

Surat Shabd Yogā, Near-Death, and Out-of-Body Experiences

Faqir Chand [1886 to 1981] was a remarkable Indian sage who spent over seventy-five years practicing an ancient meditation technique, popularly known today as surat shabd yoga, which attempts to induce a consciously controlled near-death experience. Mastery of this practice, according to adepts of the tradition, enables one to experience regions of light and sound beyond the normal waking state, providing glimpses into higher realms of consciousness.

The Unknowing Sage: The Life and Work of Baba Faqir Chand

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Some have even described this form of meditation [surat shabd yoga] as "a conscious near-death experience," that is to say, the Holy Stream of Sound can transport souls to higher states of being that may for some resemble NDE's or OOBE's (out of body experiences, soul travel). This is not a 'do-it-yourself spirituality' in the sense that one needs the guidance of a competent Master in order to practice the meditation correctly in a healthy and balanced way. One should never attempt to climb the Himalayas without a Sherpa guide; in the same way one should not attempt meditation to this degree without the sound wisdom and spiritual direction of a living Guide. In

the Shabd Yoga tradition of India the methods of practice are communicated at the time of Initiation by the Master.

James Bean, *Tuning the Cosmic Radio Dial, Part Five: The Yoga of the Audible Life Stream is the Path of the Masters*



True spiritual enlightenment, according to Faqir Chand, is not the apprehension of inner visions, the listening to celestial sounds, or out-of-body experiences, but is rather the realization that every conception of the Divine is ultimately unreal. Truth or Reality is, in essence, absolutely unknowable. Liberation is the tacit awareness of that mysterious fact on every level of life. Thus, Faqir Chand and his Be-Man philosophy represent a devastating subjectivity, which no matter how profound can never be completely objectivized--Divine Ignorance from beginning to end.

Obviously, this radical purview did not sit well with other Radhasoami groups (especially the Agra sects), since it relativizes even the most exceptional of religious revelations. Faqir Chand's heterodox views have not won him a wide following, though they have clearly distinguished his teachings as the chief "counter system" to mainstream, orthodox Radhasoami theology.

David Christopher Lane, [Radhasoami](#).