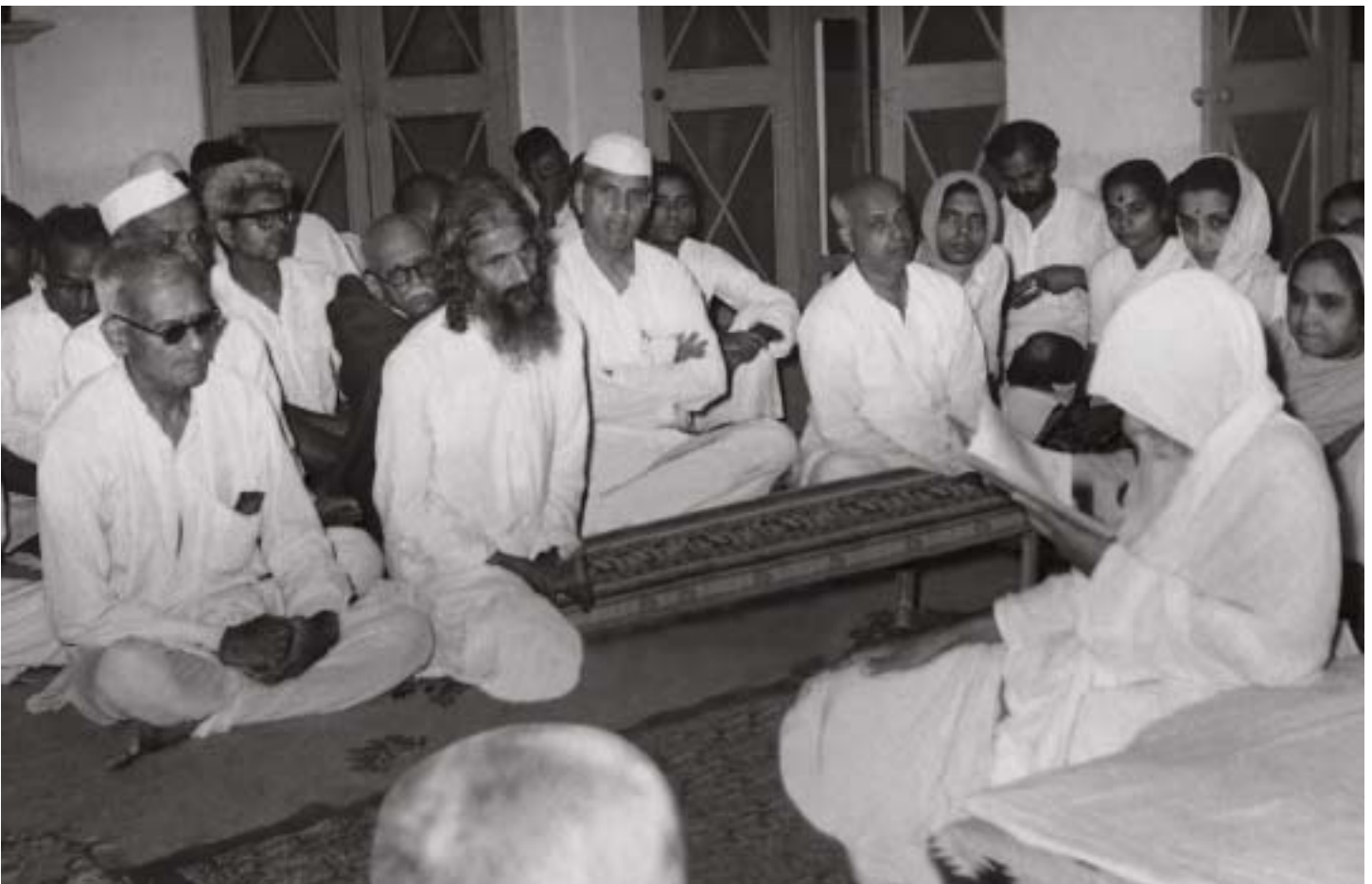
The surrender of dacoits, (*Bagis*, as they called themselves) in the Chambal ravines was totally unexpected. Those who had adopted dacoity as the means of their livelihood came to me with a feeling of repentance and abandoned their former ways. Twenty of them laid down their guns – some of them costly telescopic rifles – and surrendered themselves to me (May 19, 1960). It seems that God penetrated their hearts and brought about this miracle.

People ask, ‘Have the hearts of these dacoits really changed?’ In fact, it is my heart that has undergone transformation. I was very harsh by nature. But experiences during the *Bhoodan* pilgrimage made my heart tender and sensitive. These dacoits made me all the more tender-hearted.

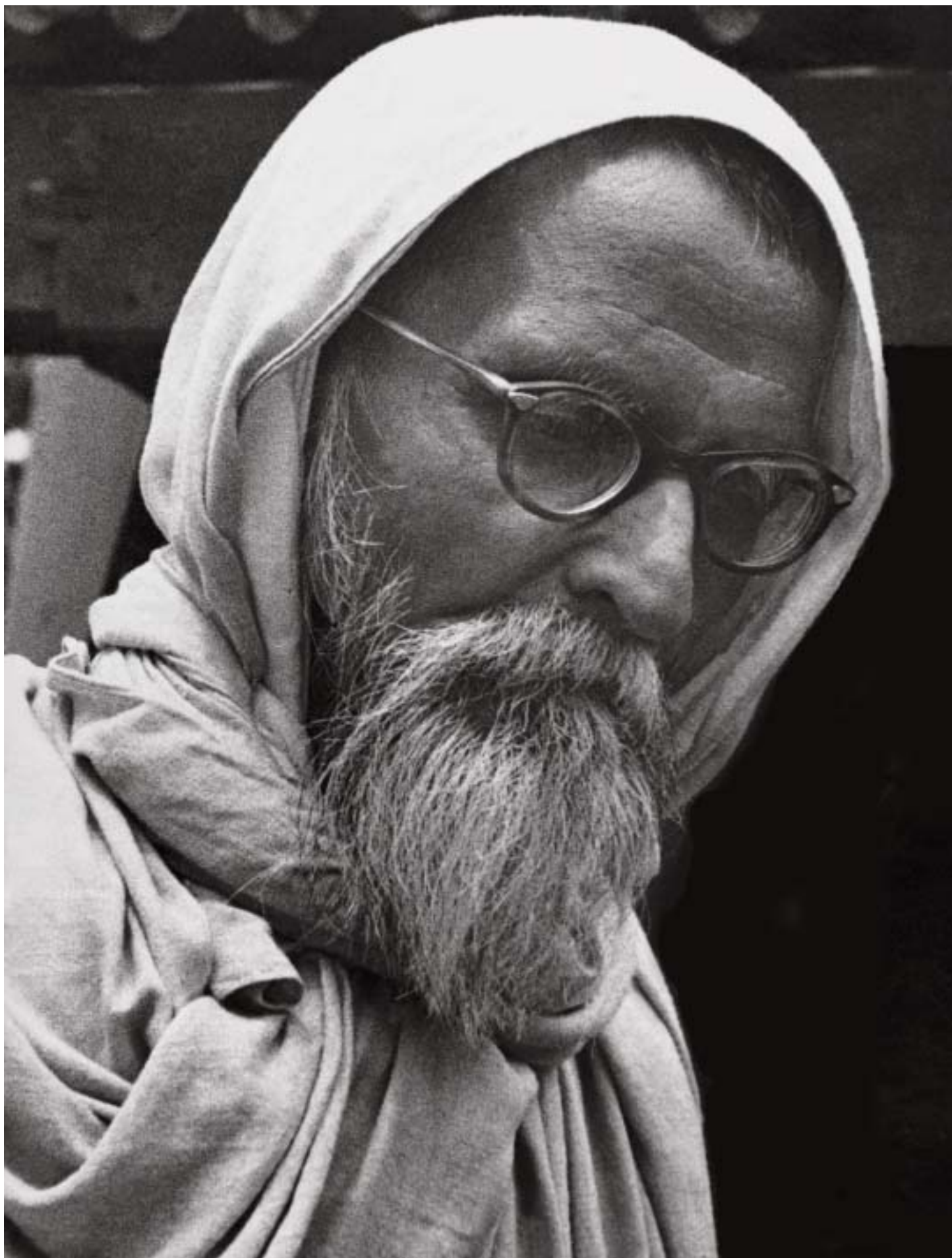
After my tour of Kashmir, the idea of *Prasthan Ashram* occurred to me. It was established in Pathankot in October 1959. Pathankot is the meeting point for Punjab, Kashmir and Pakistan. By imbibing what is good in all three, Pathankot will certainly symbolise a grand confluence.

I set up *Visarjan Ashram* at Indore (August 15, 1960). The purpose of this *ashram* is to perform a *visarjan* (submergence) of the out-dated values, and along with it, a *vi-sarjan* (re-emergence) of those living values which are suited to the new age.

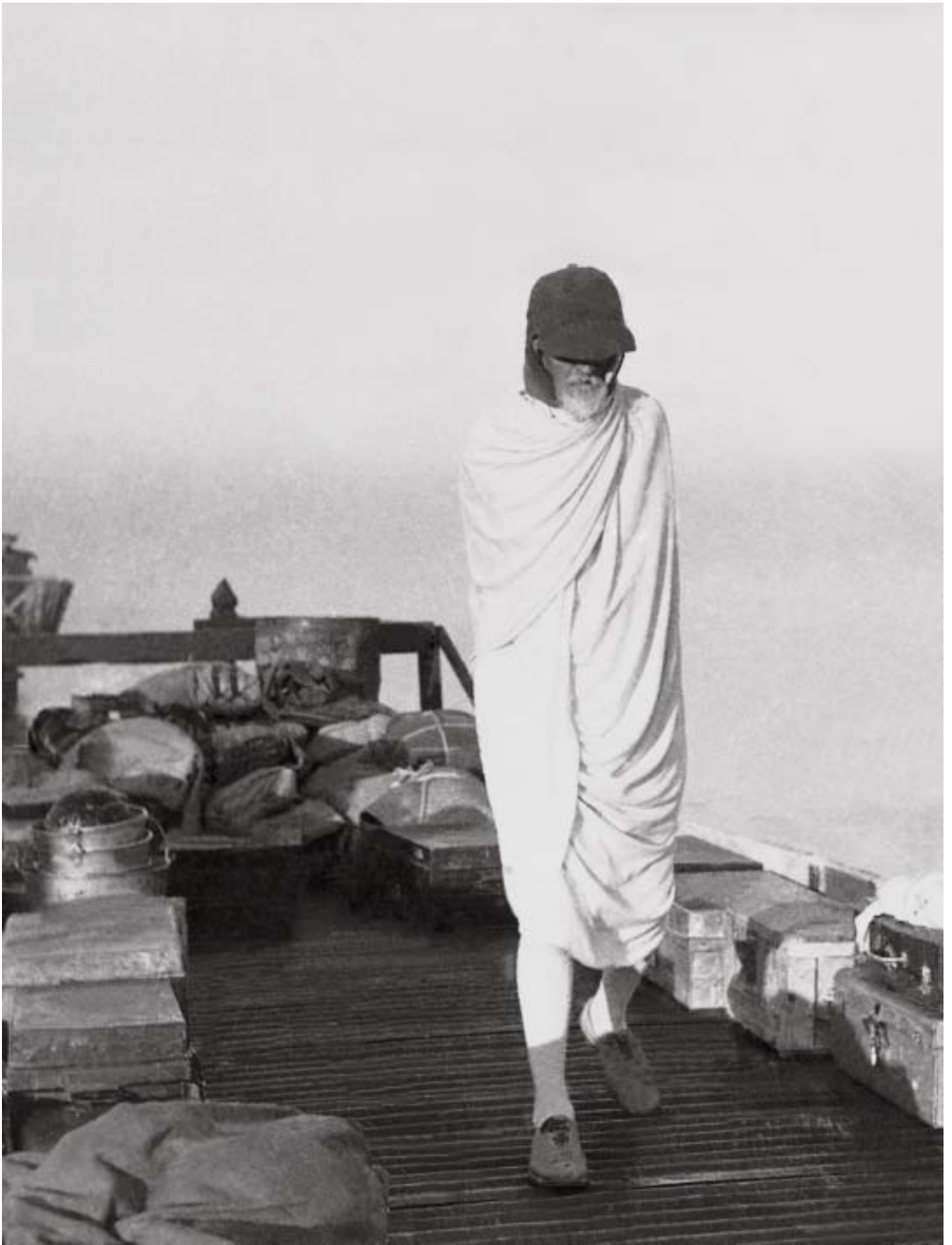
In 1960 I spent five weeks at Indore. As I went round the city, I saw filthy cinema posters in a number of places. There seemed to be no bounds to the dismay I felt at the sight of those filthy, offensive posters. I told the public there that their children were being given free and compulsory education in sensuality and sexual indulgence. I told the women in particular to rise against them, and not to put up with them for even one day longer. They should tear them down and burn them. Women will have to take up the task of guarding the peace and the character of the country.







Without the knowledge of the Supreme we shall never obtain our true welfare. Those who regard our movement as merely economic and social are taking a completely one-sided view. The movement is spiritual and founded on Brahavidya.



*Walking on the deck of the boat, on the river Brahmaputra*



*The mammoth gathering to  
welcome Vinobaji on the banks  
of the river Brahmaputra*













The brain of India resides in the cities, but her heart is in the villages. As long as we do not reach the heart, we would not be in a position to affect people's thinking. That is why I am travelling on foot, avoiding the use of vehicles.





*A public meeting in the downpour. Amalprabha Das is translating the speech.*

It is raining; the Lord Himself is touching us by His thousands of hands. The rain teaches us equality. It pours over the fields of poor farmers as well as rich farmers. It does not even distinguish between soil, rocks, hills or sea. It knows no distinction; it loves all uniformly. It represents God's grace.









*Tribal women looking on with curiosity*

*People's welcome in their village*







There is a confluence of different cultures at the borders between different regions. Cultural centres or *ashrams* should be set up there. With this in view I have set up *Maitri Ashram* on the Arunachal-Assam border (March 5, 1962). The only rule in this *ashram* is friendship (*maitri*), its only goal is friendship, its only programme is friendship. Friendship has always been a necessity; however, need for friendship is particularly pressing in this age.

In the ideal village there should be five virtues 1. Love 2. Fearlessness 3. Industry 4. Education 5. Cleanliness. These virtues cover everything. From this alone will spring forth *Gramrajya* and *Ramrajya*.

Every village should have a *gramsabha* (village assembly). It should look after the whole village like a mother. It will not be a co-operative institution in the conventional sense of the term, although the spirit of co-operation will certainly be there. It will not wield coercive power; its power will be that of love. It will therefore work on the principle of consensus, not on the principle of majority.

The present *panchayat* system is faulty. *Panchayats* are plagued by the ingress of political parties because of the principle of majority. They are formed not through service, but through power struggles. Exploitation is inevitable in them because of the element of power. I have called them 'a decentralised scheme for exploitation' – exploitation being decentralised is more effective! *Panchayat* thus means efficient, effective, decentralised exploitation!









*The woods are lovely, dark and deep ....*





We are not proudly attached to any particular country.  
We lay no special emphasis on any particular religion.  
We are not bound by any caste or community.  
To soar in the region of noble thoughts available all over  
the world is our aim of study.  
To assimilate noble thoughts in our lives is our sacred duty.  
To establish unity in diversity, to develop world brotherhood,  
is the ideal of our spiritual quest.









*Walking through the  
floodwater in Assam*

*Travelling by a boat in Assam when the  
roads and the fields were inundated*



In East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), we travelled for sixteen days. On the very first day, a Muslim gentleman came and offered a gift of land. He donated one acre out of the four acres that he owned. I touched his shoulders and said, 'I will pray to Allah for you.' Tears welled up in his eyes. This first gift was a sacred gift. Thereafter we got donations of land every day. ... At my first two or three meetings people shouted *Pakistan Zindabad* (Long live Pakistan). *Jai Jagat* (Victory to the world), I responded, and gradually the phrase, *Jai Jagat* caught on. *Jai Jagat* brought everyone together in love and harmony.

*Entering East Pakistan (Bangladesh)*









I have been a student all my life. Studying and teaching have always accompanied all my activities.









*Previous page –*

In Bengal, referring to Ramakrishna Paramahansa, I said that, from now on, what is needed is collective rather than individual *samadhi* (a state of communion with the Lord). Ramakrishna Paramahansa could not bear to touch money; I am following in his footsteps and seeking a way to free the whole of the society from the bondage of money (*Kanchan Mukti*).



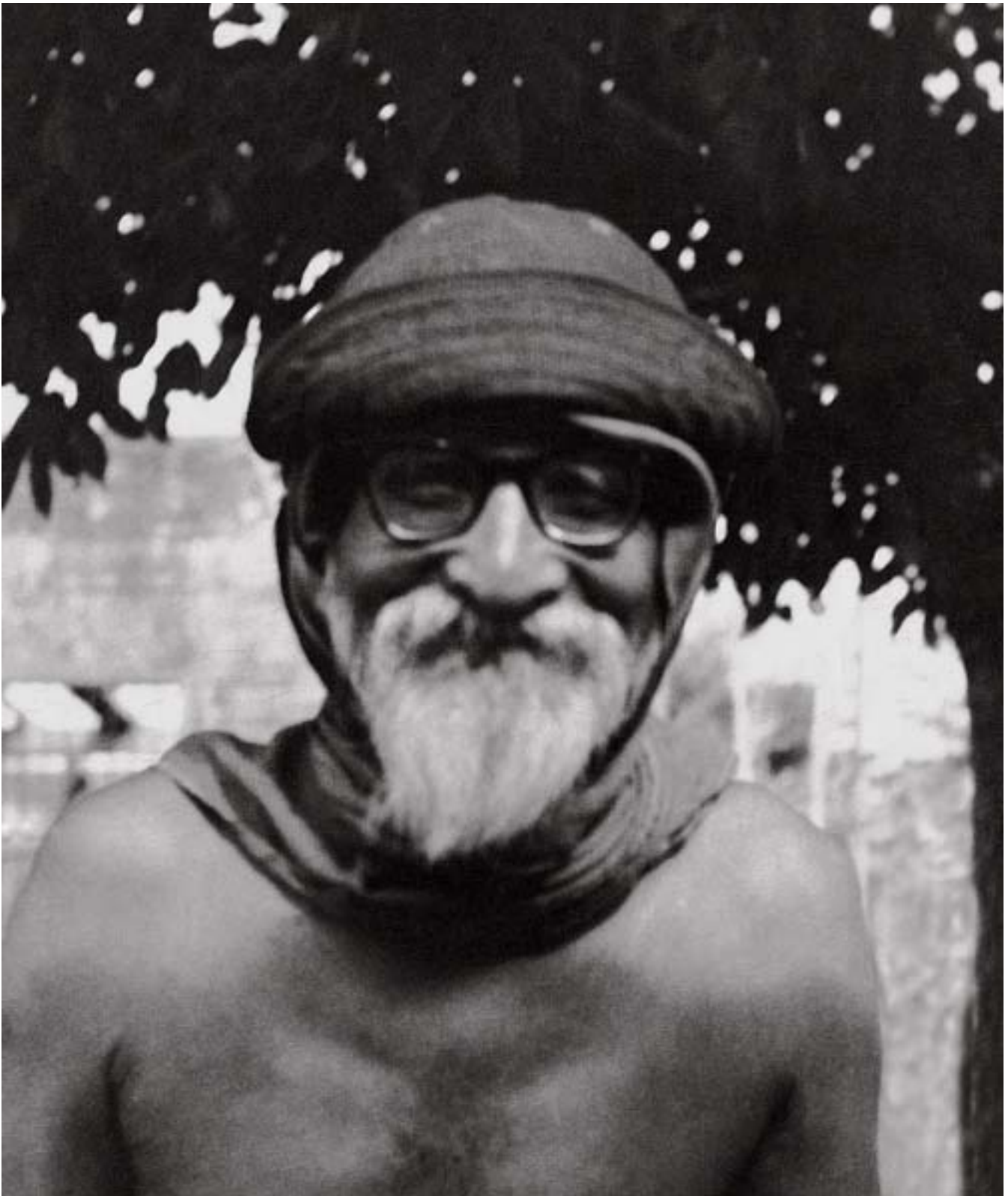




Here, the holy river Ganga is meeting the ocean. This reminds one of the submergence of a devotee into divine consciousness. Just as the Ganga merges into the ocean, the Self merges into the Supreme Self. We sat for some time in meditation overlooking the ocean and greatly enjoyed the experience. We had also meditated at Kanyakumari and at Pir Panjal in the Himalayas. Here the Gangasagar, there the Himalayas and down below Kanyakumari ... the whole of India is united in my meditation ... How vast this country is! Our hearts should become likewise.

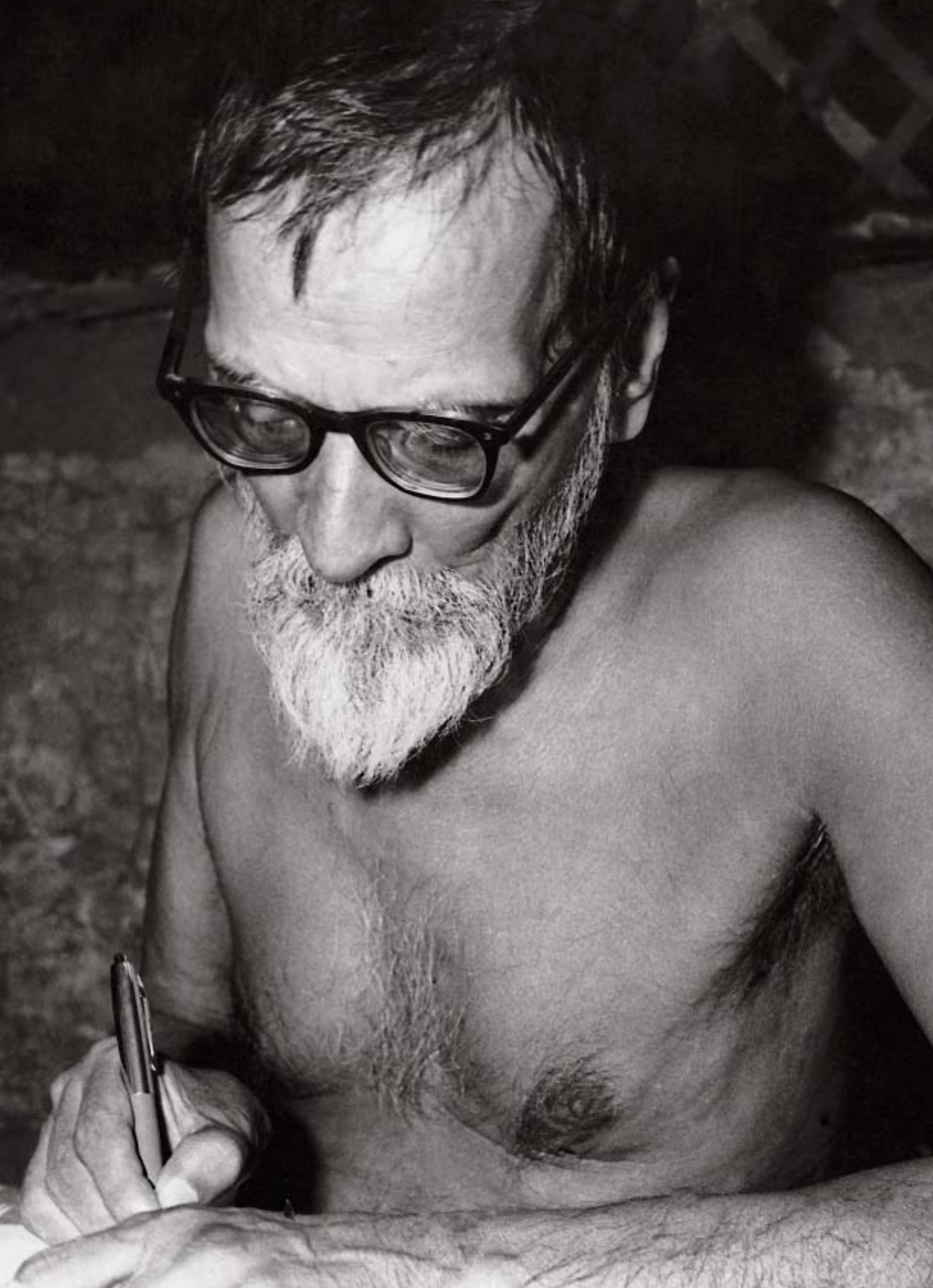
और तीरथ बार बार, गंगासागर एक बार





Everyone has a right on us, but we should have a right on no one besides God. Once this is understood, Man will always be cheerful.

If adequate attention is not paid to depth in thinking and studies, work becomes lifeless.













Now my feet do not remain steady. I often feel giddy. These feet have walked around 70,000 kms. They have walked over hilly areas, in water, in deserts, in the rain, in the sun, in the cold, in all seasons. They have walked a lot ... Now these feet are saying, “We have worked a lot. What more do you expect from us now?” These feet now want to rest.

What I aim at is nothing less than to set up *Ramarajya*, kingdom of God. That is something very big indeed, but I can speak in no smaller terms.

*Going to Bihar by car for the Gramdan Toofan (typhoon) Movement (1965)*





At the function to announce Jilla-Dan (district-dan) of Darbhanga district during the Toofan Movement. On both the sides of the stage are piles of the declarations of donations from different sub-divisions of the district. These declarations had been brought by a truck.

मधुबनी

विरूपे

ली

खुटौ

गाँव

जयनगर

भंभारपुर

भारती

बहिनियाँ





पंडौल

बेनीपट्टी

राजनगर

वासोपट्टी

बाव

लौ





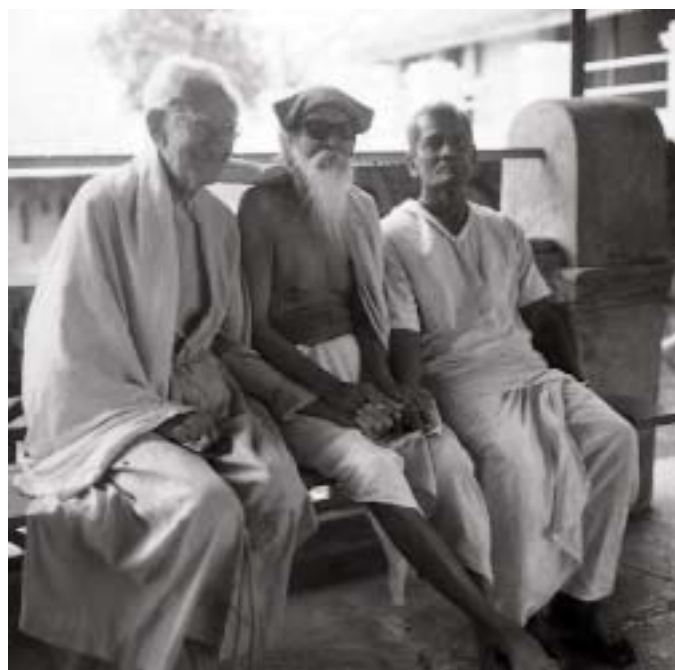
*With C. Rajgopalachari*



*With Swami Kundrakudi of a Tamil mutt*



*With Swami Sharananandaji and other religious figures*



*With Kaithan and Jagannathan*



*With Tukdoji Maharaj*



*With J. B. Kripalani, Shriman Narayan, Haribhau Upadhyay, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Jagjivan Ram*





*Cutting vegetables with Gopabandhu Choudhari of Orissa*



*With Swami Ramdas at Kanangarh ashram*



*With Achyut Patwardhan*



*With Pandurang Shastri Athavale*



*With Pandit Satavalekar and Ravishankar Maharaj at a conference on the Vedas*



*Inauguration of Brahmavidya-Mandir at Kasikabas, birthplace of Shri Jamnalalji Bajaj (13.3.1959).*



*Poet Dukhayal singing a Bhoodan song  
दे दो अब भूमि-अधिकार  
दान करो अशिमान-रहित, तो होगा बेडा पार*

I have nothing more to do now. That is why I  
have written on my book –‘My duty is done.’





*Returning to Paunar after the Toofan yatra*



Sleep should be without worries, deep and dreamless.

1. Increased vigour 2. Pacification of vicious desires and 3. Enrichment of spiritual knowledge – these are the distinguishing marks of an undisturbed, sound sleep.

The dreamless sleep of a *Karmayogi* takes the form of *Samadhi*. In dreamless sleep thoughts keep on developing. It is an indication of a state of equanimity, not of laziness.

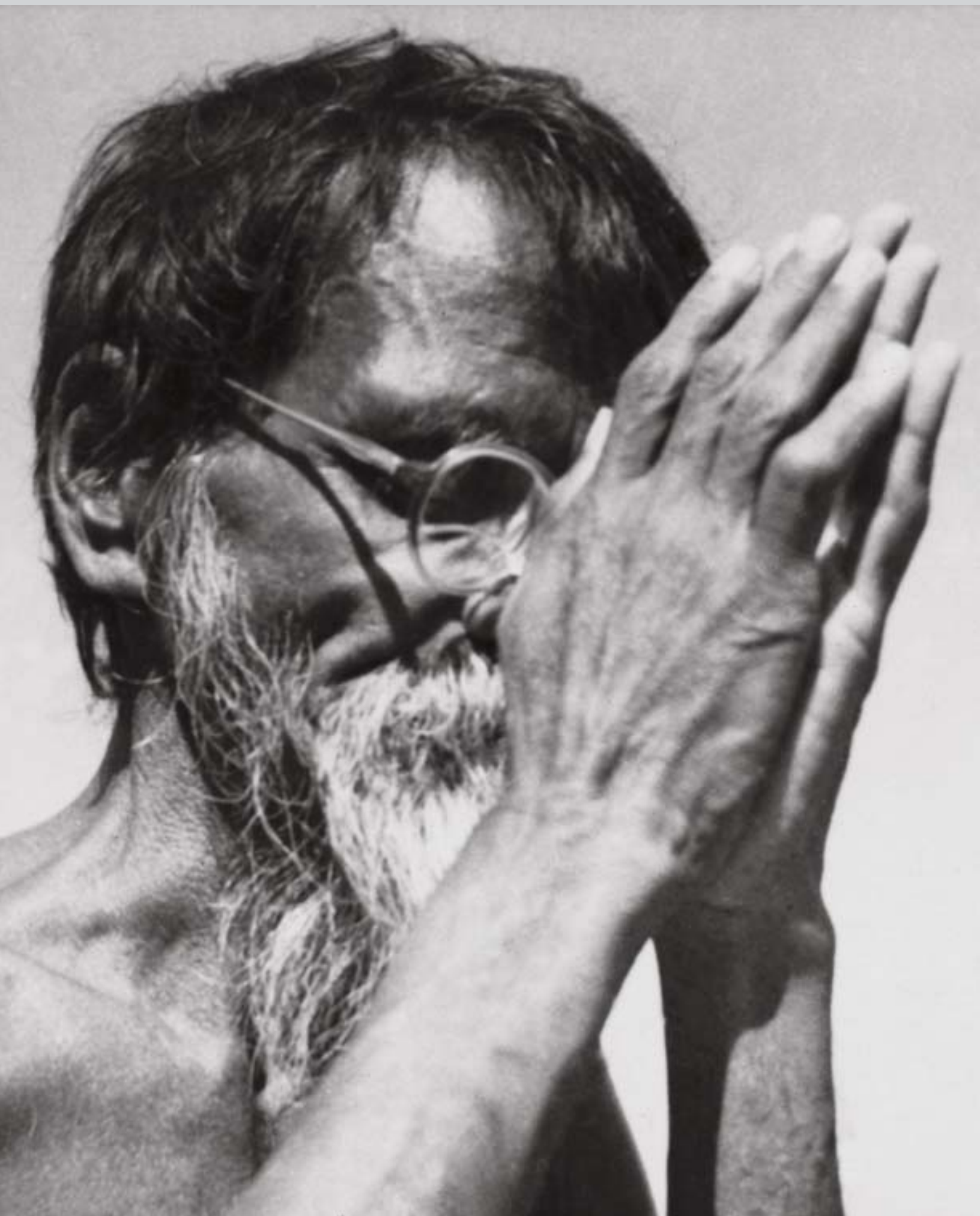


I do not deny that there is a mystic element in me. I walk on the earth, but my thinking is always on a different plane.

My travels have given me rich experiences. They had given me a kind of direct experience of God i.e. *Sakshatkar*, direct vision. I had done my work in the faith that the human heart has goodness in it, goodness ready to be called out. My fundamental faith is that in the core of each human heart, there is a divine essence. The evils which appear on the surface are not found in the depths. We must find a way to penetrate the depth of each human heart and to draw out the goodness with which it is filled.

Being still in this body, I am watching the ‘play’ of my own death and trying to imagine what will happen after that. Who am I ? Millions of people – all die. Not even the great escape death. Only God and the universe survive. We come and we go, like the waves of the sea; some smaller, some bigger, some rising high and others not, but all of them merely waves.

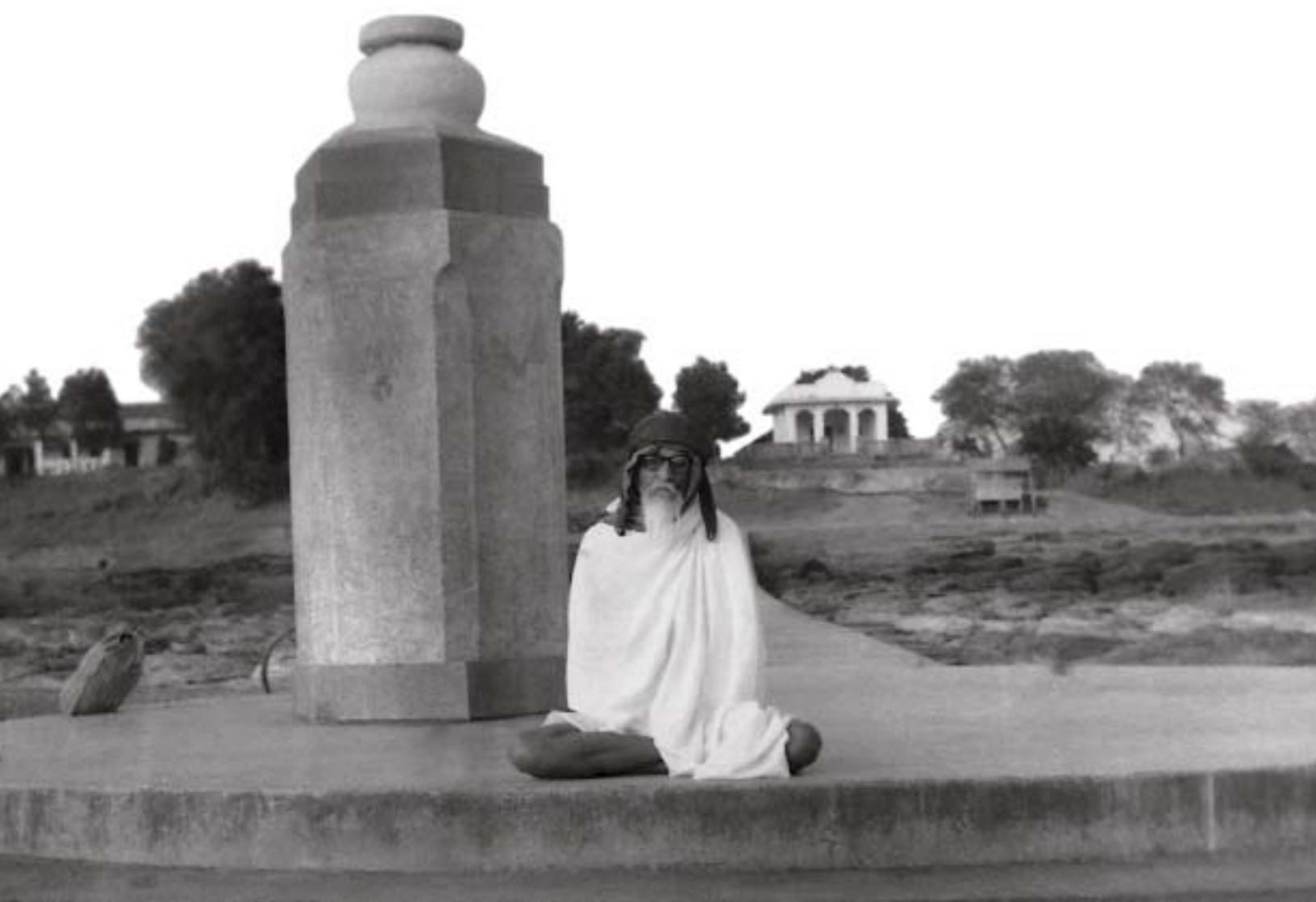






I cannot return even a fraction of the love and affection I have been given by the ancients and the moderns; those far and those near. I cannot imagine that I could ever repay this debt of love, so richly have I received. Hence, there is no other way left but to offer you my *pranams* (salute). I salute you all, with reverence and devotion.





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# **Shantam, Shivam, Advaitam**

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**Peace , Benevolence, Oneness**

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Brahmavidya-Mandir, Sukshma Karmayoga

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The name of this *Ashram* is *Brahmaildyia-Mandir*. The main features of this *Ashram* are : 1. *Samuhik sadhana* (collective spiritual pursuit) 2. *Shramanishtha* (dignity and sanctity of labour) 3. *Brahmacharya* (celibacy) 4. Meditation, study and devotion.

*Samuhik Sadhana* helps in chiselling the edges and corners of one's mind. For that, 'community consciousness' must be developed. People of the world follow their own inclinations, while spiritual aspirants treat their inclinations as enemies to be subdued. The third alternative is that of acting from a plane higher than inclination. The first simple step towards this is to decide on our activities by common consent. This is *Samuhik Sadhana*. Dedication to labour will bring fulfilment to our lives, will purify social life and is essential for a non-violent society. *Brahmacharya*, Devotion, Self-Knowledge etc. are the fundamentals of our life. They require Faith rather than expertise in the study of the scriptures.

The vision of *Brahmaildyia-Mandir* is for the coming age. The coming age belongs to women. *Brahmaildyia-Mandir* has been set up for them. Here the men may help them, but there will be no dependence on the men. It is a place where everything should be done by women, but they should experience within that they are not the doers. If they feel they are the doers, they may become leaders, but they would be far from *Brahmaildyia*. An experience of not being the doer is essential for *Brahmaildyia*.

I call this Ashram a spiritual laboratory. A laboratory is situated in some quiet spot, not in the middle of the market. But the experiments it makes, and the materials it uses, have a social purpose. The experiments are made in controlled conditions, but the results obtained are relevant to society as a whole. The *Ashram* is thus neither far from society, nor near it.



जो घर फूँके आपना  
चलो हमारे साथ

कबिरा खडा बाजार में लिये लुकाठी हाथ  
जो घर फूँके आपना चलो हमारे साथ

ॐ पूर्णं अदः पूर्णं इदं पूर्णात् पूर्णं उदच्यते  
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ।  
ॐ शांतिः शांतिः शांतिः ।

ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं, यत् किं च जगत्यां जगत्  
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः, मा गृधः कस्यस्वित् धनम् ।

*The Whole is that, the Whole is this.  
From the Whole emerges the Whole.  
If we deduct the Whole from the Whole, the Whole still remains.*

*Whatever life there is on the earth is pervaded by God.  
Therefore, having offered everything in His name,  
Enjoy whatever comes to your lot,  
Don't be covetous of anybody's wealth.*

*The day begins in the Ashram at 4.30 a.m. with this prayer and meditation.*

In the morning prayer we turn our minds to God, and that gives us inspiration and strength for the day's programme. The morning prayer should be accompanied with faith and deep reflection.











*Cows in the river-bed and the Ashram in the background*





*Inmates of the Ashram would collectively clean the Ashram. For some time, Vinobaji had become 'Sanitation Commander' and the inmates had to stand up in a line and take orders like a battalion.*



Manual labour is as indispensable for spiritual enlightenment, if not more, than it is for mere material achievements.









When we clean a place, it first becomes tolerable, then it becomes clean, then beautiful, and finally it becomes sacred – From tolerable to clean, to beautiful, to sacred. This is true for external cleanliness as well as for internal cleanliness.

When *Karma Yoga* focuses on cleanliness it is elevated to the status of *Dhyanayoga* (the path of meditation).

If, instead of a broom, I had picked up a rosary and started telling my beads, no one would have said that I was wasting my time! Picking up rubbish acts for me like a rosary – with every straw picked up there is a remembrance of the Name of God. There is no thinking involved, it is pure contemplation. A man who cannot tolerate rubbish around him will not tolerate rubbish inside him either, and will feel a strong urge to get rid of it. That is a spiritual urge.

*For some time, Vinobaji used to spend three to four hours daily in cleaning the premises with attention to the minutest detail. For hours, he would pick up dried leaves, twigs and other rubbish. Once a visitor expressed surprise at this and wondered why he was wasting so much time and energy in such trivial work, when his services were sorely needed by the country. Vinobaji said, 'Well, you can take it as my stupidity!'*



*Sukshma Safai*





*Breakfast in the field*



Let us resolve to wield divine weapons like brooms, pick-axes, spades and so on to do the Lord's work.





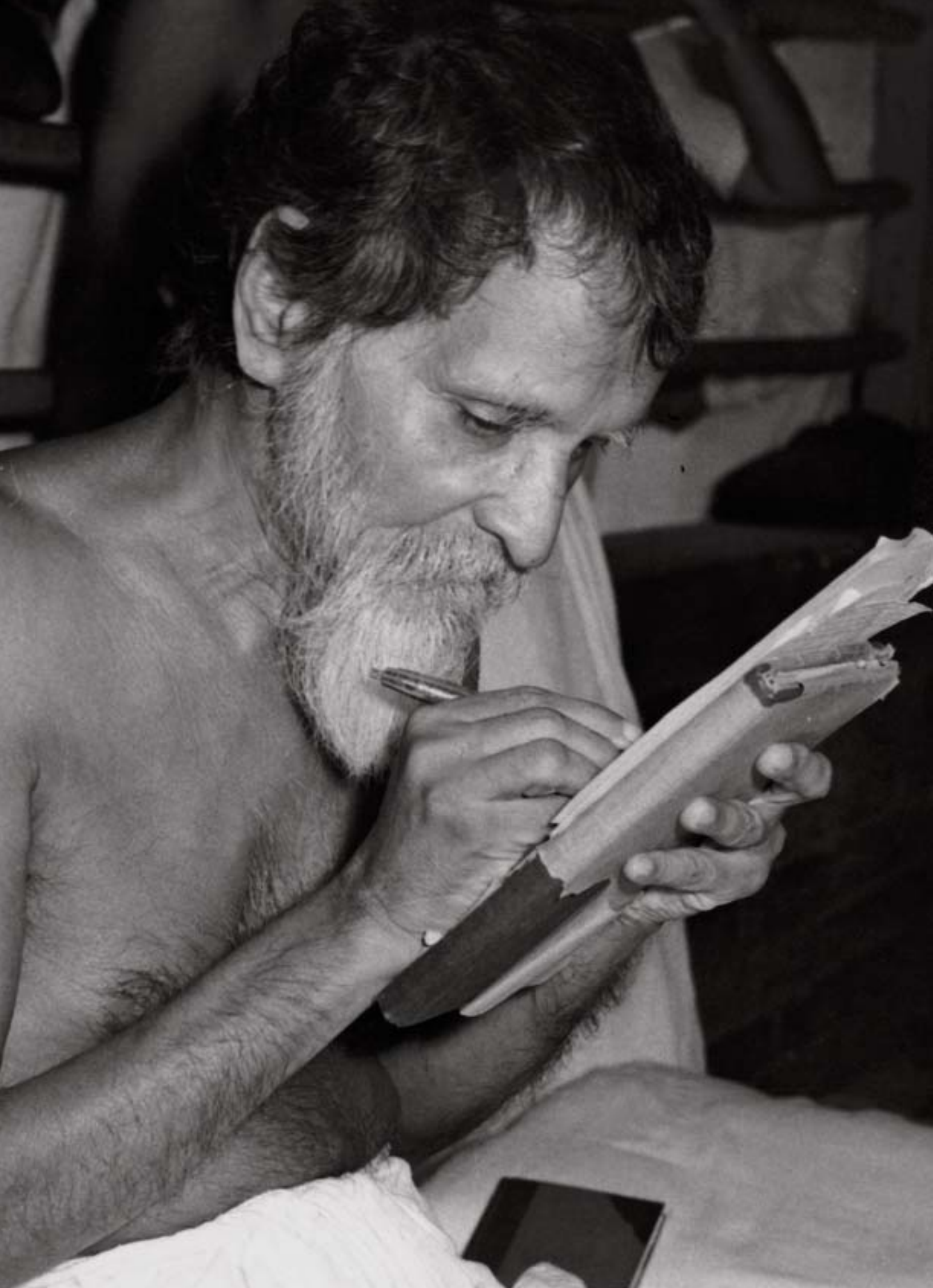
Land is not merely a means of production. It is also a means of worshipping the Divine.

म्हा ने चाकर रख्यो जी !  
 चाकर रहशां बाग लगाशां  
 नित भुठि दरशन पाशां  
 परं धाम की कुंज-गालेन में  
 ग्तेविदे - लीला गशां

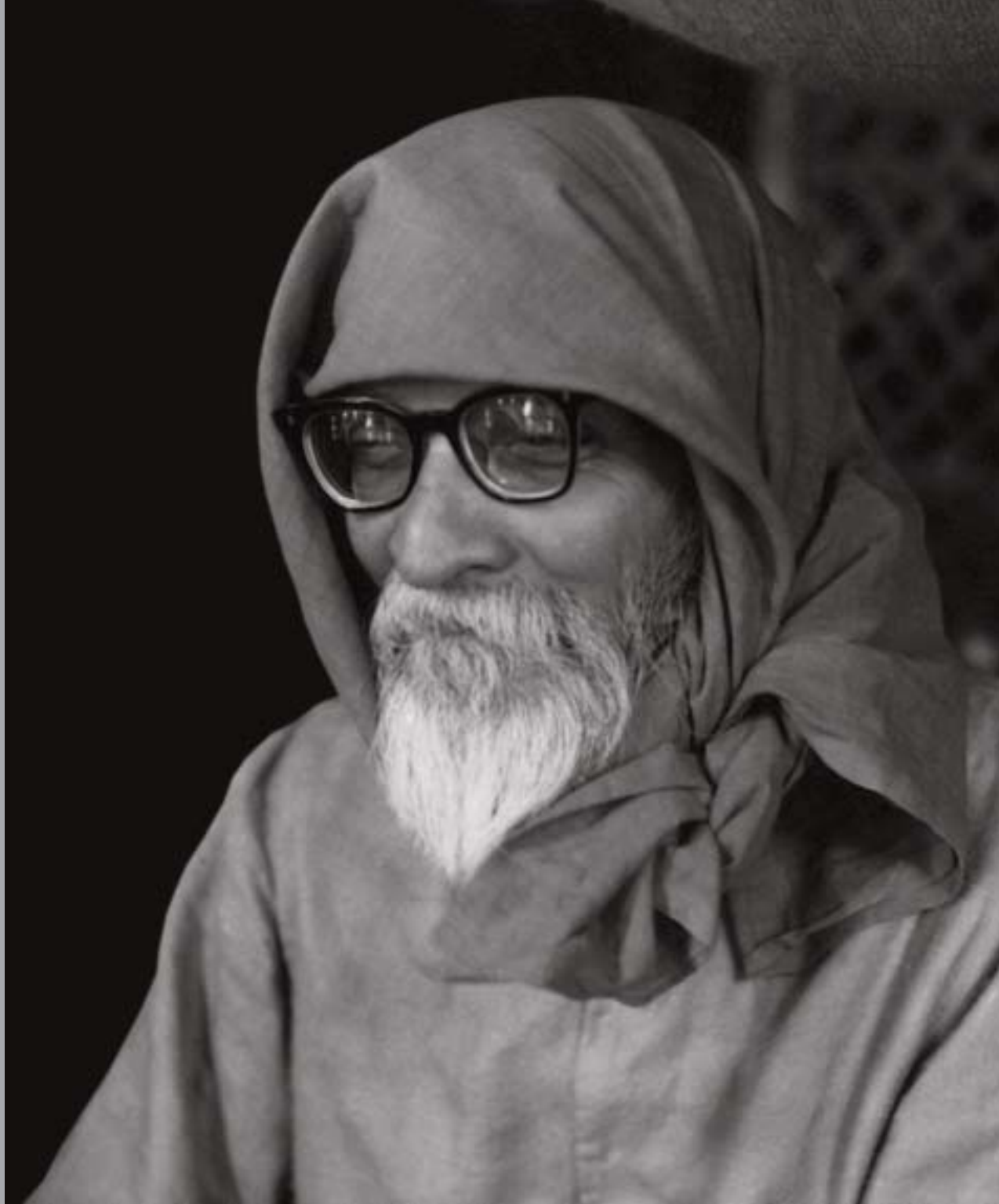


As a form of spiritual discipline, I have done various kinds of manual labour. However, I have experienced a special inner joy with agricultural work. On the basis of that experience, I can say that for the spiritual discipline of *Brahmacharya* (celibacy), it is very beneficial to spend some time working in the fields every day. This has been the experience of others as well.

Agriculture means oneness with nature and service to creation.





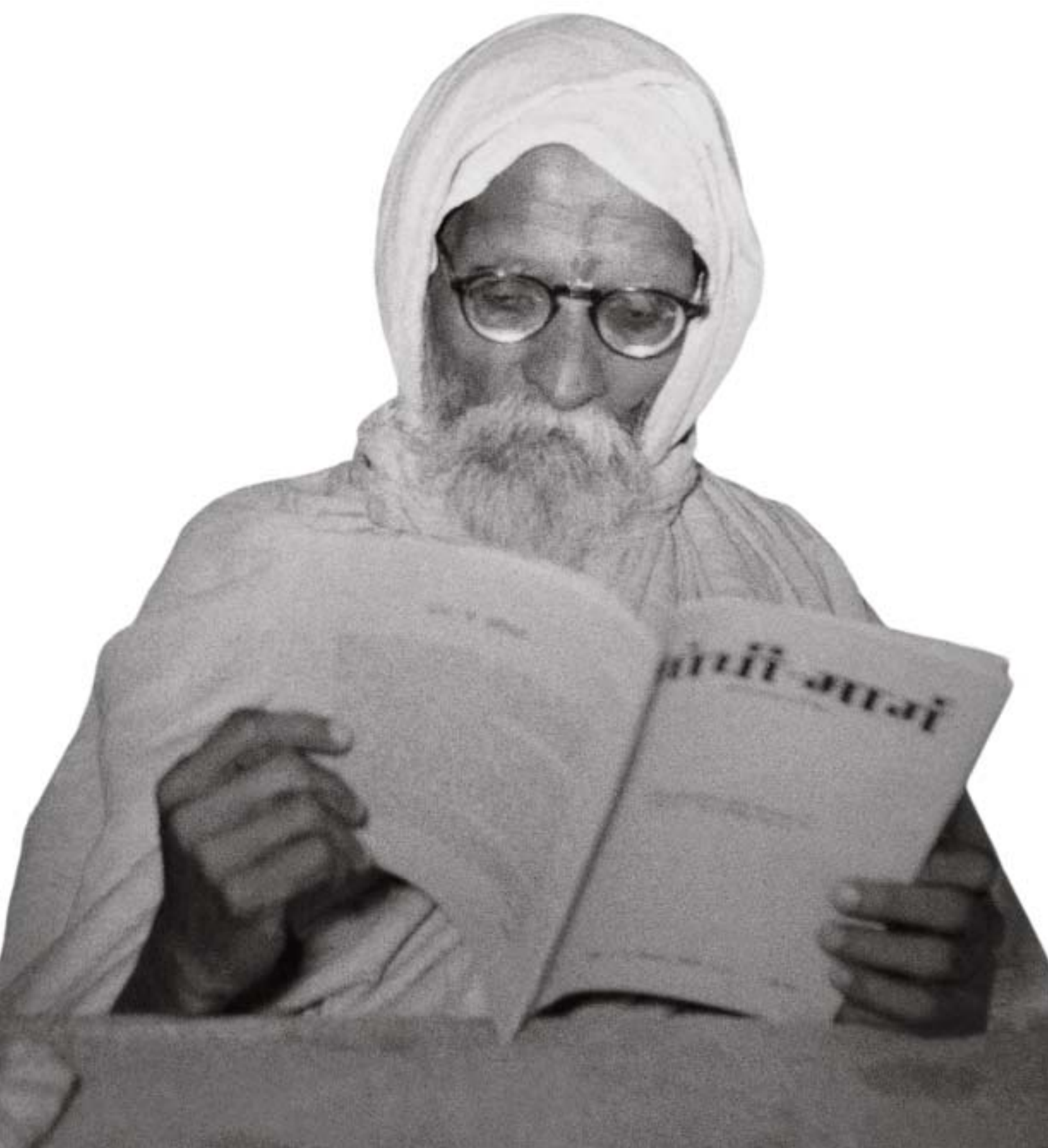


Mental satisfaction is an indication of the Grace of God. It is the receipt of His acceptance of our service.

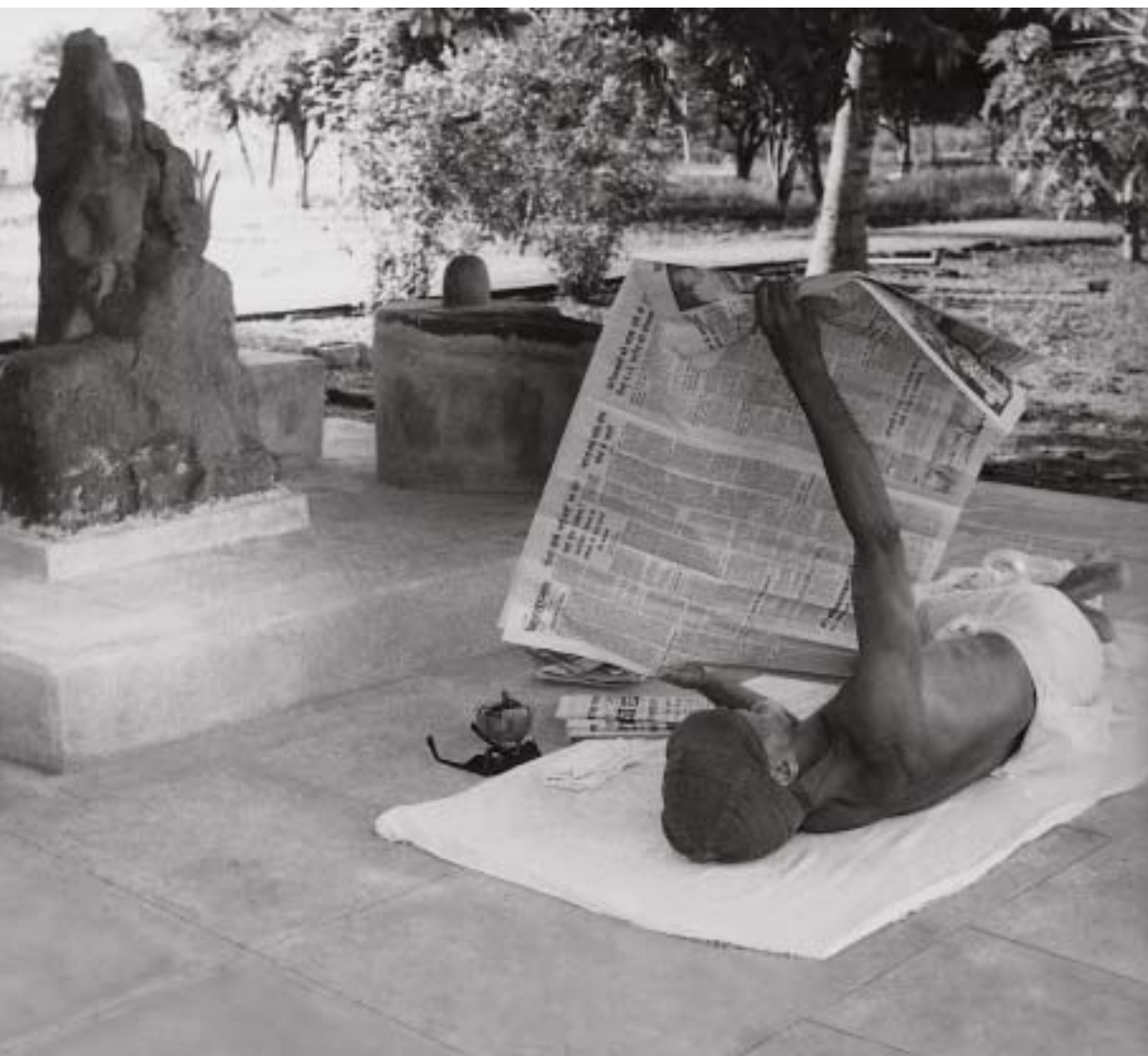
Both man and animals eat and drink. Animals cannot rise above their bodily needs, whereas man has the capacity to stand apart from them. Inculcation of such a capacity constitutes true learning. As long as man does not develop this capacity, he remains a part of the material world; he cannot become a witness.



Holy books should continually resonate in speech, reflections  
and life. Then only will the last moment in life be sweet.







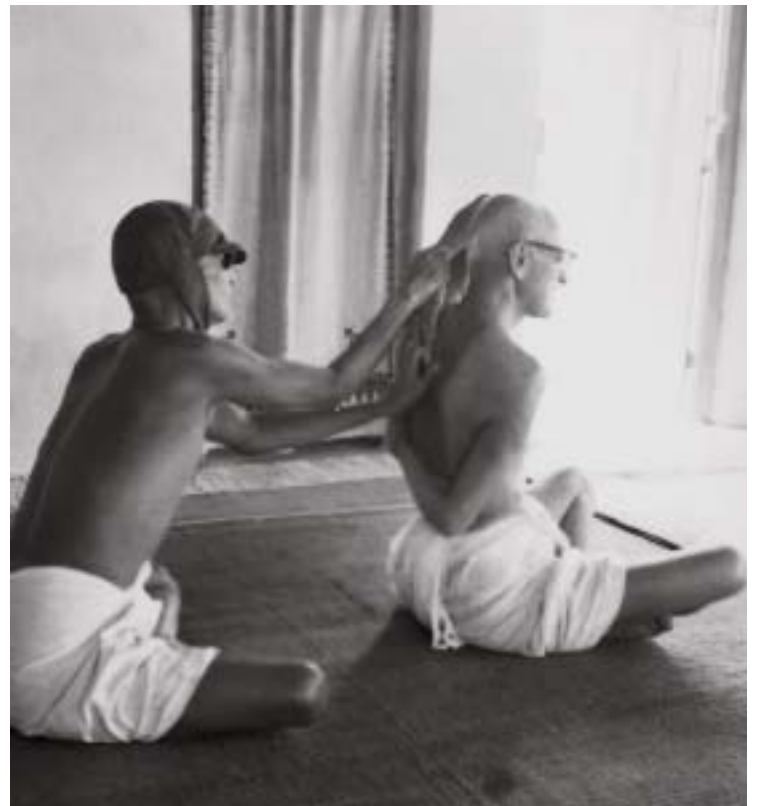
When we read newspapers, it appears that a game of chess is going on, where the king, the queen and everything else are made of wood. Efforts may go on for boosting military might, for exploding atom bombs; this is just an exercise in futility. I have no doubt that ultimately, everything is bound to give way to non-violence. Ever since I realized this, I have been without a care in the world. In pleasure or in pain, it is God's play that is going on.



There is a place in the life of the spiritual aspirant for the detached performance of duty, as there is also a place for reflection and for study. But the most important place must be given to *upasana* (worship). Worship links us with God. The more we devote ourselves to the practice of worship, the more deeply we shall enter, step by step, into the secret of linking every action of ours with God.



*Yogasanas need no instruments, very little space, and is a quiet form of exercise.*



*Helping Balubhai Mehta (aged 90) with yoga exercises.*





*A heater is unnecessary; a coal stove serves the purpose*



*Beating the heat with cold water*



In English, music and painting are called fine arts. I call cooking a finer art. I have done this work for many years and have induced others to do the same. There is no spiritual experience like the *Vedanta*, no science like mathematics and no art like cooking.



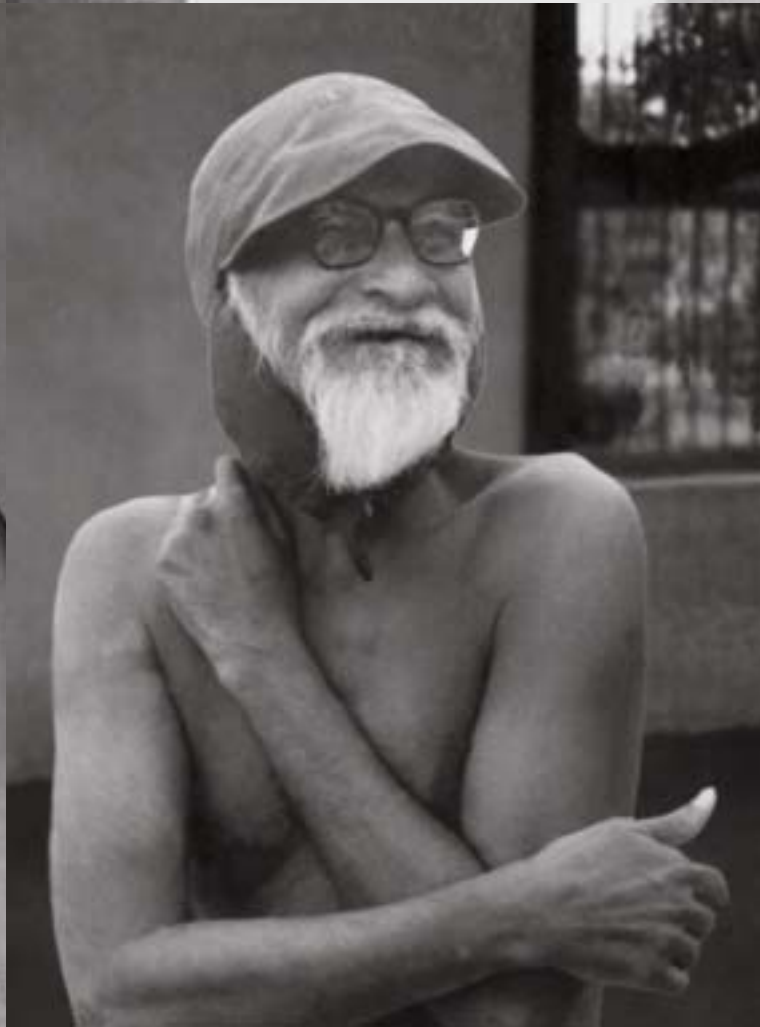
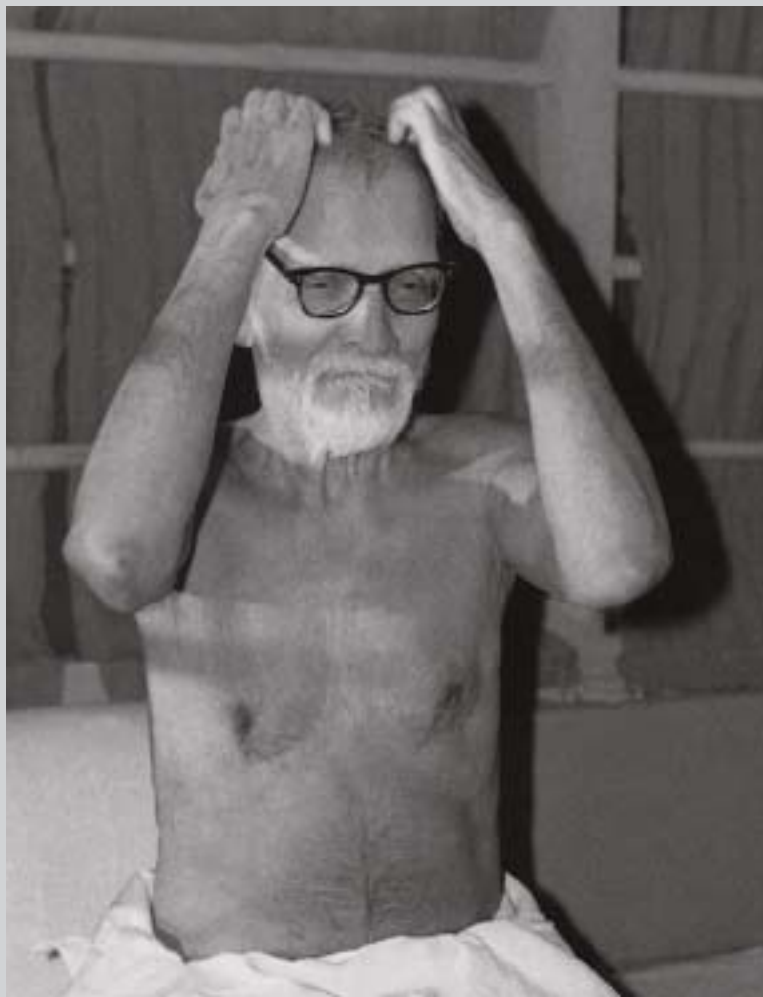
I observed that there is an effort in the *ambar charkha* to combine science with non-violence. So I approved and welcomed it. I myself have spun on a single-spindle *ambar charkha* as well as a double-spindle one. (*Vinobaji used to spin with both hands.*)

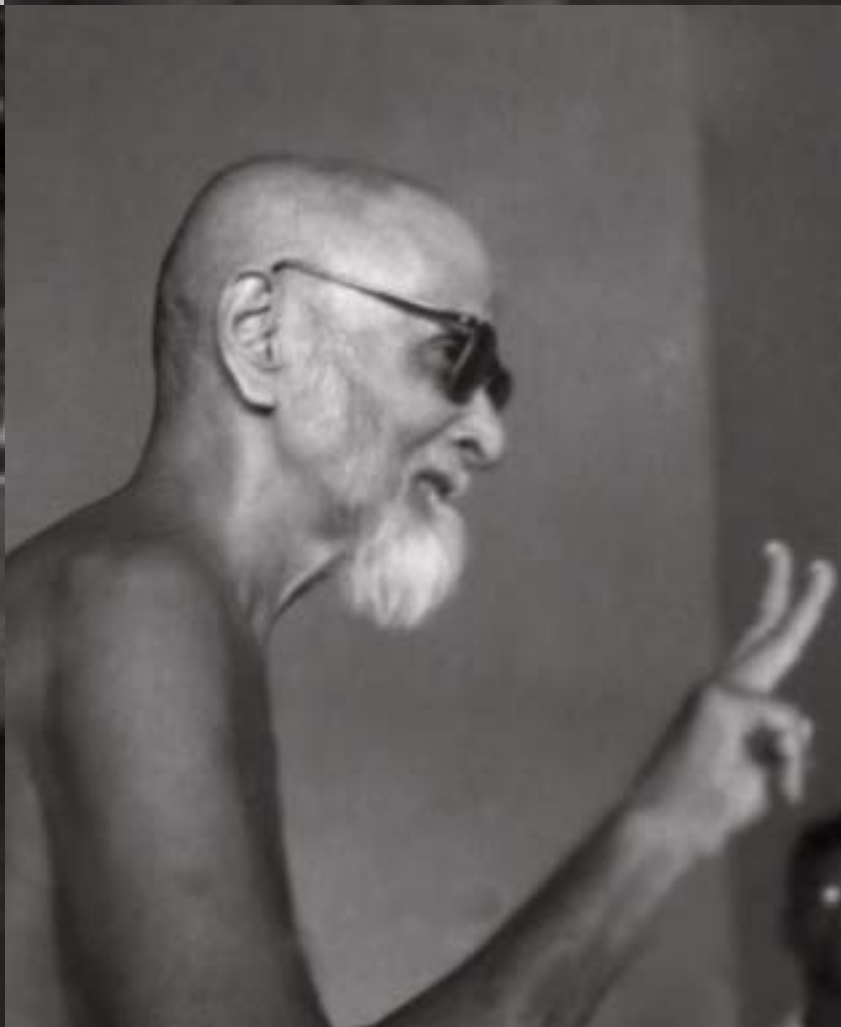




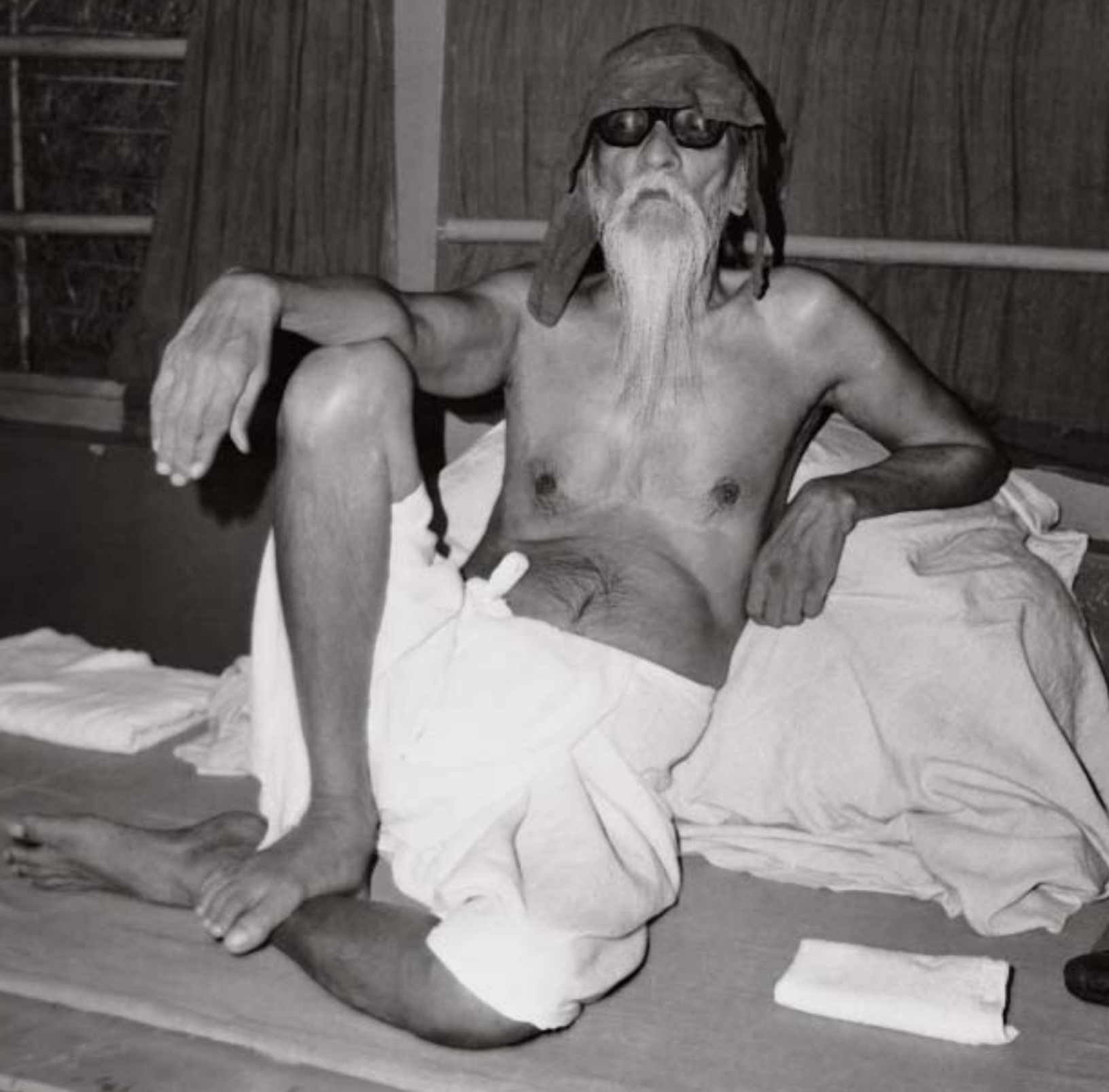
We associate *jnana* with knowing. But knowing through reason only, does not lead one to true knowledge. Intellectual understanding is not enough. Knowledge should be fully assimilated, it should become a part of our being and should be reflected in all our actions.







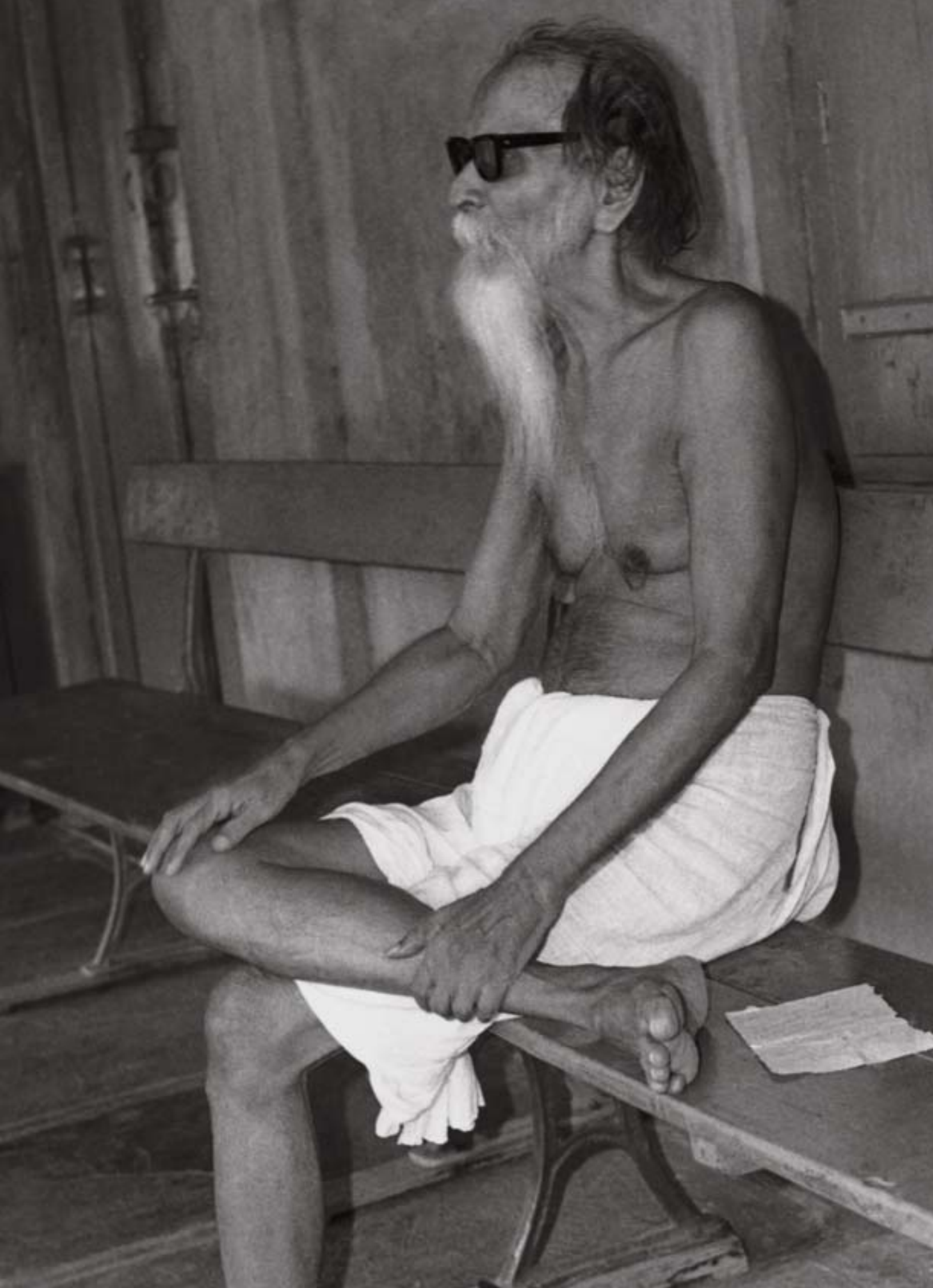
Being free from the problems of the life of a householder, there were no worries in my life. There was just contemplation and only contemplation. It has been my experience that contemplation is easy whereas worrying is difficult.

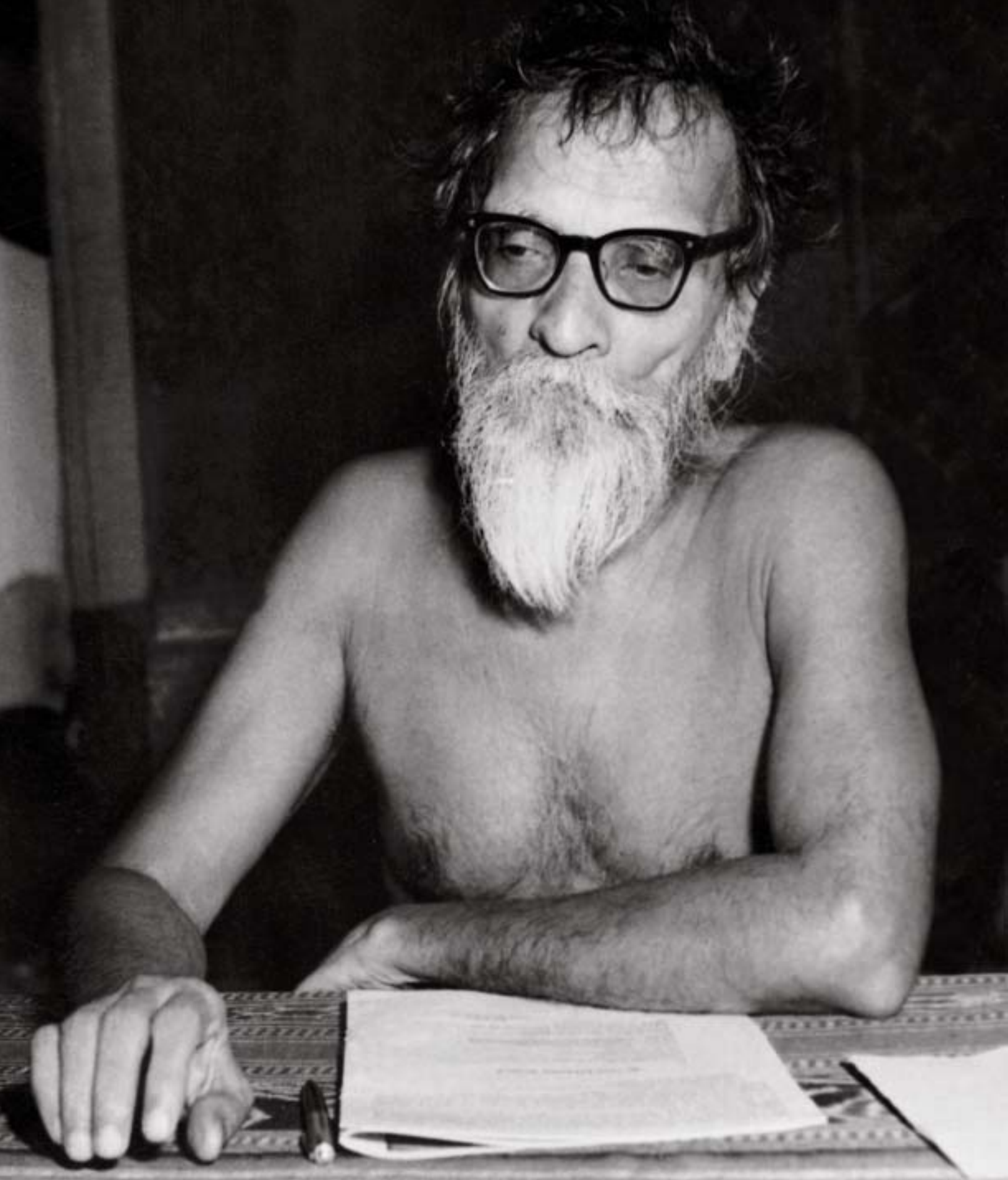


*These feet also know how to rest – ‘He moves and moves not’*

I compare the free mind to the empty sky. Outwardly all pervasive and inwardly void. In it the air flows, dust particles whirl around and rains occur, but the sky remains untouched. The sky's only purpose is to give space to everything. In the same way even though I am constantly thinking and reflecting I remain untouched. This state of mind is the state of the free mind.

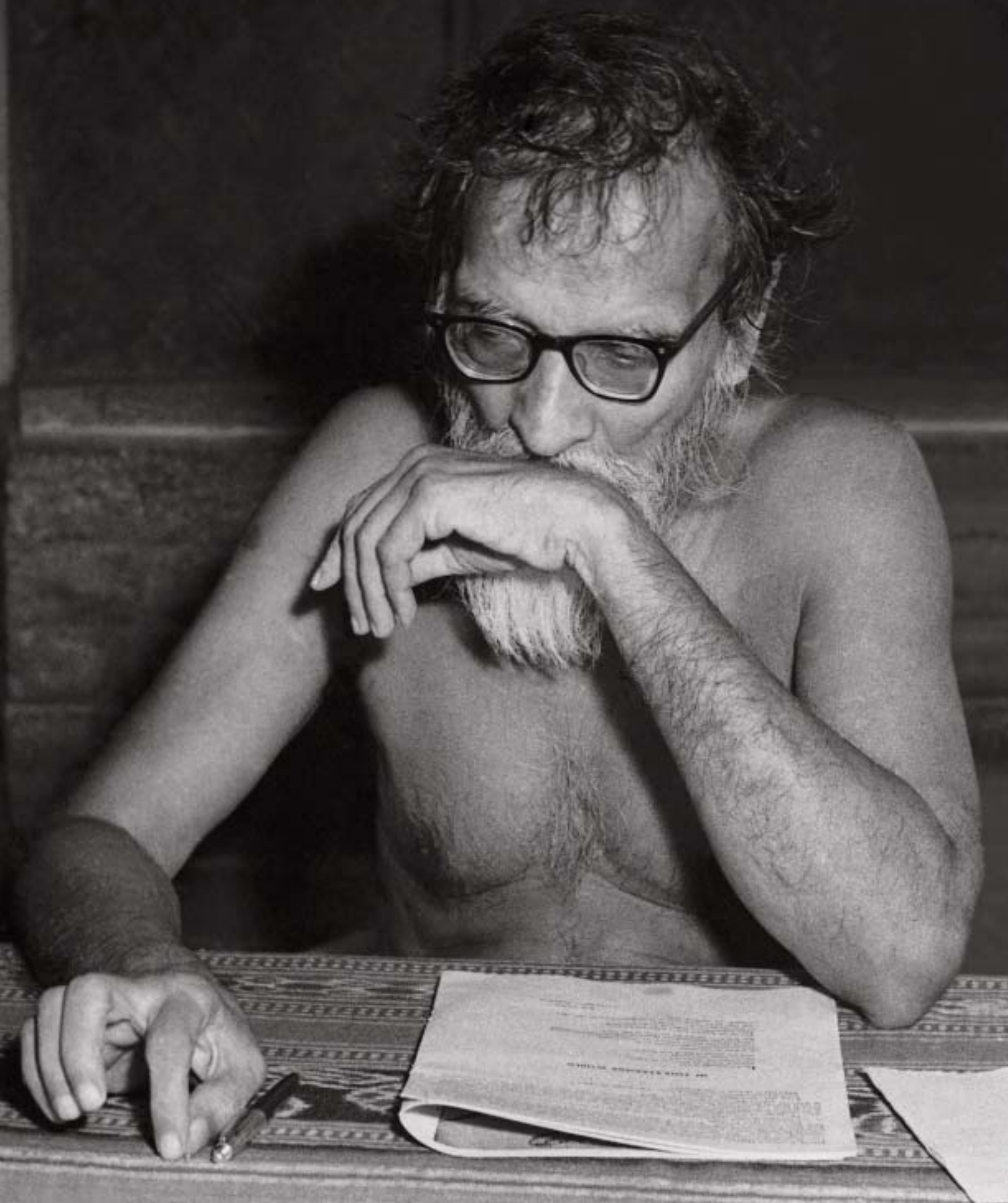






Everybody should have the habit of contemplation after entering deep within oneself. We should detach ourselves a little from our work, our ego, and from whatever is most dear to us.





The pattern of my life has been one of experiment born of reflection and of reflection born of experiment. I call this reflection *nididhyasan*, a state of concentrated contemplation in which ideas flash into the mind like living sparks.





Where do I stay?

The first answer – Anywhere

The second answer – In *satsang* (company of holy men)

The third answer – In the Self











The three brothers





*Seated among the villagers,  
who were praying for rain*







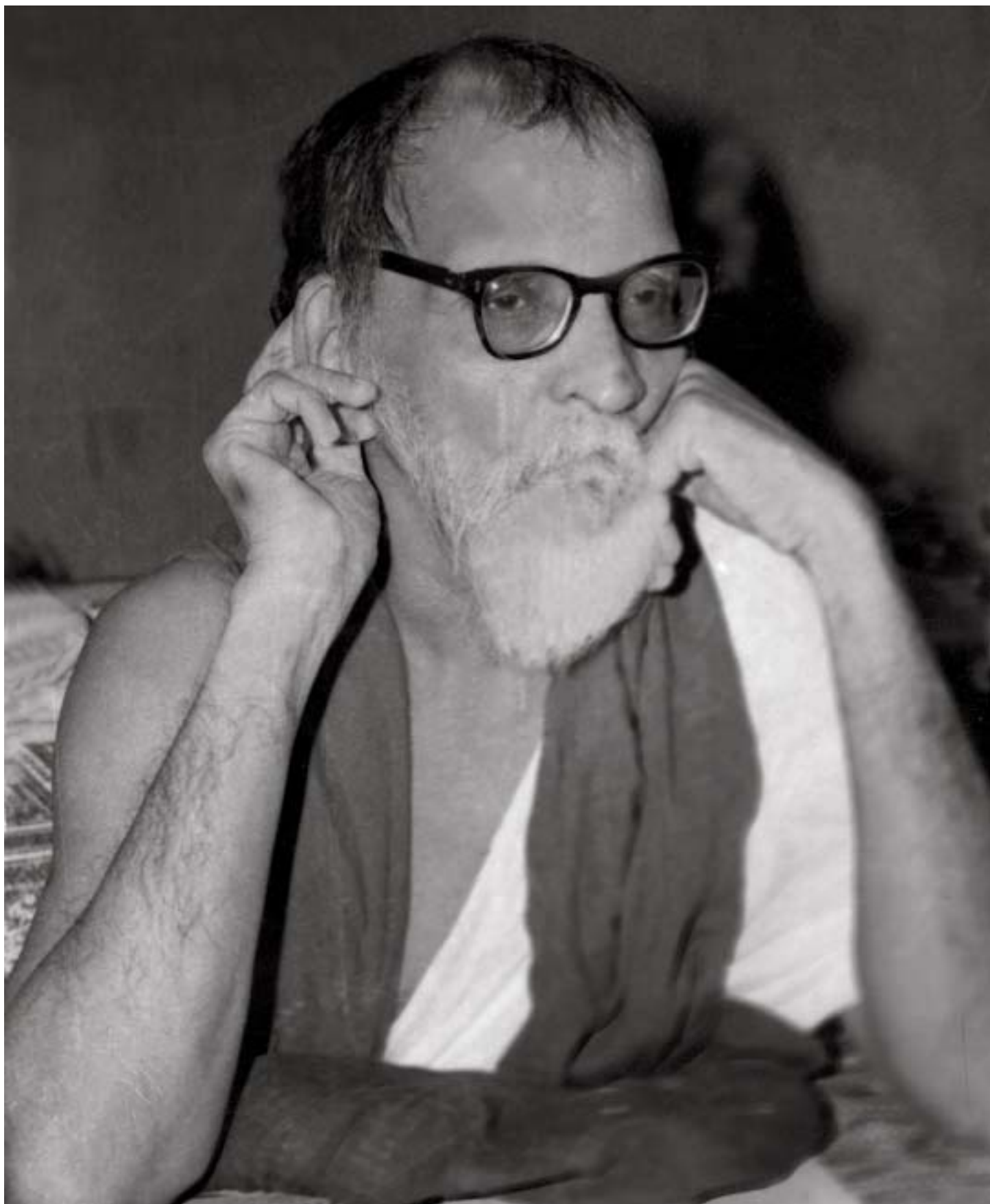


A river is the incessant flow of God's compassion.



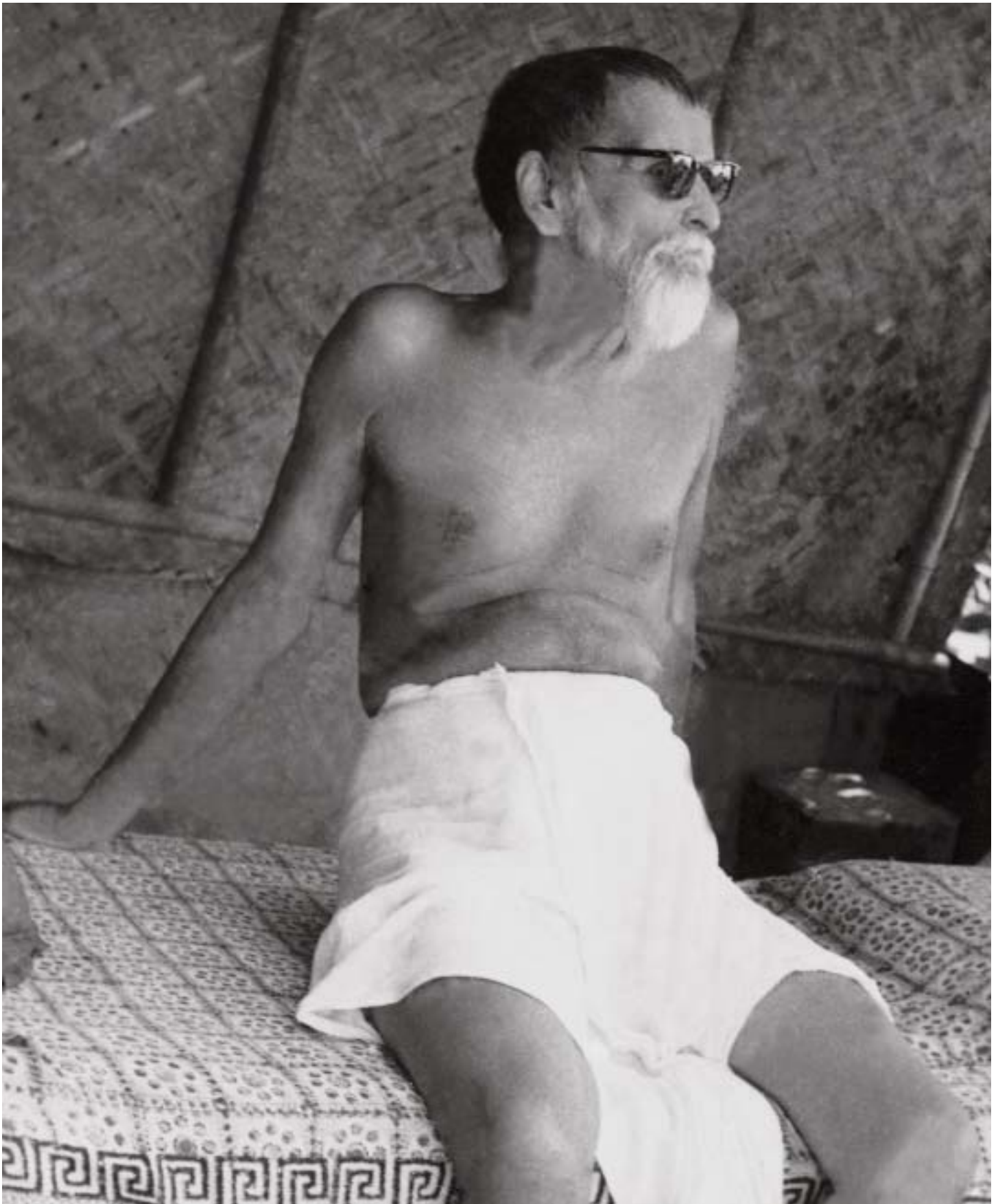
*River Dham in floods - 1978*





The music that we hear within, in the silent recesses of the soul, has no parallel in the outside world.





Silence means – 1. Restraint in speech.  
2. Safeguarding truth.  
3. Conservation of energy  
4. An aid to meditation.



*Fresh coconuts from the tree*



*Observing the level of water in the well*



*Last rites of a cat*





*Inspection of the farm*



*Inauguration of the biogas plant - alternative fuel as a by-product from the dairy*





In Hinduism, *Holi* is observed to signify the principle of non-possession.

*Joy of dance*





Nothing can match music in turning the mind inward. These days music has become a slave to sensuality, but unite music with devotion and see how powerful it becomes! Music should be used for rendering melodious, morally elevating songs like those of Tulsidas and Soordas.



*Listening to devotional songs sung by Smt. M. S. Subbulaxmi*

*Playing chess with Balubhai Mehta*

If we enjoy the game of chess irrespective of whether we win or lose, then that game will have a spiritual dimension. If the outcome of the game makes us happy or unhappy, the game will remain only on the mental plane.





*With a little friend in Madhubani, Bihar*



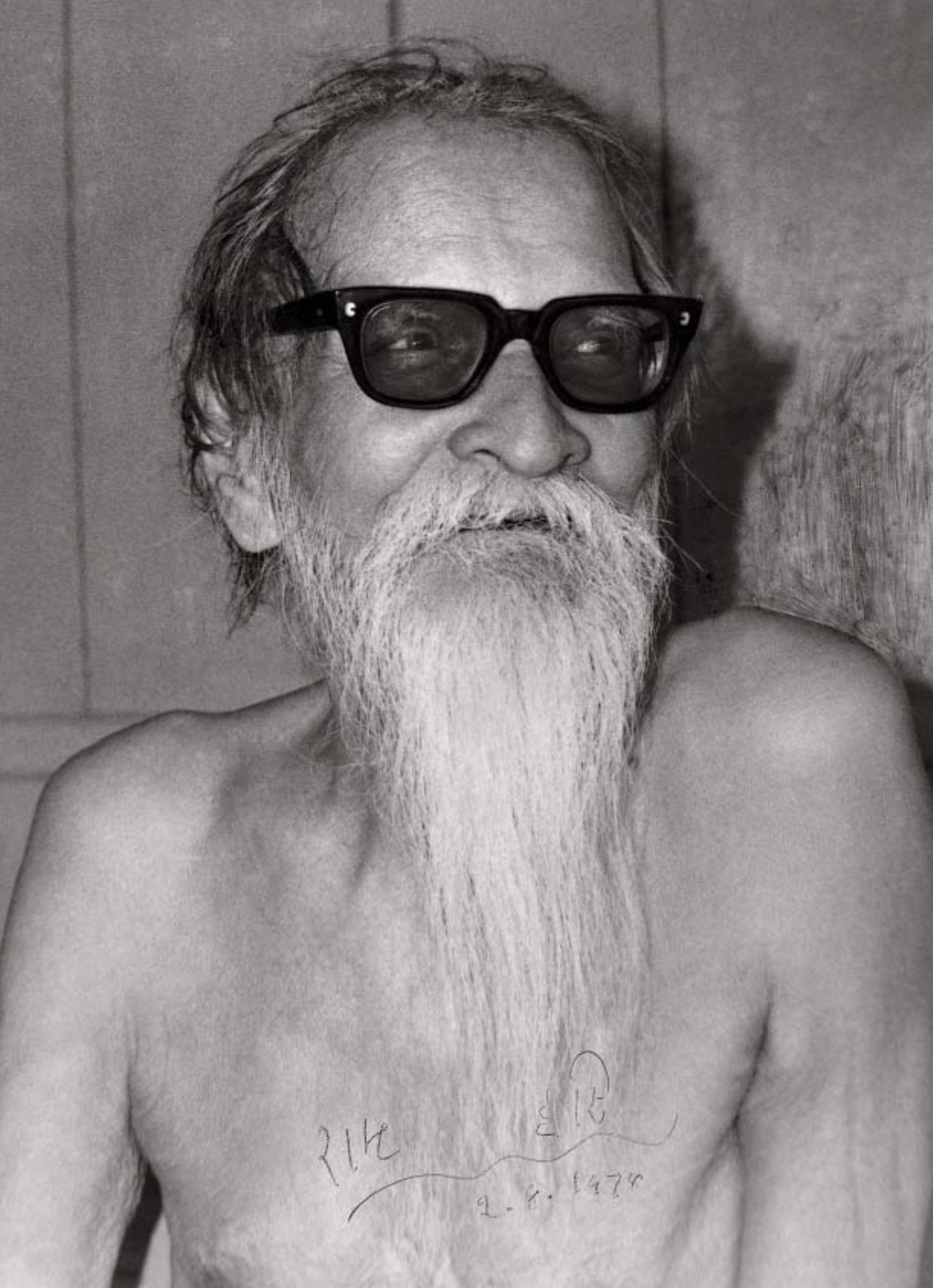
*A cat and a dog – they too are members of the family!*



Children are a gift of God; they are nearer to Him. Let us not believe that it is up to us to shape their lives. It is enough if we ensure that their minds are not vitiated by harmful impressions.

Jesus was asked by his disciples – Who will be able to enter the kingdom of heaven? Jesus lifted a little child seated next to him and making him stand on the table, said – Those who are like this child will be able to enter there. Jesus' words are absolutely true.



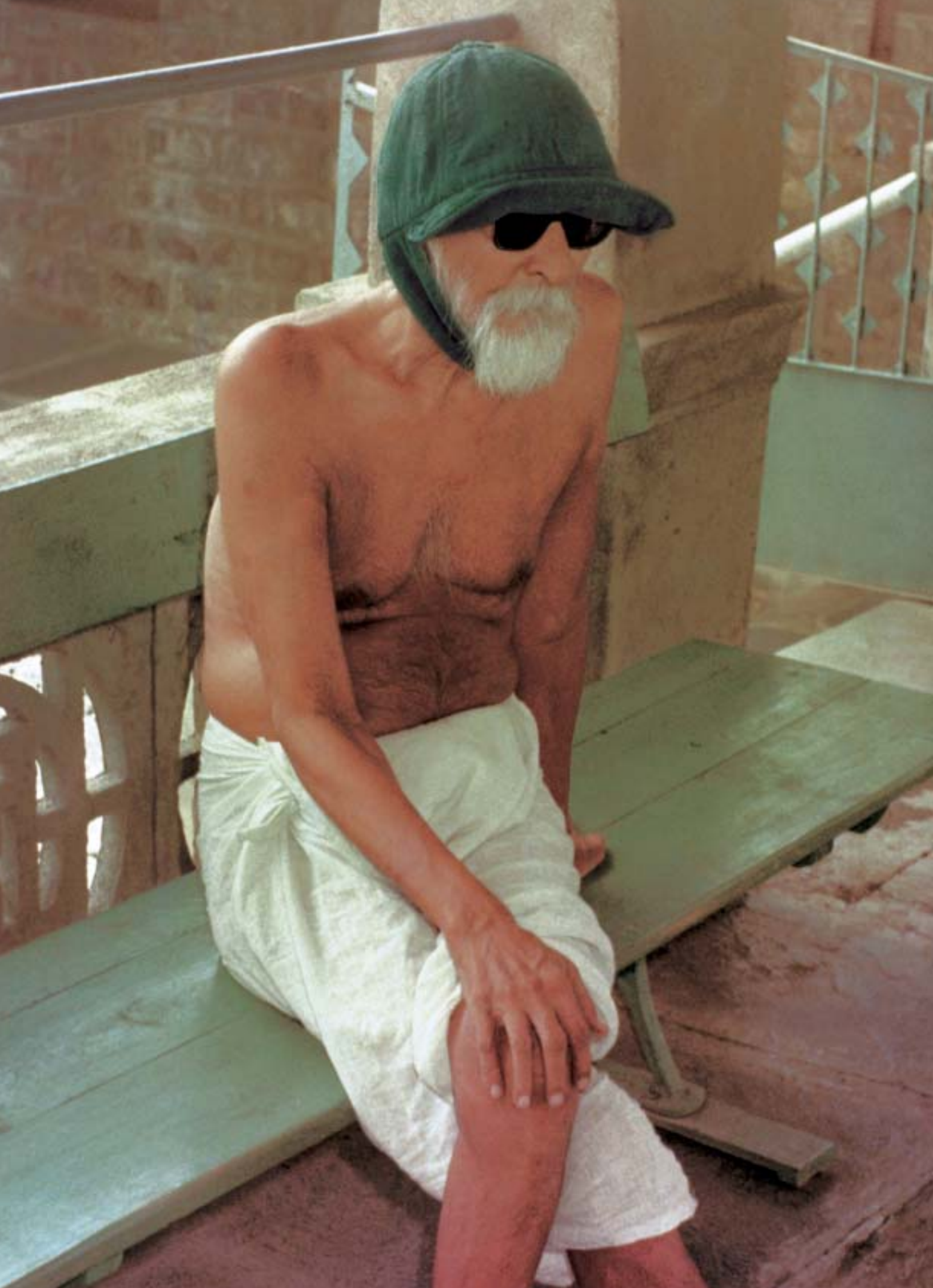


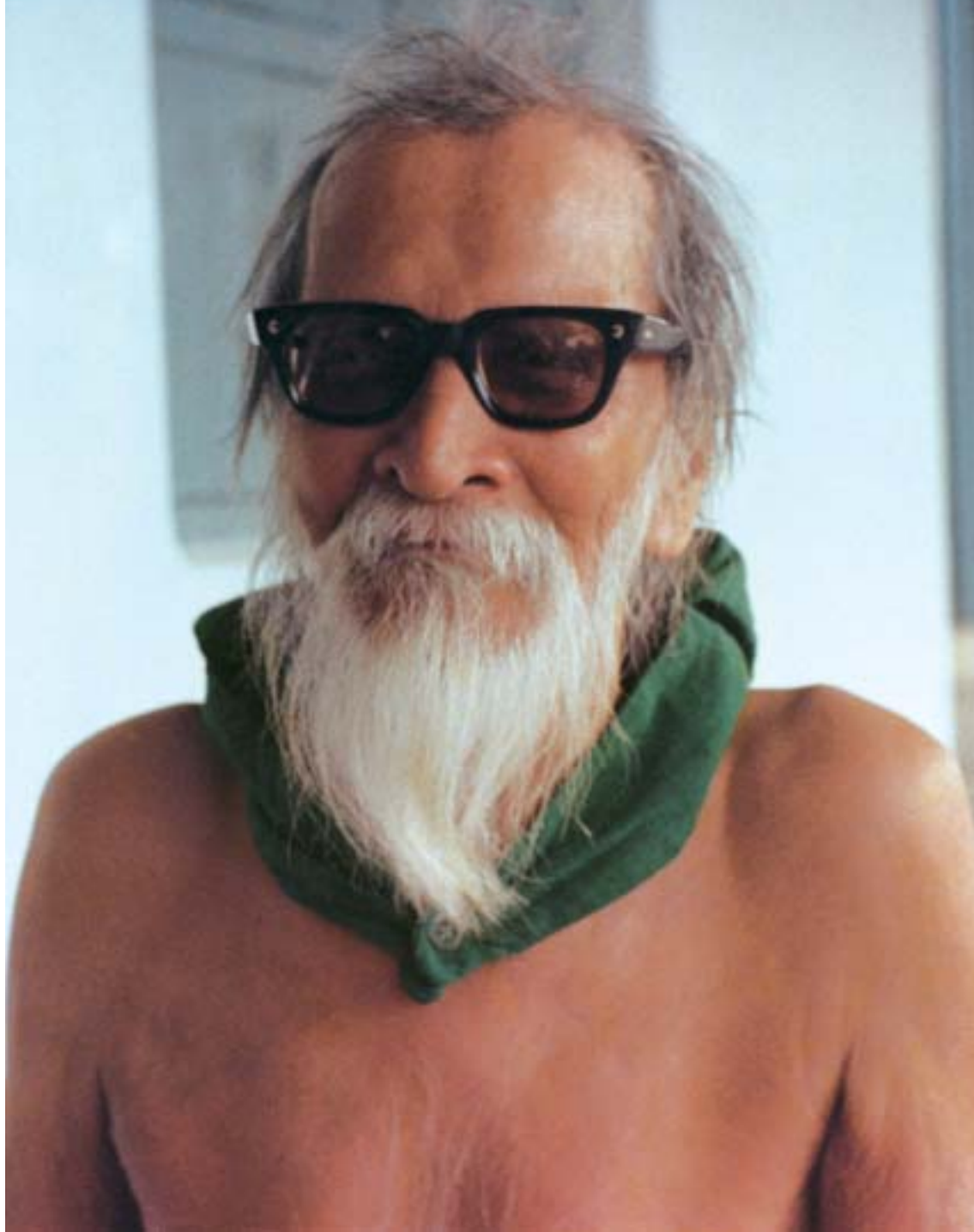
२१५      २१५  
२-४-१९७४

Kabir has asked us to say *Rama* (name of God) with each breath. I have made an addition to it. While breathing in, say *Rama*; while breathing out, say *Hari* (another name of God). *Hari* means one who takes away, one who cleanses ... From the standpoint of science the meaning would be – while breathing in, say *Rama*, that is, take the pure air inside; and while breathing out, say *Hari*, that is, release the impure air outside. The spiritual meaning would be, while chanting *Rama* increase your devotion, while chanting *Hari* extinguish your desires. *Rama* = increasing devotion; *Hari* = finishing off desires. In this way continue to do *japa* of *Rama-Hari* as much as possible.





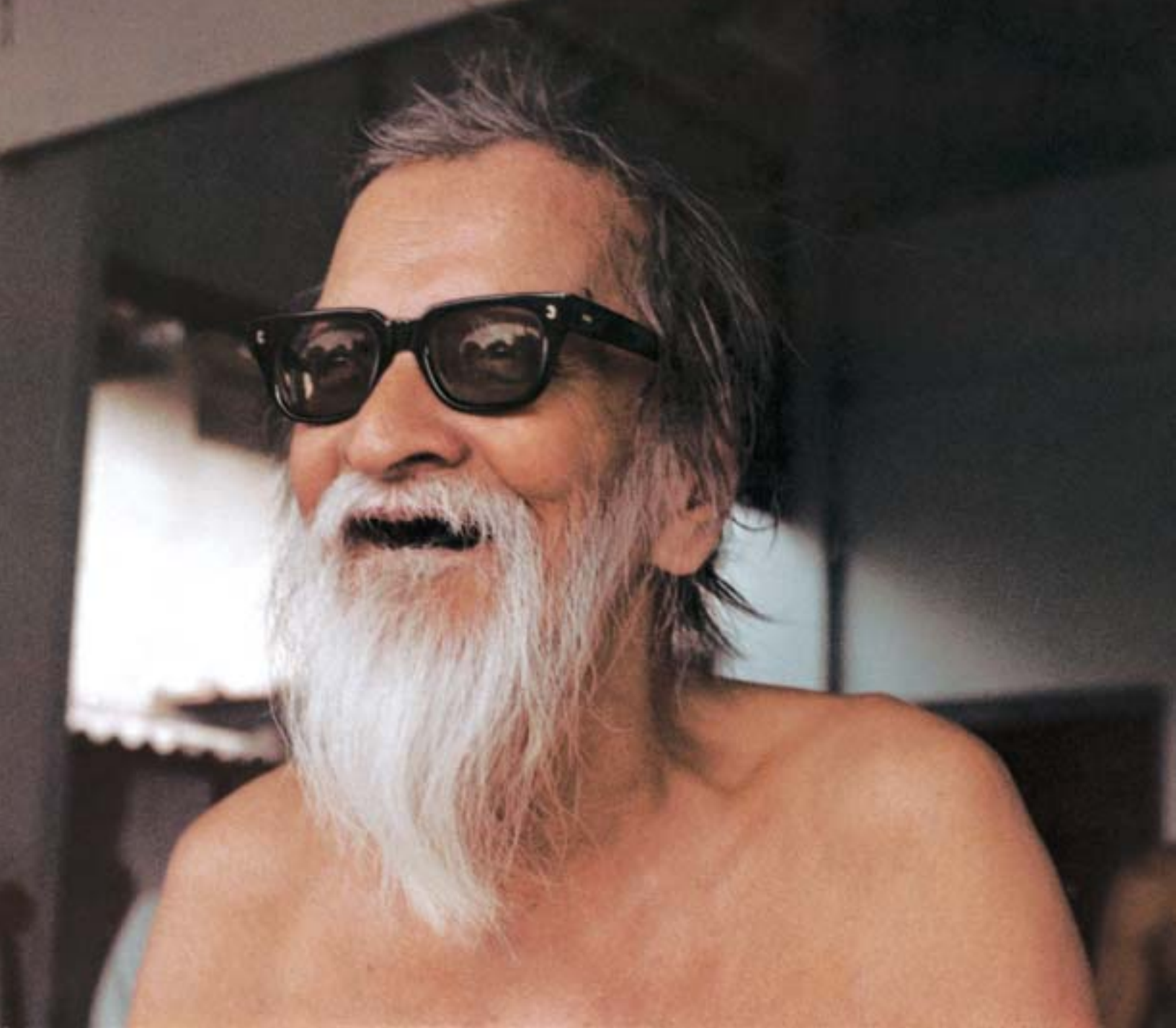




आंख न मूंदौं कान न रूधौं  
तानिक कष्ट नहिं धारौं  
खुलै नैन पहचानौं हंसि हंसि  
सुंदर रूप निहारौं  
साधो! सहज समाधि भली

Far greater service to humanity can be rendered through contemplation and meditation than directly through action.





The stream of joy and contentment will continue to flow in the consciousness of one who is self-reliant.





Nothing belongs to me. Everything  
belongs to me. I belong to every one.



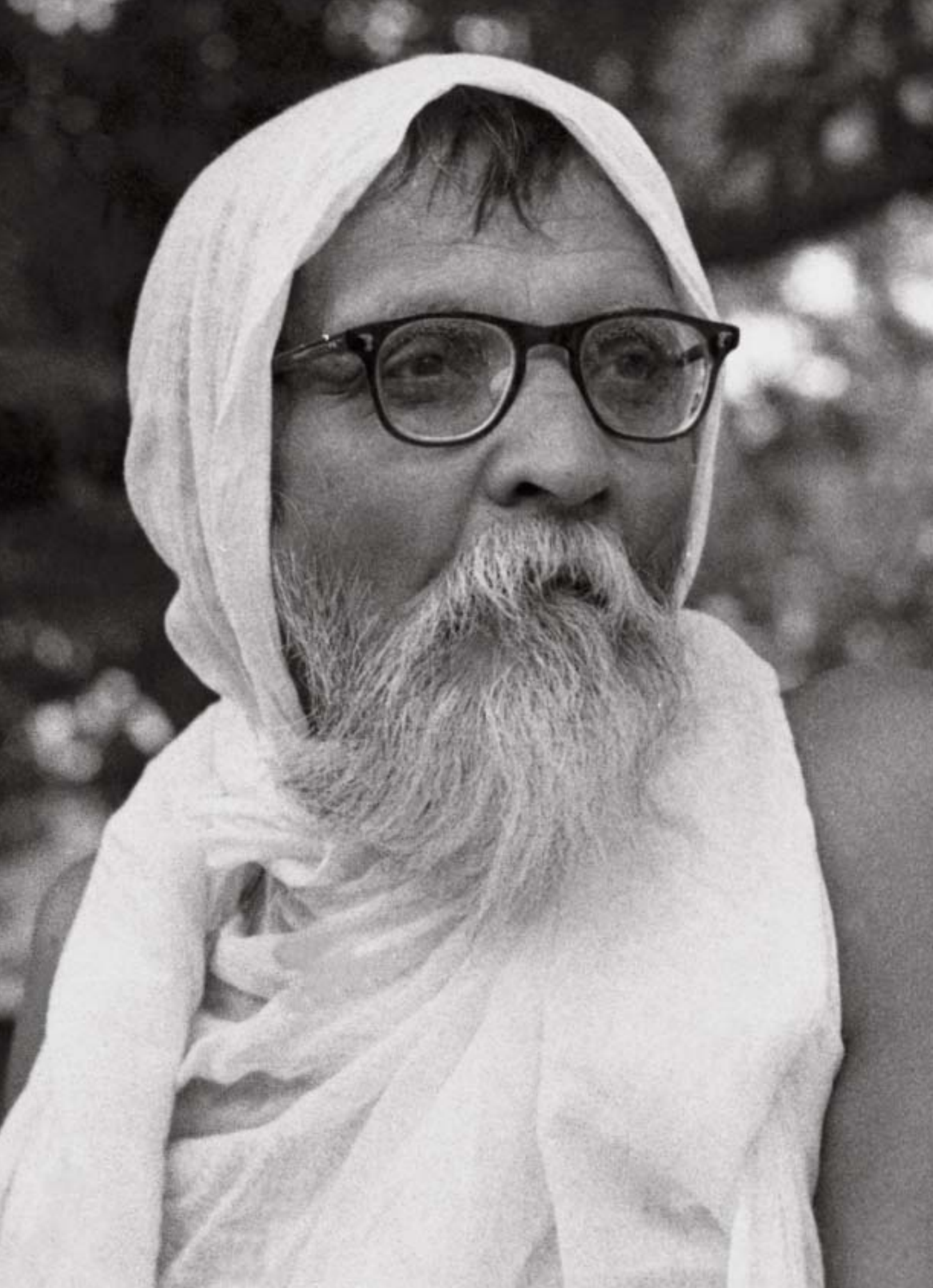
The music in the silent sky, the music in the inner recesses of the mind that accompanies breathing, the music that makes every act in life harmonious – that is the real music.

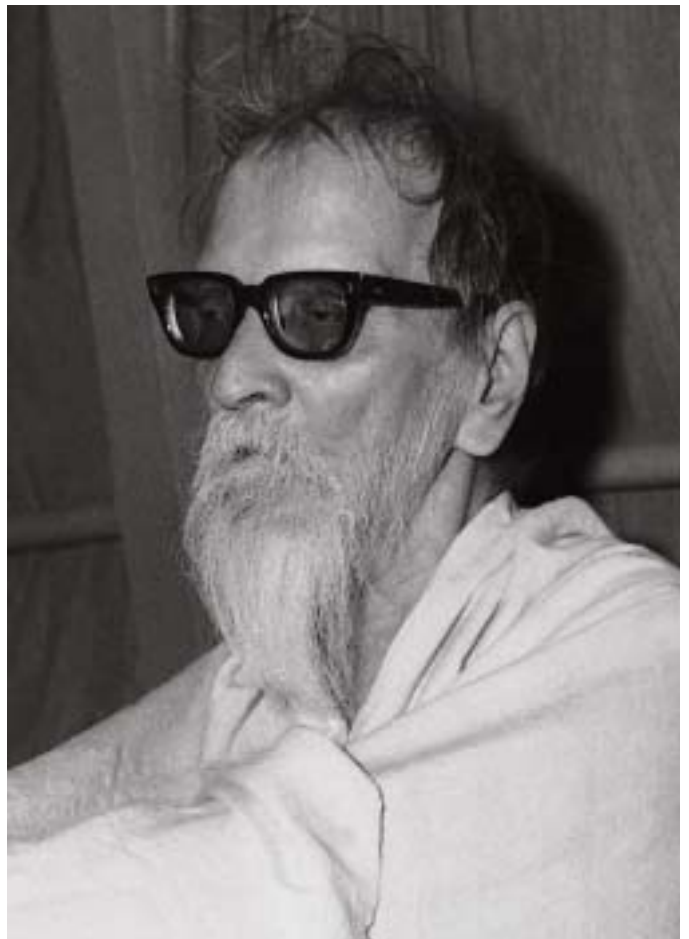
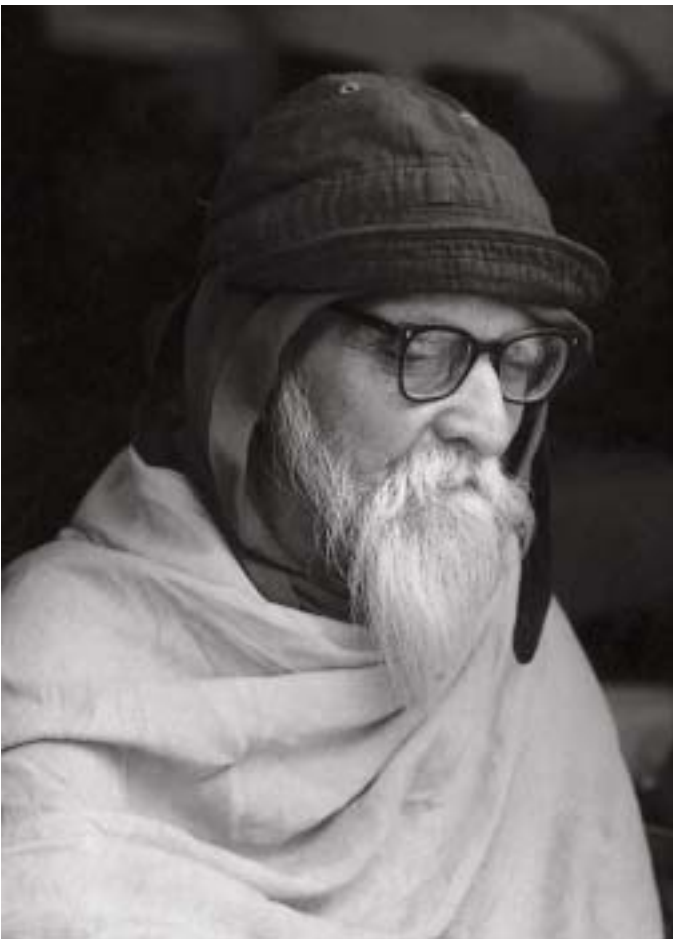
Where there is purity, there is beauty,  
where there is beauty, there is poetry.



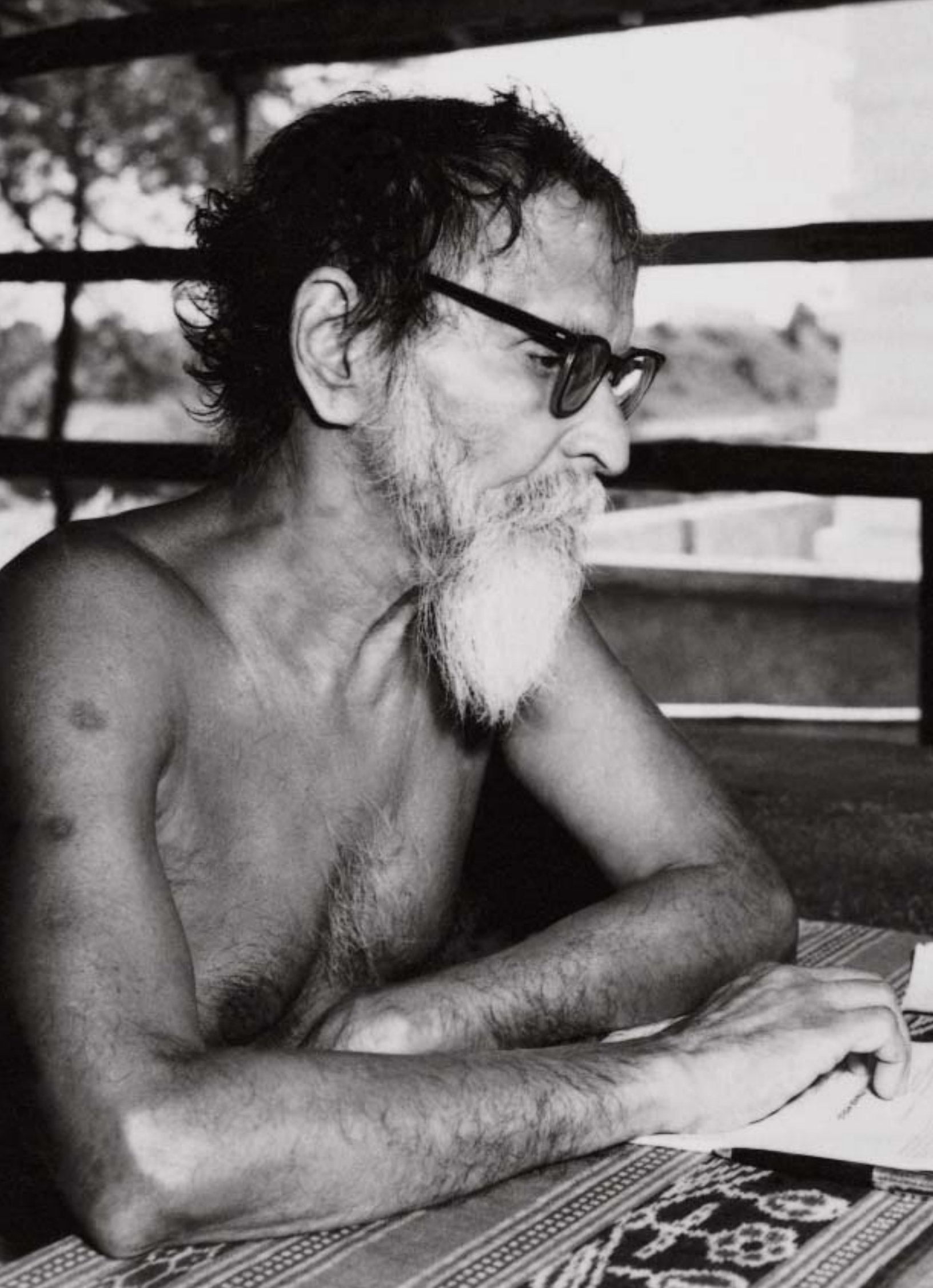
*On the request of Prime minister Nehru, Vinobaji engaged himself in rehabilitation work (1948). One man was wrongly imprisoned. Vinobaji told Nehru about it. Nehru said that he had already given instructions to release the man a month ago. Vinobaji said in jest – When the king speaks the army moves, when a bearded person speaks his beard moves, but when Nehru speaks nothing moves.*













Just the mere presence of a man, who desperately yearns for God, is his greatest service. Due to this conviction of mine, even though I am engaged in many kinds of work for the sake of service, I have no desire to measure its value by any external yardstick. Externals are all zero and will remain zero. However, whatever service the body is capable of rendering, should not be given up. It should be perfected. And it should be considered zero.

My basic nature, even today, is one of a *Nivrittimargi* (path of withdrawal from worldly affairs). Should anyone ask me which the best moments of my life are, I would reply, "Those moments are the best, when there are no fluctuations in the mind." In this sense I am a *Nivrittimargi*. Even so, you will see that I am engaged in unceasing *Pravritti* (activity). This may appear contradictory, but it is not so. There is silence within and activity without in the same measure.





Through the course of digging, many stone images were unearthed in the *Ashram*. These are about 1400 to 1500 years old, and most of them are damaged.

Here in *Brahmavidya-Mandir*, there is an image of the Goddess Ganga opposite my room. I use it for meditation. There is compassion in her eyes, joy in her face, affection in her bosom, strength in her trunk. There stands before me, in that image of stone, a picture of all those virtues in one.



मंगलं भगवन् विष्णुः  
मंगलं गरुडध्वजः  
मंगलं पुंडरीकाक्षः  
मंगलायनं हरि



The image of Lord Vishnu in black stone, about 1000 years old.





Om Tat Sat Sri Narayana tu Purushottama Guru tu,  
 Siddha Buddha tu Skanda Vinayaka Savita Pavaka tu  
 Brahma Mazda tu Yahva Shakti tu Ishu Pita Prabhu tu,  
 Rudra Vishnu tu Rama Krishna tu Raheem Tao tu  
 Vasudeva Go-Vishvarupa tu Chidananda Hari tu,  
 Adviteeya tu Akala Nirbhaya Atma-linga Shiva tu  
 (Tu means Thou(art). All the other words are the names of God).

I have been a worshipful student and practitioner of different religions and cultures. It has been my practice to reflect upon the prominent names of God therein. ... In 1951, I composed *Nama-mala* of three verses which contain most of the prominent names in the different religions of the world. Yahwa (Jehovah) is the name dear to the Jews, Mazda (Ahurmazda) to the Parsees, Ishu-Pita (Jesus' father) to the Christians, Raheem to the Muslims, Tao to the Chinese. Beginning with the Vedic name *Om Tat Sat*, this *Nama-mala* includes the names pertaining to many of the sects in Hinduism as well.

*Next page –*

The evening prayer should be in the nature of surrender. It is only with keen examination and perception of our faults and an earnest appeal to God to forgive us, that we can surrender our daily activities to God. Introspection is an essential part of the evening prayer.

















*Inside Bapukuti –*

Since two days I have been sparing time to meditate in the *Bapukuti* (Gandhiji's hut at the *Sevagram Ashram*). The hut has something in it that touches one and is bound to touch an inner chord in the mind of a man who is given to meditation and contemplation. In the context of that experience, it appears to me that *Bapukuti* can best be utilized for meditation.



The synthesis of Science and Spirituality has given birth to collective *Ahimsa* (non-violence). This is what is called Gandhian ideology. It is from this that the world will be benefitted. Just as hydrogen and oxygen combine to form water, in the same way, *Sarvodaya* or *Samyayoga* is the synthesis of science and spirituality.

*A heap of handspun yarn outside Bapukuti –*

For me a hank of handspun yarn symbolises Gandhiji as nothing else can. His life is reflected therein to a greater degree than in his photograph. I have therefore put before the country the programme of *Sootanjali* (presenting a hank of self-spun yarn) in Gandhiji's memory.

The *Gitai* is the greatest achievement of my life.



*A view of the  
Gitai Mandir  
where 700  
verses of the  
Gitai have  
been engraved  
on slabs of  
stones*







*At the function for laying the foundation stone of the Gitai Mandir with Kamalnayan Bajaj, Balkoba Bhawe, Khan Abdul Gaffarkhan and Fuji Guruji of Japan*





## Glimpses of Ashram activities



*Agriculture is true service to God*



*Harvesting*



*Watering banana trees*



*Tomatoes*



*New millet*



*Plucking cauliflowers*

A farm is an excellent temple of health, worship and wisdom. As the saying goes, *Lakshmi* - the goddess of wealth - resides on the tips of the fingers. *Lakshmi* means productivity, not money. There is a difference between *Lakshmi* and money. Money can be had by theft, robbery, cheating, speculation, eloquent words, force, use of a gun, making a nuisance or by the favours of people in power. However, agriculture is productive work, therein lies *Lakshmi*.





1



2



3



4



6



5

1. Cows bathing in the river
2. Churning curds
3. Ploughing the soil
4. Atop the coconut tree
5. Baking rotis
6. Keeping the waterpot cool

With dignitaries



*With Mr. Baker, the friend of trees*



*With D. K. Karve, a pioneer in women's education*



*With the president, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan*



*With the prime minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi*

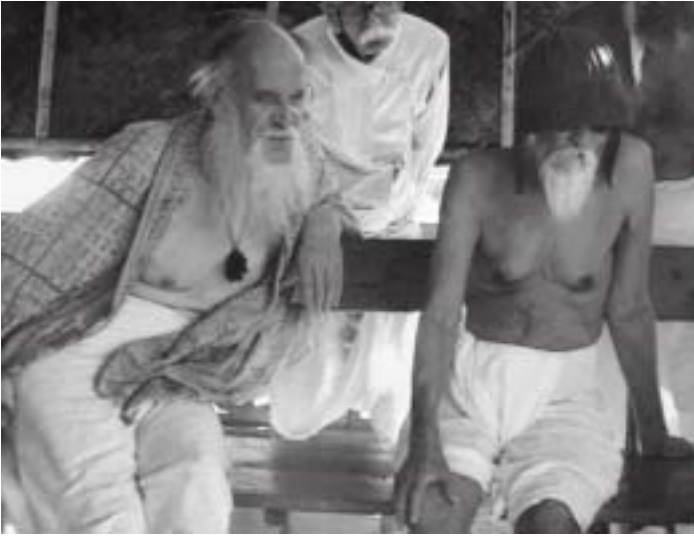


*With the prime minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri*



*With Baba Amte, a social worker*





*With Lanza del Vasto (nicknamed Gandhi of France)*



*With Shrikrishnadas Jajoo, close associate of Gandhiji*



*With Khan Abdul Gaffarkhan, close associate of Gandhiji*



*With Swami Ramsukhdasji*



*With Acharya Tulsi*

The cow is like our mother. So, killing a cow is tantamount to killing our own mother.

A cow embodies the message of Indian culture. Worship of the cow is one of the best concepts in Hinduism. Cow's milk deserves a more prominent place on India's agenda than even *khadi*. Milking of the cow is a discovery that has taken us a step forward on the path of non-violence; it has enabled man to overcome meat-eating.

If the cow survives; the village, country and its culture will survive.

In India, a cow is a part of the human family. Our rural economy is cow-centred. We have deep reverence for the cow. We should also love her and serve her properly.

*When the cows are slaughtered I feel as if I myself am being slaughtered.* – **Gandhiji**

*On gaining independence, we shall ban cow slaughter in five minutes, with one stroke of the pen.* – **Lokmanya Tilak**







*The Acharya Conference at Paunar*

To continue the pursuit of knowledge, to study the problems of society dispassionately, to arrive at a consensus regarding their solutions and to put before the people that consensus for their guidance – these are the objectives with which I have founded the *Acharyakul*.

The thinking of politicians is biased, therefore it is not holistic and right. The country needs guidance from dispassionate men of wisdom and learning, expressed in appropriate words. The consensus of the *Acharyakul* will save the country.

*Acharyakul* will have in its fold men of character, wisdom and learning. It will have as its members, teachers, scientists, writers, judges, journalists, and people who are non-partisan and think in a balanced way.

These *acharyas* will be fearless, free from enmity, and non-partisan.



Four things are essential in our approach of equality of feeling towards all religions :

1. Commitment to our own religion (*Swadharma-nishtha*).
2. Respect for other religions.
3. Reform in all the religions, which is essential for man's progress.
4. Opposition to unrighteousness.



*Selecting verses from the RigVeda*

The *Vedas* seek to arouse the spiritual consciousness in man; that is their main object.

The *Vedas* lay stress on worship and meditation. There is no nature-worship in them; there is worship of the divine essence manifested in different forms. Reflection on God's manifestations develops different virtues in us. Devotion in the *Vedas* is not polytheistic. It is said in the *Vedas* – 'God is one, but the devotees give Him different names.'

A question is often asked, "Why should we prefer the older treatises to the modern ones?" Millions of people and great men have reflected upon ancient spiritual treatises again and again, thereby enhancing their potency. Besides, they have withstood the test of time. They have lasted thousands of years. How many of the present writings will be read even after a hundred years?

वंत्तुं लज्जिनि योसहे.कून बे योमिहूनि  
 वंत्तुं लज्जिनिहुम् मिन् अजावे  
 रब्बेहिम् पुइफेकून  
 इन्न अजाव रब्बेहिम् गौरी मअमून  
 वंत्तुं लज्जिनिहुम् ने फोरूजेहिम् हाफेकून  
 इह्वा अजाव अज्जवाजेहिम् जे  
 ओ मा मलकन् मयमानोहुम्,  
 फ इन्नहुम् गौरी मल्लमिन् (निंदनीय)

Vinobaji used to write down Arabic verses in the Nagari script while studying the Quran. 'The Essence of the Quran' has been published in the Nagari script also

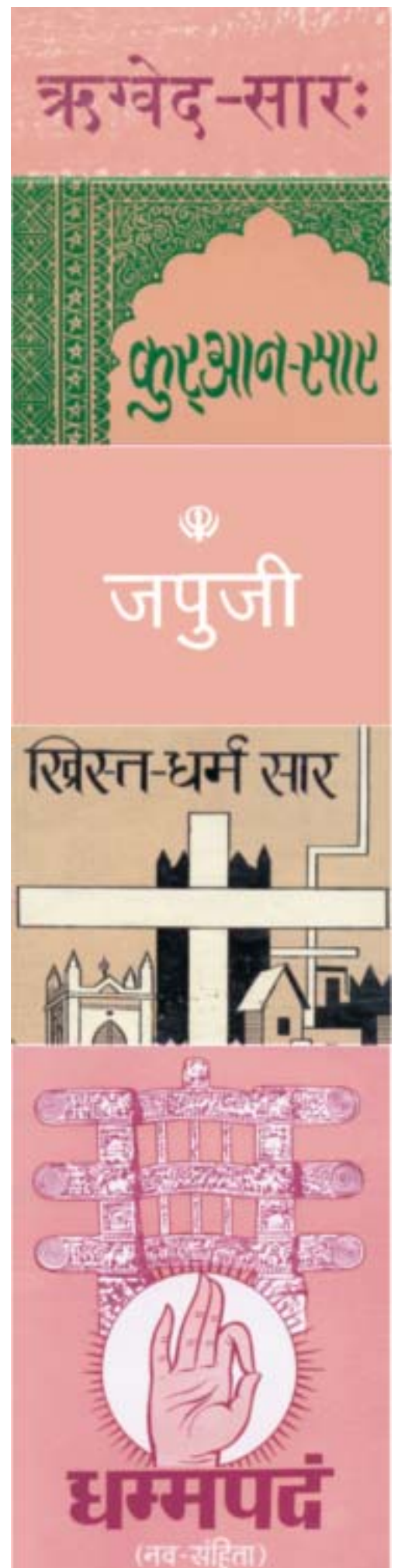
Throughout my life, all my activities have been motivated by the single objective of uniting hearts. The same motivation is behind the publication of *The Essence of the Quran*. The *Quran* stresses on three things – Truth, patience and compassion.

*Japuji* is a book about *Namsmaran* – recitation of the names of God. It enjoins the worship of God as Truth. Guru Nanak Dev's whole spiritual discipline can be summed up in two words, *Nirbhau* (without fear) and *Nirvairu* (without enmity).

Jesus' three commandments :

1. Love thy neighbour as thyself
2. Love thy enemy
3. Love one another

*Dhammapada* is usually presented as a series of well worded but disconnected maxims, obscuring its all embracing vision. When I studied *Dhammapada* minutely, its verses arranged themselves in my mind in a systematic order. I felt that I should place before the public a *Dhammapada-Navsamhita*, a new arrangement of the *Dhammapada*. It was a bold thing to do, but bold as it was, I did it with great humility.





*Prayer in Bharat-Rama Mandir*

Prayer is not to be done with an eye on a place in heaven. It is to be done for the purification of heart, for social integration, for becoming absorbed in the Self. The secret of prayer lies in trying to delve deep into the Self.

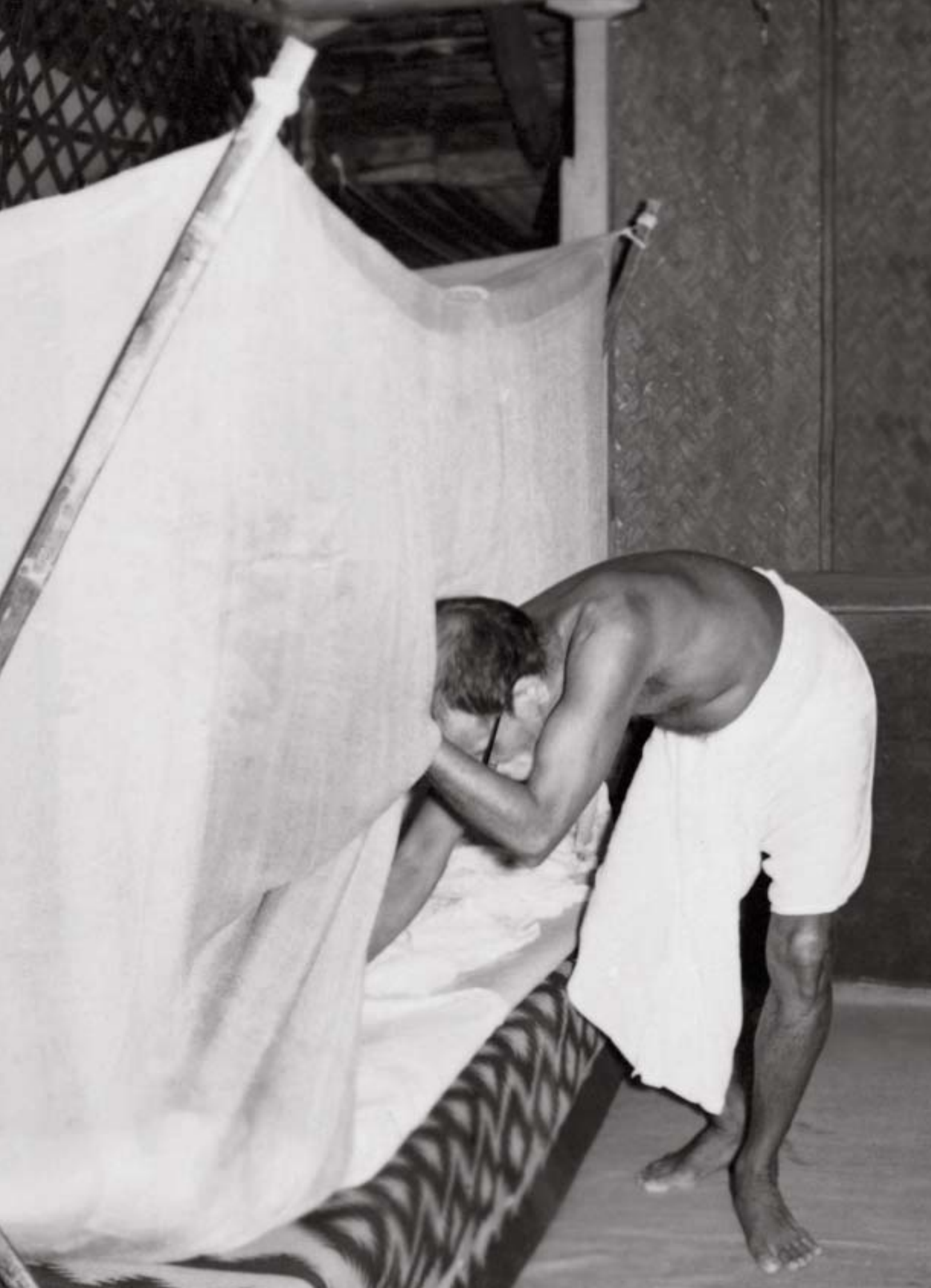
Prayer is the most important part of our life. It is like the lungs. After the morning prayer, the rest of the day should be spent inspired by it; and in waiting eagerly for the evening prayer. Prayer takes little time, but it is the mainstay of all daily activities.





*Aarati in Bharat-Rama Mandir*

There was a time when I relied much on *Jnana*, knowledge, but experience has taught me that knowledge alone is not enough. It can burn down gross impurities in the mind, but is powerless to wash away subtler impurities. The subtle impurities can be washed away only by the waters of *Bhakti*.



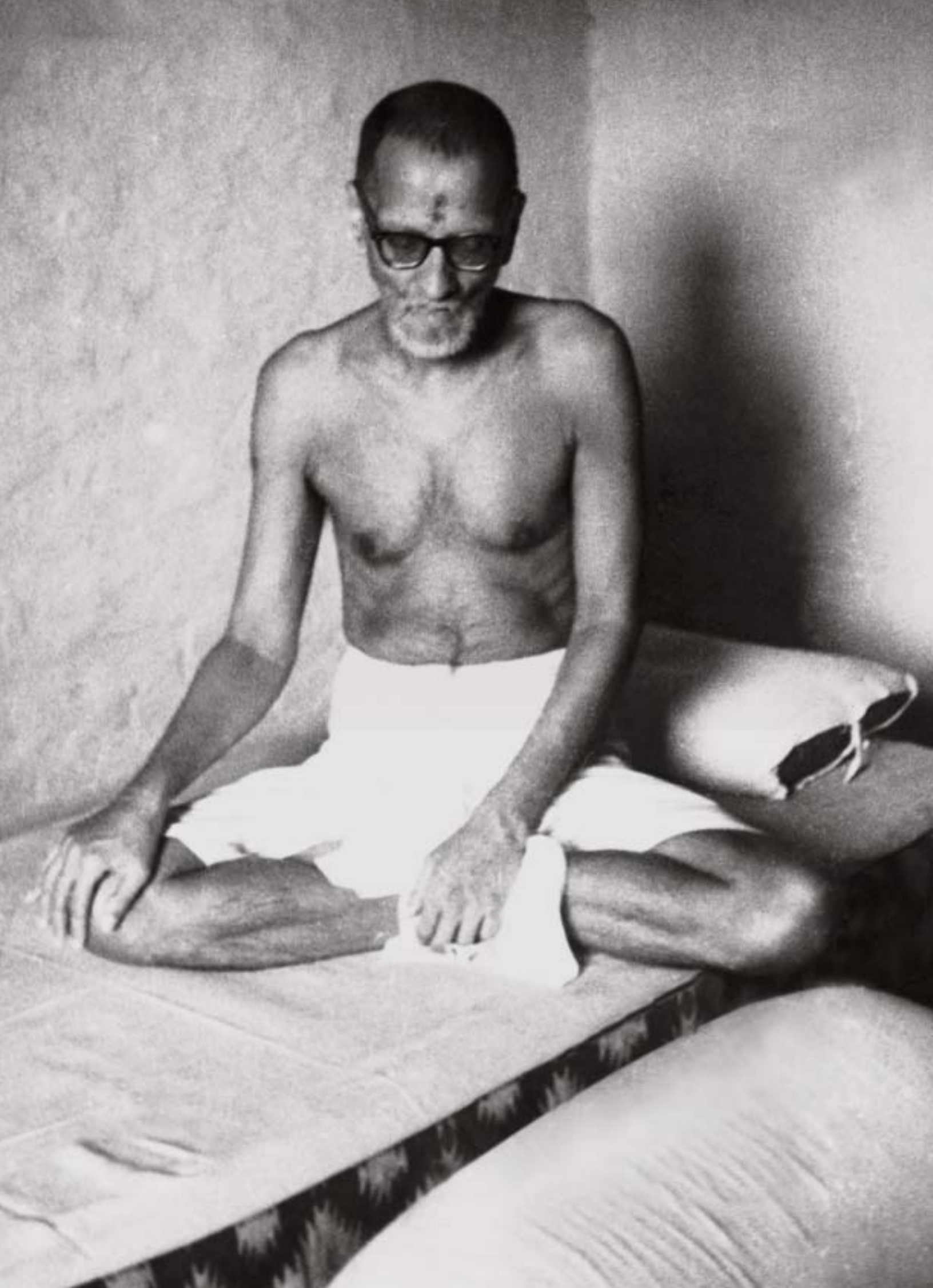


In prayer, we try to establish communion with the Lord. In deep sleep we actually rest in His lap.

Sleep, is the rehearsal of death. Before going to sleep, we should have the feeling that we are going to die and will shortly be in His lap. We should sleep with this thought. If we want to remember God at the time of death, we should daily practise the rehearsal of death, remembering God.

Just as seeds germinate under the cover of soil, thoughts develop in dreamless sleep.





Entering a deeper inward path - *Sukshma pravesha* :

I was feeling a strong urge to free myself from outward visible activities and enter upon the inward hidden form of spiritual action (*sukshma karmayoga*). I believe that a lot of work is done in this innermost hidden way, and that those whose personal desires have been blotted out in the contemplation of God and his creation may be of the greatest service, invisible though it be.

The individual, who enters on this path of deeper inward action will be reduced to nothing, to less than nothing; that is the test. For society, it means the release of a power, which, like the power of the atom, is inner and hidden, but whose effect is far greater than that of outward force. This inward energy is just as great as that of the atom, but it can not be described in material terms.

Being now freed from outward activity I am reflecting on death, and how through death comes deathlessness. Saint Tukaram says, 'My death has died and made me immortal. I saw my death with my own eyes, and it was an incomparable festival'. So I die daily, and forget all that is past.

**I have one very important thing to say, Forget me,  
but remember the Gitai.**

*Let this life merge in the all-conscious and eternal  
being, and let my body be reduced to ashes ...*

*The last pilgrimage (16.11.1982)*







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## Main events of Vinobaji's life

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| <p>1895 Sep.11 : Birth in Gagode village (district Raigad, Maharashtra) : Stayed there till the age of nine</p> <p>1905 Baroda (Gujarat) : Education : At the age of ten takes a vow of <i>Brahmacharya</i></p> <p>1916 March 25 : Leaves home for spiritual quest : Stays in Kashi for about two and half months : Corresponds with Gandhiji : June 7- Enters <b>Gandhiji's Ashram</b></p> <p>1921 April 8 : Arrives at Wardha to manage the branch of the Satyagraha Ashram</p> <p>1923 April 13 : Leads the first mass Satyagraha - <i>Jhanda Satyagrah</i> - in Nagpur, and is imprisoned for 4 months</p> <p>1928 July 19 : Laxminarayana temple in Wardha, becomes the first temple opened to <i>Harijans</i></p> <p>1930 Oct. 7 to Feb.6, 1931 : Composes the <b>Geetai</b> in Marathi</p> <p>1932 Feb.21 to June 19 : Delivers the <b>Talks on the Geeta</b> in Dhule Jail</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Dec. 25 : Begins staying at Nalwadi, a <i>Harijan</i> settlement</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Arranges the 11 vows in verse form</p> <p>1934 May 6 : Establishes the <i>Gram Sewa Mandal</i> for organizing various types of village work</p> <p>1936 May 18 : The first Indian institution for leprosy patients is opened at Dattapur.</p> <p>1938 March 7 : Arrives at Paunar</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Unearths the stone idol of <b>Bharat-Rama-Milan</b>, while digging in the Ashram field</p> <p>1940 Oct.17 to Dec.3, 1941 : Chosen as the <b>first Individual Satyagrahi</b> by Gandhiji : Satyagraha and imprisonment</p> <p>1942 Aug.9 : Imprisonment during the 'Quit India' movement</p> <p>1946 April 2 : Begins <b>Scavenging work</b> at Surgaon, 3 miles from Paunar</p> <p>1946-47 Paunar : Writes his reflections on <i>Jnanadev's Bhajans</i> in a state of <i>Samadhi</i></p> <p>1948 Feb.12 : Immersion of Gandhiji's ashes in the Dham river, along with the first public recitation of his own Marathi rendering of the <i>Ishavasya Upanishada</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- March 13 to 15: Founding of <b>Sarvodaya Samaj</b> at Sewagram : Formulates scheme for <i>Sootanjali</i> and <i>Sarvodaya Mela</i> every Feb.12</p> <p>1950 Jan.1 : Begins experiment of <i>Kanchan-Mukti</i> and <i>Rishi-Kheti</i></p> <p>1951 Apr.18 : Receives the first gift of land in Pochampalli (Telangana), Beginning of <b>Bhoodan Yajna</b></p> | <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Sep.12 : Leaves for Delhi, on foot, to meet the Planning Commission</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Nov.24 : Begins the All India <i>Bhoodan Padyatra</i>, from Uttar Pradesh</p> <p>1952 May 23 : Announcement of Mangroth (U.P) as the first <b>Gramdan</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Oct. 23 : Patna : Declaration of <i>Sampattidan</i> – an expansion of Gandhiji's Principle of Trusteeship</p> <p>1953 March 12 : Chandil (Bihar), Announcement of the 'Third Power'– opposed to the power of violence and different from the power of the state</p> <p>1954 Establishes the <b>Samanvaya Ashram</b> in Bodh Gaya (Bihar)</p> <p>1957 April 15 : Kanyakumari : Takes a vow for <i>Gramswarajya</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Aug. 23 : Manjeshwaram (Kerala), forms the <b>Shanti Sena</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Sep 21-22 : Yelwal (Karnataka) : All Political Party Gramdan Conference</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Oct. 15 : Bangalore : Conception of <b>Vishwanidam Ashram</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Nov : 1: Proclaims new <i>mantra</i> - <b>Jai Jagat</b> - for the first time in Karnataka</p> <p>1958 Jan. 1 : Dharwad : Announcement of <b>Sarvodaya Patra</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- May 29 : Enters Vithoba's temple at Pandharpur, along with a group of people from different religions</p> <p>1959 March 13: Founding of <b>Brahmavidya-Mandir</b> at Kashikabas (Rajasthan), birth place of Sri Jannalal Bajaj</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Sep 23 : Pathankot : Conception of <b>Prasthan Ashram</b></p> <p>1960 May 19 Kaneragram (Bhind, M.P.) : Manifestation of Ahimsa : Surrender of dacoits</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Aug.15 : Establishment of <b>Visarjan Ashram</b> at Indore</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Dec.25 : Bihar <i>Yatra</i> : "<i>Bhige me kattha, dan do ekattha</i>"</p> <p>1962 March 5 : Establishment of <b>Maitri Ashram</b> in Assam</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Sep. 5–20 : <i>Padayatra</i> in East Pakistan (Bangladesh)</p> <p>1964 April 6 : Sewagram : Inaugurates scheme of free weaving for handspun yarn</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- April 10 : Arrives at Paunar Ashram, after 13 years of <i>padayatra</i></p> |
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- June 1964 - July 9, 1965: resides in Brahmavidya-Mandir  
 1965 Aug. 24 : Leaves for Bihar by car, for *Gramdan-Toofan Yatra*  
 1968 March 8 : Kahalgaon (Bhagalpur, Bihar) : Establishment of *Acharyakul*  
 1970 From June 7 : Declares *Kshetra Sanyas* at Brahmavidya-Mandir  
 1973 Sep. 11 : Beginning of *Upvasdan*

1979 April 22–26 : *Fast for ban on Cow Slaughter*  
 - Dec. 30 : International women's conference  
 1980 Oct. 7 : Inauguration of *Geetai Mandir*  
 1982 Jan 11 : "There should be no slaughter of cows or bulls, of any age, in this country." For this cause, instructs fellow-companions to conduct Satyagraha at Deonar, Mumbai  
 1982 November 15 : *Brahmanirvana*



## Vinobaji's main writings

**Geetai** – Translation of the Bhagwad Geeta in Marathi, in verse form. More than 240 editions and 37 lac copies in print  
**Talks on the Geeta** – Explanation of the 18 chapters of the Geeta in simple language for everybody. Translated into 24 languages, more than 25 lac copies in print  
**Samya-Sutra** – 108 Sutras (Aphorisms) based on the Talks on the Geeta  
**Steadfast Wisdom** – Commentary on the 18 verses of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of the Geeta  
**Geetai Chintanika** – Reflective short notes on every verse of the Geetai  
**Rigved-sar** – Selection of 1319 Rigveda mantras in original Sanskrit  
**Upanishadonka Adhyayan** – Detailed explanation of Om Shanti Shanti Shanti  
**Ashtadashi** – Selections from the 18 Upanishadas  
**Ishavasya-Vrutti** – Notes on the 18 verses of Ishavasya Upanishad  
**Vishnusahasranam** – Sketches and meanings of some of the names  
**Bhagawatdharma-sar** – Selections, rearrangement and commentary on the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of Bhagawat – (Dialogue between Krishna and Uddhava)  
**Gurubodha-sar** – Selections from Shankaracharya's smaller works  
**Manushasanam** – Selections from Laws of Manu with captions  
**Jnanadev Chintanika** – Classification and reflections on 150 Bhajans of Jnanadev  
**Saints of Maharashtra** – Selection of Bhajans from Namdev, Eknath, Tukaram and Ramdas  
**Vinayanjali** – Abridged form of Vinayapatrika by Tulsidasji

**Namghosha-sar** – Selections from Assamese saint Madhavadev  
**Japuji** – Commentary on Guru Nanak's Japuji  
**Dhammapada Navsambhita** – Rearrangement of Lord Buddha's Dhammapada  
**The essence of the Quran** – Selections from the Holy Quran with rearrangement, captions and maxims  
**The essence of the Christian teachings** – Selections from the New Testament with captions and maxims  
**Abhang-Vrate** – Verses on Ashram vows  
**Madhukar** – Collection of short essays  
**Moved by Love** – Biographical sketch in his own words  
**Mahaguhame Pravesh** – Thoughts on Meditation and Yoga  
**Thoughts on Education** – Experiences and thoughts on education including Basic Education  
**Science and Self-Knowledge** – Will replace Politics and Religion. Science + Spirituality = Sarvodaya  
**Lokneeti** – An alternative to Power Politics  
**Swarajya Shastra** – Text book on Political thought.  
 Besides these, books on following subjects have been published in various languages – Khadi, Go-Seva, Bhoodan, Gramdan, Women's Power, Shanti Sena, Third Power, Language, Literature, Nagari Script, Economics of Sarvodaya, Gram-Swarajya, Cleanliness, Gandhiji, Dharma, Ashram, RamaNama etc.  
**Vinoba Sahitya** (Hindi) in 21 volumes (11000 pages) with detailed Index, covers all the above mentioned literature and more



## Acknowledgement



The 1951 camera through which many of the photographs of this book were taken