

The hungry birds

Written by SADHU SUNDAR SINGH
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P A R A B L E

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Once as I wandered in the mountains, I came upon an outcropping of rocks, and as I sat on the highest rock to rest and look out over the valley, I saw a nest in the branches of a tree. The young birds in the nest were crying noisily. Then I saw how the mother bird returned with food for her young ones. When they heard the sound of her wings and felt her presence nearby, they cried all the more loudly and opened their beaks wide. But after the mother bird fed them and flew away again, they were quiet. Climbing down to look more closely, I saw that the newly hatched birds had not yet opened their eyes. Without even being able to see their mother, they opened their beaks and begged for nourishment whenever she approached.

These tiny birds did not say: "We will not open our beaks until we can see our mother clearly and also see what kind of food she offers. Perhaps it is not our mother at all but instead some dangerous enemy. And who knows if it is proper nourishment or some kind of poison that is being fed to us?" If they had reasoned thus, they would never have discovered the truth. Before they were even strong enough to open their eyes, they would have starved to death. But they held no such doubts about the presence and love of their mother, and so after a few days, they opened their eyes and rejoiced to see her with them. Day by day they grew stronger and developed into the form and likeness of the mother, and soon they were able to soar up into the freedom of the skies.

We humans often think of ourselves as the greatest living beings, but do we not have something to learn from these common birds? We often question the reality and the loving nature of God. But the Master has said: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." Whenever we open our hearts to God, we receive spiritual nourishment and grow more and more into the likeness of God until we reach spiritual maturity. And once we open our spiritual eyes and see God's presence, we find indescribable and unending bliss.