

SHANKARACHARYA 1974

OCTOBER 1973 – MARCH 1975

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Questions of Nicolai Rabeneck and answers given by H.H., The Shankaracharya.

Questions and answers of 20th October 1973, as translated by R.L. Dixit.

Q.1. Remembering or thinking about Param-Atman as the tremendous source of the Universe remains for me a cold, intellectual pursuit. It is easier to remember Param-Atman and oneSelf (Atman) together; then a warmth and a sense of unity comes in. To hold on to this good state I have tried to repeat “Tat twam asi” or “Aham Brahmasmi”; this helps but I am afraid to go on for long lest the repetition becomes mechanical. Is there a method of using the Mahavakyas as a help to find the unity with the Universal Param-Atman?

H.H. It is possible that remembering or thinking about the Param-Atman as the tremendous source of the Universe may appear to be somewhat of a cold, intellectual pursuit. It would not be so, if it were the other way round. Instead of trying to make your thoughts dwell in (on?) Param-Atman, let Param-Atman dwell in your thoughts. Then coldness will disappear and warmth will come. You need not fear that your repetitions may become mechanical in course of time. It is Self-potent and therefore continues to shed energy at all times instead of taking energy from any other source as a machine does. The method to find unity with the Universal Param-Atman is to be after the Truth in your thoughts.

Q.2. The study of H.H.’s answers to Dr. Roles (Jan. – Feb. 1971) on Prakriti and on ways to remove the shortcomings of Prakriti lead me to conclude that in my case Prakriti is mainly composed of Tamas and Sattva: there is little Rajas. Activity has to start with effort. The obstacles are procrastination, indecision and plain physical laziness. Negative thoughts exist but optimism and positive desires generally prevail. Only resentment of long standing is difficult to uproot. I have started to work against the defects I can see. Would H.H. give me his encouragement and advice? H.H.’s recent explanation on “giving up” helps much.

H.H. We should cultivate the habit of never thinking of the defects of others nor of our own. Our attitude should be to overlook and ignore them. Let good thoughts prevail. Let there be purity in our practical life.

Message to H.H. The group has much appreciated H.H.'s recent instruction passed on by Dr. Roles. There is now felt a need to go deeper in silent contemplation. Lately great interest is shown by many in Indian culture. Some learn to play the sitar, others engage in Indian dancing. The study of Sanskrit continues with more intensity. Some of our students are very young, joining us when only 17 or 18. I let them study on their own Indian music or dancing if they are serious about it. We are careful not to let them join unworthy classes advertised under fanciful Indian names. Would H.H. give us his blessing for the start of the new term!

H.H. Regarding the method of training your younger group, H.H. sees nothing wrong in what you are doing. But he adds that external means are not so helpful in holding on to the state of permanent happiness as internal stability. We add certain things to our meals in small quantities so that we may relish what we eat. Yet they are not our chief food. In the same way, music and dancing prove helpful in clearing the mind of evil tendencies.

Questions and Answers of 29th November 1973

Q. A transition state comes at the end of a meditation when Consciousness passes from the silent Spiritual World to the outer world, both worlds being present for a short time. Repeating "Aham Brahmasmi" prolongs that transition state and its feeling persists for a time even when I become active.

H.H. When we go into meditation, we reach a Spiritual World where quietness prevails like that of a deep undisturbed ocean. No movement, no waves, no currents – everything absolutely stationary. This is the meditational world. When we look out of such a spiritual world then our own ego (self) becomes everything and nothing else remains

except that. Even matter and Atman become a mere creature of that.

Q. How can I become more direct and “give up” this analytical approach? Experience gets me to observation, and that to formulation: words but not realization. Is observing a bad habit?

H.H. As toy horse made of sugar, its rider, the reins etc. are all sugar and taste sweet though taking different forms, so everything is Atman and nothing else. The straight and simple idea is that everything is a manifestation of Param-Atman. “I” and “you” are two different departments of one and the same company, while the company is one. Similarly the Param-Atman is one, though it is called differently by such names as “God,” “Khuda”, “Brahman”, “Sat-Chit-Ananda”, etc.

We should always keep such a feeling alive in our heart. But this is not possible till a stability in the meditational state is reached and this becomes natural.

Audience with Shankaracharya, 9th November 1973.

Mr. Whiting quotes a message from N. Windsor in London:

May we convey to His Holiness the appreciation of all the members of the School for the words he sends us, from all the people who have not seen his face, but whose eyes light up when those words are read.

S. Through the words the Self was also present. It is not only the physical body that has to be there in person, but the finer levels of Being are embodied in the words, and with the words the Self appears.

One appreciates the message from London and hopes that the words will be heeded so that they improve the lives of the members of the School and everyone connected with it.

W. When one was here last (six years ago), it seemed that you had made it clear to us; and if we could realize the true significance of your words, we perhaps wouldn't need to come to disturb you. Still we seem to need your help even though the presence is always with us.

S. Any effort made on the Way is itself a realization of the Way. Slowly and steadily everything is being done, and one doesn't have to worry about the end of the journey which is where there would be nothing further to do at all. All one can do is to make these little efforts from day to day. Making the effort is itself a part of the realization of the work, and one feels happy that these efforts are being made towards understanding the words.

A certain man had to go out to another town miles away. It was night and pitch dark, and all he had was a tiny little lantern which could, at most, light a couple of steps. Because the journey seemed so long, and the night dark, he was depressed and unsure, – unsure of reaching his destination with only this tiny light.

While he stood at his door in utter frustration and helplessness, a Realized Man happened to appear there and asked him why he was standing at his door with a lantern.

The man replied that he really did not know what to do; though he was all set for the journey, it appeared so long and the night so dark, that his small lantern could not really be of much use.

The Realized Man explained to him that it was not necessary to have a light big enough to illuminate the whole way. “As you proceed,” he said, “the light will move with you, so that the next one or two steps will always be clear. All you need do is to hold on to this light and start walking. As the darkness clears (with the rising of the Sun), if you keep walking you will reach the destination in the full light of noon.”

The same applies to one’s little efforts. After hearing the words, however small the efforts one can make, the Light will be enough for the goal to be achieved. Then there will be nothing else to do except enjoy the full bliss of Union.

W. Your Holiness speaks of ‘light’, and certainly the words you spoke at my last audience brought great light to the people in the School. At that time when he spoke of ‘rest’ (through meditation) he said: ‘Your job is to provide ‘rest’ and make them give up.’ Can he tell us more?

S. There are three types of rest: the bodily rest of the physical realm, the mental rest of the subtle realm, and the Spiritual rest of the causal realm. As far as the physical realm is concerned, every one knows that after a full day’s work one must get rest during the night. Even after exertion during the day one must stop to rest and gain energy to start again. Most people know about it although not every one knows the art of physical rest.

The rest at the subtle level appears between the end of fulfilment of one desire and initiation of the next desire. This is the state of non-desire which provides rest of the subtle level. One stops all hankerings, and the thinking process comes to stillness.

The rest at the Spiritual or causal level is available when all activities of the physical and subtle body – the desires, the thinking process and even the feelings and emotions – are stilled. The body, Manas, Buddhi, and Chitta are all stilled. Buddhi and Chitta at the causal level are the ultimate initiators of all activity, and when complete satisfaction with everything and every

situation is materialised and there is no hankering after any further need, then one gets the rest of the Spiritual realm. In that rest the Atman appears as the sole witness in its luminous glory; and observes the great stillness of the whole universe as one single unit where there is no play of physical movement, mental movement or even emotional movement. This could be described as ‘complete surrender’ or ‘complete faith in the Will of the Absolute’. One simply accepts everything without any rejection or opposition. These are the three (types or) levels of rest which the School should provide for its members according to the varying needs of individuals.

W. Is it possible to ask more about actually providing this stillness or rest? We seem to know the words of his answer, but it remains to be realised.

S. The rest or stillness at the physical level provides enough energy to employ in eight or nine hours of activity for any individual. This is how the human race keeps going without much trouble. At least people with common sense appreciate this and provide themselves with physical rest, and keep in good health and normal activity.

The rest at the subtle level, by cessation of conflicting desires, brings another dimension to the idea of rest. In this dimension of rest efficiency arises, and this works through all activities – ordinary physical work or artistic work. Thus, rest at this level between fulfilment of one desire and initiation of another, will be rewarded with efficiency.

The third or causal level of rest, which is profound stillness or total immobility, is in the realm of the Absolute. Since the causal realm cannot be described one learns about it from its effects. One can see it in the activities and dispositions of such men who provide themselves with Spiritual rest. There are three prominent features:

Firstly, they show love and affection toward everything they encounter. All activities will be initiated with love, and then be held and nourished with love till they come to their fulfilment. All

relationships with individuals or activities, direct or indirect, will be lighted and guided only by love and affection.

Secondly, their ideas, intentions or motives will be pure and simple. Purity and simplicity widen the horizon, and they think and work for the whole of humanity and only through the Law of the Absolute. The divisions of groups, races or nations disappear and only natural Laws are employed. Their thoughts naturally encompass the whole of the human family, and it's intrinsic goodness.

Thirdly, the physical movements of such people are only geared to the natural rhythm, and the result is simplicity and economy of movement. They never rush into any situation; are never agitated; and perform all actions in an efficient, sublime and refined way. Whatever they do will emerge from stillness, be held in stillness, and again submerge in the same stillness which they experience in this great total immobility. This would establish an ideal or a standard for the common man to aspire to, if he somehow awakes to the need to improve his lot.

As an example: anyone here who has learned to read could recite the verses from a famous epic (such as the Rāmāyana) and explain its meaning; but if a man with that profound stillness undertakes to recite and explain, then the love and wisdom pour out through him. He dives deep and brings out fresh and new relationships and interpretation, and convincingly leaves a deep impression of love and devotion, and of the poetical glory.

W. His Holiness said that the meditation was only at the immobile level. This is what we have been attempting to discover. Could He say more about it?

S. The ultimate end of the meditation is to reach to this total immobility, or the profound stillness, and this is very deep. No meter could measure it; it is without end. It is not necessary that one should remain in this state for a long period. Longer meditation does not mean the achievement of this profound stillness. Most of

the time spent during the meditation is in preparation to lead one to this state. There may be meditators who would sit for hours and hours but without any avail, for they keep on churning their mechanical thoughts in particular rotation. They end up tired, both physically and mentally. Those who manage to dive deep, they come out with potentiality emanating from the Will of the Absolute.

During the Mahabharata episode, Arjuna asked Shri Krishna about the man with such stillness. In the Gita such a man is called Sthitaprajna – ‘one who is steady and still in his Knowledge and Being’. Krishna says that such a man would not be agitated in discomfort, pain or misery. He would not rise in revolt against such misfortune. Even if a calamity befalls, he never gives up nor feels sorry – he only attends to overcoming its effects with a smile. When honoured with success, pleasure, or comforts he never bursts into jubilation; he simply accepts them with gratitude, and then forgets. In short, one could say that a man with this profound stillness always remains the same and expresses efficiency, wisdom, love and mercy.

(See especially v. 20 of ch. vi of the Gita.) (See p. 78)

W. That proves that this immobility or stillness must be ever present; therefore, in truth, it would seem that meditation starts there.

S. One would say rather that this stillness is itself the real experience of meditation. Since there is no movement, one cannot call it a starting point – for nothing is ‘starting’. When one comes out of such a state, then one comes out with the treasure, and this treasure is without end. In ordinary rest and stillness, one regains only some of one’s lost energy; but, having reached to this stillness, one is never without energy and love. Such a man always does everything fresh, new and for the first time. This is because his sensations and movements, mind, Buddhi, instincts and emotions come together in unity to face any situation. When he attacks any problem, all his forces work through this one-pointed attention.

During the great war of India (described in the Mahabharata), one day Karna was appointed commander-in-chief of the whole army. When he was going to the battlefield his charioteer said to him: “Although you are a great warrior and an efficient leader, it would not be

possible for you to vanquish Arjuna because he is supported by Shri Krishna, who has achieved this profound stillness.” (Karna was proud of his descent from the Sun God, and also of his own strength and efficiency.)

The charioteer told him a story about a flock of crows. One of them was strong, clever and good looking, so they made him their leader. This king of the crown felt proud of his exploits, and hence looked down upon all other creatures.

One day a young swan appeared in that vicinity. They all assembled around the swan and asked him if he know about the great deeds of their king. He pleaded ignorance and wished to see their king. The king crow appeared and asked the swan about different types of flight. The swan, in his simplicity, said that he knew only one style.

The king crow then embarked on an exhibition of his 101 styles of flight. Having performed his 101 types of acrobatics, the king wanted to see the art of the swan. The young swan took off in a graceful, gentle and natural flight and, as usual, increased his speed only gradually. Since the crow was small and swift he flew fast, and realizing that the swan was left behind, he came back to cheer him up. The swan gradually increased his speed, and it was not very long before the crow was tired and trembled, and ultimately fell into the waters of the sea. The swan came down and rescued the crow and helped him back to his flock. The crow then became ashamed of his pride, and thanked the swan for his modesty and magnanimity. You see, the swan lived a natural life, while the crow occupied himself in acrobatics and cleverness.

“The ultimate victory goes only to the natural, steady, still and simple man; while the clever, smart and artcrafty waste their energy in trifling pursuits only leading to their destruction.

So, my great master, you must keep in your mind the steady, still and natural Krishna, for no one can ever transcend Him or anyone whom He likes to support.”

W. His Holiness has spoken of meditation itself as Yoga, practice of meditation as

Dharma, and the repetition of mantra as Japa. Could he say more about it?

S. This is a journey of the individual Consciousness (Vyashti) inwards to the Universal Consciousness (Samashti, the Absolute).

One starts the mantra, and repeats the mantra, one initiates this at the level of the personality (the Vyashti), and then this repetition of the mantra is leading on to the bare thread of meditation which is the Dharma. This movement is aimed at only one thing, and that is to cut out or diminish the activity – the Rajas-involvement in life. Although it is known as the “practice of meditation” yet this “practice” is leading towards the end of all activity. Slowly and gradually this march towards non-activity takes place until one reaches the realm of Union (Yoga), which is stillness or unity of both outer and inner worlds. This is the experience of Self as universal (Samashti); here there is no duality and there remains no place to move on to, and there is no time to change to, for He is the place, the time and also the substance. In that profound silence, stillness or Yoga, all movements stop, and there is only ‘One without a second’ and that is Atman Himself, the Observer.

This does not mean that all relationships and agitations would have disappeared from our inner universe, for it only indicates that there is no initiation of any agitation from the personality. We know that there are five levels of consciousness known as unconscious, sleep, dream, awake and Samadhi. This particular state (Turiya), which we are considering, is unique and does not come under any one of the five “states of consciousness”.

When one comes away from that state then one feels joyful, just as when one goes to see some great man one returns with indescribable joy and enthusiasm feeling that everything seems good, beautiful and pleasant. That state of Yoga is devoid of all vikshepa, agitation, desire, need, ignorance, and is profoundly still, without any hankering, fully satisfied and complete in all respects.

W. It seems that people in the School of Meditation need help, particularly over this second aspect. This seems that repetition of mantra is only sounding it again and again; and the final union being union there can’t be any problem there. Is there anything to help them on the second aspect?

S. The Japa (repetition of God's Name) is of many types. It can be loud, mild or even silent, it can be fast or slow, but it is repetitive and involves time and rhythm. One takes a mantra and repeats it over and over again, or allows it to be repeated. The state of yoga, although it means unity of the Self with the Universal, only means dropping off all unrest or useless activity. Activity is the product of desire (unrest) and ambition, so yoga means dropping off all the desires. These desires are obstacles in the way of experiencing the ever-present unity of the Self and the Absolute.

The practice of meditation by itself is not an isolated act, it is a journey from the start of a mantra to the end of all agitation. This is a bridge over which one needs to throw one's belongings of desires and activities while walking towards the other end. Japa itself (the act of repetition) has no real potency. Although a mantra repeated and sounded would naturally create its Sattvic effect, yet just this is not enough.

The practice of meditation demands relinquishing activity. At one end (of the bridge) is the start of an activity and at the other end is the stillness, the immobility. The practice of meditation between these two points is to pick up the mantra, embark on the activity of repetition, and with the help of the mantra, allow everything – even the mantra – to disappear without doing anything extra. The rhythm of activity will settle down to come to a complete stillness – not of a void, but of fullness, which is the presence of the Self.

ALLAHABAD 19741st AudienceWednesday, 16th January

We entered His Holiness's private room where he was already seated on his divan. After presenting fruit and flowers we had a short meditation. The audience was only supposed to last one hour as His Holiness had some special function at the Mela.

His Holiness enquired if we had a peaceful and comfortable journey?

R. Yes, our journey was very peaceful, and we bring love from everybody including my wife. She wanted to come but could not because she had to look after house and family, but we bring much love.

It was then agreed we should put questions:

R. (1) After your telephone message last night I clung to the thought of Param-Atman only, and gradually got the subtle peace which comes when there are no other desires, and the Self alone seems real.

About 4 a.m., after some meditation, the meaning of the story of "Lakshman's dive" suddenly appeared with a new dimension. One saw how recurrent lives of body are based on repeated moments of desires and dreams at subtle level, and on Causal level all is One without movement.

S. In this universe the impulse for all movements is given by the Laws of Nature (Prakriti) and it has a particular momentum according to the kind of being which inhabits the universe, and this movement goes

on until the energy is dissipated; then all created beings need to have a rest (according to their own measure of time and space).

In the physical world one can see that every being starts a 'day' or a round of activity, and by the end of the day, having expended its energy, must have a good sleep on its own.

Similarly on the inner side of the human individual there is also a need – and a natural longing – to have rest; and this psychological rest comes only when other desires have been given up – i.e., only after the cessation of desires. Then the individual reaches into the great ocean of the Atman where he finds rest in the peace, where there is no movement activated by desires or by the Laws of physical Nature. There alone is the real home to which the individual always needs to go. If he finds a chance to go there, then he gets a glimpse of the great Bliss which is available within this ocean of the Self. Otherwise he only gets individual physical rest to keep his body going during his short life.

R. (2) Must one, then, reach this ocean before one can hope to transmit with radiance and simplicity the Truth that His Holiness gives us?

S. The process of giving takes place only when one has acquired. So, the System of Meditation has been prescribed to all of us for this deep dive into the Self. The Self is like the great ocean full of Bliss, and it has a very sweet taste – one who dives deep comes out with radiance and a sweet smile on his face, and with enough Light to guide himself and others around him.

So it is only a question of acquiring the ability to dive deep into this great ocean; and if one comes out with even one drop of this Bliss of the Self, then one would be good enough to guide the destiny of oneself and one's fellow men.

R. (3) We may only have a few audiences at this very busy time. How do we make the best use? May we experience with joy anything which His Holiness suggests, or does he want more questions, or how would he like the audience to proceed?

S. The system is always the same – that one must dive deep into the Self – into this great ocean of Bliss. When one reaches that level and comes out having soaked or bathed in it then one finds that this Antahkarana, which is the medium of all expression for the individual, by itself regenerates everything as new. New for meeting each situation as it arises. So this gives you a creative faculty to meet the situation and provide new solutions every time there is a problem.

There may be a hundred questions, but all these questions will be easily met by this Antahkarana ('inner organ' or soul) when it has come out of this ocean. All Knowledge hasn't been exhausted by the Vedas and Upanishads, for very much more is still held in by the Self and keeps on emerging as new creations. The trouble lies not in the expression as to how one deals with the problem; the trouble is that all that anyone can experience is in the realm of diving deep and going inside.

If one has learnt to dive deep without any load and to go to the base – the bottom of this ocean – then there is nothing which a man

really needs; everything will be provided, everything will be ready made for him, and he will make it ready for everyone.

The question of hierarchies or levels is on the superficial level of this earth.

If you go deep into the earth you will find water. Sometimes you get water at 10, 20 or 100 feet. If the ocean is very deep there may be 1,000 feet. At the bottom there is no movement, and because there is no movement there is no hierarchy at all.

At that level all men are equal. Atman is the same and all the great men have their base there in equality. If one can reach there, one will avail oneself of all the greatness that one needs for this world of hierarchy. One simply needs to dive deep and come out with the Bliss.

R. (4) Will the pressure of questions and necessities, together with the feeling of insufficiency of one's ordinary state, force one actually to dive deep instead of merely thinking or talking about it?

S. There are two sorts of situations where questions arise. There is the one where people who are by nature curious raise questions; they may understand the answer or keep on questioning as long as they are not fully satisfied, but once their curiosity is assuaged they drop the questions completely. These people who are activated merely by curiosity don't take the further step of wanting to go deep into the Self, for this makes no appeal to them.

The other sort are those who, starting with curiosity, want to enjoy and experience the True Knowledge that lies behind these answers

they get. If they find any obstacles to further experience, then they ask more questions relating to the obstacles which prevent them enjoying the inner Being. When that kind of question arises, and proper guidance is given, then the door is open to them to dive deep without any obstacle and get the bliss from the Self.

A. (5) When I came in here this morning, I felt complete reassurance of the absolute unity that exists in all things, and I was again completely certain that there is no need for any anxiety and that all things are cared for. How can one hold that?

S. When one comes to certain places which hold a particular type of influence just as Lord Allan describes, there are two ways of holding this experience. One is by the mind – by the thought or Buddhi. If it is held by the mind constantly and one reminds oneself about the experience and the taste of the experience, or the content of the experience, then in the course of time it becomes one's own.

The second way of holding is to hold by faith – Shraddhā – and that is held in the emotional body of the individual. It holds it very tight; this is where it is held totally. Having held this from these two standpoints – from faith and from mind or thought, then it becomes one's own; and then wherever, or under whatever circumstances, or under whatever influences one may move about, one will never lose this experience which has become one's own. And over and above that, one would be able to transmit these influences wherever one goes, provided this influence is held by mind and by the emotion through faith.

There is an example from the life of a Mahatma. A particular Mahatma used to say that “all movement is poisonous – not useful to the Self – and yet there is movement all over the creation. So it has to be held somewhere, otherwise the bliss of the ocean will not be experienced and the Self will not manifest; so this movement must be held somewhere.”

In the mythology of India, Shiva is depicted as holding that poison in his throat. He does not allow it to go to either the outside or the inside body or it would kill the Truth about both the outer and the inner world. So he simply holds it at the threshold of the outer and inner body. He can do this because he is always in Samadhi.

Anyone who has acquired the taste of this great unity of peace in which everybody’s soul is cared for, feels that if he could hold this he would, like Shiva or Shankara, be able to keep the peace himself and provide it for others who need it. Thus, Shankara is one who has the peace and can bring peace to everyone.

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We prepared to stop at 10 but as our taxi had delayed our arrival, His Holiness allowed us a little more time –

M.A. (6) I just feel very lucky to be here with Dr. Roles and I remember what His Holiness said at the beginning of our last visit, to Mrs. Roles, when He spoke about “catching the spiritual influences which are available here”. I feel I would like to make best use of the time to do this. Could His Holiness say more about this, although I realize he has partly answered it this morning?

S. The questions and answers must certainly be carried through before the mind can come to rest; so the individual’s questions must be exhausted far enough, at least for him to be free from the load of them. That must be done, and be done carefully.

But apart from this, there is the Chitta (“reflected Consciousness”) of the individual which could give him Bhāwanā – a state of pure Emotion, one aspect of which is ‘Faith’. So, if one is full of Faith, i.e., connected with this Bhāwanā or Pure Emotion then one’s state is charged with certain magnetic qualities and this is common to everyone. (Faith, that is, not in men but in the benevolent and omnipresent Self.)

In certain individuals this influence is more powerful than others; but, having come into contact with it, one simply needs to allow this magnetic force to work without impediment. Then it will attract these charged particles from the atmosphere.

When this happens one will be impelled to seek more of this influence and store it, so that one experiences a deeper relationship with the Unity around, and this is what His Holiness prescribes. One should just let the influence come into one’s experience (through penetrating this “cloud of unknowing”).

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R. (7) About the influences of this special time: we don’t want to cause any trouble to His Holiness or his staff but we would be very happy to take some of the influences at the Mela or in the Ashram here when auspicious occasions arise.

J. (translating): Under his guidance the Mela starts at 9 a.m. and the Rasleela or Krishna cycle is held from 9 – 12. Then His Holiness gives three hours there when discourses take place and he speaks himself.

In the afternoon and evening they have the Ramleela cycle, and this goes on till about 10 p.m., so from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. something is always happening! The Rasleela occurs at the time when we are at the Ashram, but His Holiness will arrange for it to be performed one night here so that we may enjoy it at the Ashram. Otherwise any afternoon that we care to go and look around we will be welcome. It will be good to practise taking the influences in the multitude as well as in seclusion!

2nd Audience

Thursday, 17th January

A. (8) My main question turns out really to be a request which is: How can I have His Holiness' help to dive deeper?

S. There are three ways this help can be taken and these three ways relate to the three bodies: The first one is the field of activity, and quite a number of disciplines and of meditation practice have been given us for the physical body. The second one is in the realm of the subtle body or mind, through which one communicates whatever one has within; whatever one feels, whatever one thinks, one communicates and tries to get further guidance which is, of course, being done here and now.

The third realm is of the Bhāwanā or the emotion. This is far the most potent of the fields. In this field the aspirant gets inspiration – inspiration to move on the Spiritual line. This is what usually takes one to the deeper levels.

To be on the deeper levels is to be in the purified states of these three types of function. So when the activity which one undertakes, is entirely tuned in to the Truth (that true Knowledge which has been given to one), then the physical activity will take one to the deeper levels. When the ideas, the true Knowledge which is being imparted to the aspirant, are held in their true and pure form without being adulterated with any other ideas or doubts, these then purify the mind and take it into the deeper level.

The third one is the realm of emotion. For that the meditation has been prescribed, and the more one does it properly, the more one goes deeper, one comes to a state where there is no division in the act of meditation, then one would find oneself at the deeper levels. It is only through these three ways one can go deeper. Whatever one says – one should do, whatever one thinks – one should say, and whatever one feels – one should express.

A. (9) Can the aspirant himself bring about the expansion of the Self from the centre so that it embraces all things, or does this only come as an act of Grace?

S. The act of reaching the centre and experiencing the expansion which embraces everything is not, in fact, enacted completely either by the aspirant himself, nor completely by any Grace – it is a mixture of the two.

There are three types of Grace which are in a way constant – always available, always present. The first Grace is from the Absolute which is in the creation of this universe, and everything is made available to everyone. This is the Grace of the Absolute – always available, always present.

The second Grace comes through the Shastras, the Knowledge (the Scriptures). This also is made manifest and declared to the whole universe and is always available; nowadays through books as well, and through teachers all round the world. Anybody, whatever they want,

can take to it and will benefit from the grace which is within the Shastras.

The third Grace comes through the teacher, the guru. This grace is a little different from the other two graces. The other two graces are very passive but the Grace of the Guru and the effort made by the aspirant are active. The Guru cannot directly transform everything in the aspirant unless he makes effort himself.

Take the example of the sun. The sun when it comes out can be seen by anyone who has the instrument of the eyes to see, but there may be circumstances where the eye is faulty. If the eye is faulty then one cannot see the physical sun.

If the eye is not faulty, there may be other circumstances preventing one seeing it – there may be clouds which make a screen preventing one from seeing the sun. One may ask the question as to how the clouds will be dissolved – whether the cloud will be dissolved first, and then the sun will be seen, or is there some other way of seeing the sun first and then dissolving the clouds? Might one have access to the Divinity first and then get the blemishes out, or get the blemishes out first and then have access to the Divinity?

The third situation is that perhaps there is no sun to be seen because it is behind the earth or there may be an eclipse. These are several ways where one might find oneself not seeing the sun.

The availability of the teacher is to help one to relieve the tensions and gratify the eagerness with which the individual is making his effort. But the individual must also follow the teacher and practise all the guidance given by him. If he does so, in course of time when the cloud is dissolved or it moves away, then he would be able to see the sun.

You can take the simile of lime and coriander. The lime is white and coriander powder is yellow. You mix them and both turn into red. Red here symbolises love and affection.

The efforts of the aspirant and the Grace and guidance of the teacher mix together to create something which is different and is like love. When both help, then the transformation or diving deep takes place. This would be the Unity or Realization of the Self.

So, it requires the two passive Graces of the Absolute and the Shastras, and the active Grace of the teacher with efforts of the aspirant according to the teacher's guidance, to materialize the journey to the centre and to experience the complete expansion.

M.A. (10) One has no doubt about the meditation but one often has doubts about one's own meditation and feels it is only Grace which can purify it, one could not do it oneself.

S. This observation is of great importance, and great devotees have always expressed this situation all over the world. They do everything in their power to carry out the discipline of body, mind and heart and yet they feel insufficiency and have this longing for the Grace of the teacher. This, in fact, keeps the path of transformation and union open for the grace pouring from the teacher. The aspirant makes the effort by himself while the teacher's grace joins in to enliven the stream of transformation. The feeling of insufficiency widens the possibility of the flow of influence from the teacher.

If, on the other hand, the aspirant feels confident of having done enough to deserve this or that, then this cuts off the stream of Grace so that reconnection is difficult, and further advance is impossible.

[H.H. went on to quote from the Indian contemporary of Shakespeare who wrote the popular version of the Ramayana Epic, which is the only Spiritual teaching that crowds will flock to hear nowadays.]

The great poet Tūlsidās, he said, in his devotional songs, has at one place expressed that “your loving devotees, O my Lord, keep on listening and singing the songs of your praise and yet they are always thirsty for more. They never seem to have had enough.”

This passionate longing for unity and feeling shy of not being deserving, is the real thread to connect one to the Absolute. They are blessed who have such feelings; for them everything is alive and the unity is assured.

R. (11) When in a state of rest on the subtle level, i.e., when my Buddhi is at peace between desires, I have complete faith that we belong to Param-Atman and He belongs to us. But immediately Buddhi becomes active in any direction, this Faith gives place to doubts or worry, or something anyway less than Faith.

How can I cultivate the state of Buddhi which is devoid of reservations and doubts – except by a return to solitude and silence? (The quickest method found so far is to substitute thoughts of Param-Atman for worldly or selfish thoughts and then repeat the Mantra a few times.)

S. The need for rest on the physical, subtle, or causal levels is only necessary when some activity has been undertaken. If one did not activate oneself, one would not need rest because one would not have spent any energy.

The process of our creation is such that in the pattern of this universe, both physical activity and physical rest are available – during the day you have the activity, and then you retire to get the rest in the night. The same applies to the subtle level and the causal level – the pranas or body (neuro-chemical apparatus), the mind, the senses, the Buddhi and the Chitta – all these assets are provided by Nature, and it is necessary for us all to make use of them. We cannot and we should not put all these things to rest all the time. We must use them and use them fully so that we can go back to the rest and get all the energy recharged from the centre, and come back again to make use of all these glorious aspects of our Nature.

For example: one goes to the river which is flowing all the time full of water, and puts an earthen pot into it. When you submerge the earthen pot into the river, then the water without and within this earthen pot is the same, there is no difference of any sort. The only barrier is the earthen pot itself, but the earthen pot holds the water which can be used outside the river.

So the stream of energy going through the universe all the time (Samashti) is held by the individual organism (which is called Vyashti) like the earthen pot. You take the energy from this stream, use it in your daily affairs, and it must be exhausted. When it is finished you go back to the stream, fill it, and exhaust it again.

The same energy system is available to all of us. The ordinary man uses up his energy every day but only knows how to replenish his physical energy; from the rest at the physical level he also gets some rest on the subtle level and causal level, but very little – only what he can pick up by resting physically.

And so he keeps on going, but he does not really get the best out of his life because he does not get adequate rest either on the subtle level or the causal level. Fortunately, we, having seen something of the Way, have been given all the conditions and disciplines necessary for finding rest on the subtle and the causal levels.

Another example: eyes are designed to see everything visible in this universe, but they cannot see if the sun is not there. If one thinks that it is only through the eyes that one sees, then one can try as hard as one can to see in the dark when there is no sun and one will find that then there is no possibility of seeing anything.

But the power of vision requires all the faculties made available to the human being – the design of the body, the design of the senses and of Manas, Buddhi and Chitta. They are all there to be made use of.

When we prescribe the rest on the subtle or the causal level, we are not meant to keep at rest all these faculties and the subtle body itself. We only need from time to time, as has been prescribed to us during two half-hours, to go into the Treasury, to go into this stream where the energy is available and make ourselves fresh. So all we need to remember is to go into this stream of the Param-Atman twice a day and let it happen as we have been told, so that the energies are recharged. Then, come out into the world and act as the situation demands.

How to act in the world is again regulated by the True Knowledge which is being given to individuals – one can waste the energy in fruitless activity or one can use the energy to good purpose. So one should use Buddhi, one should use Manas and the eyes, the ears, the body and

make the best use of all faculties according to the True Knowledge.

Then, having spent one's energy, go back in meditation – two half-hours every day – and recharge oneself with the pure energy which is available from the subtle or the causal level.

R. (12) That has really answered all the questions completely except in just one aspect – You have said that the Realized man treats his Buddhi like a wife. But for a man like me, my Buddhi is very much like a wife who looks at any young man that comes along, or any new thing in the shop window! Do I punish her, or try to attract her love with gifts?

S. My prescription is certainly the gift; gifts are preferred by wives to punishment! Although in the past punishment has had its day, usually one found this course most used in Yogic practices. Yogic exercises and the Eightfold Path are certainly the way of punishment of the body, the senses and the mind (Buddhi), to force them to be regulated in the useful service of the Self.

In the ordinary way recourse to punishment doesn't work. As long as the punishment prevails there will be fear, and this fear will get the work done. But the moment the reins of punishment – the fear of punishment – is relaxed or removed, then the mind of the individual is bound to become too free, to feel free to do whatever he or she likes to do. So if one tries to get service from the mind by punishment, so long as the punishment is there the mind will work accordingly; but directly the punishment is relaxed and the fear removed, one will see that the mind will go astray and do whatever it likes as you have described.

So His Holiness doesn't recommend that way; he prefers to recommend the way of gifts and winning the mind over. He gives as an example:

If you demand 10 rupees from a man, if he is frightened of you he may give it, but as soon as you are not there he will try to regain it; then there would be a constant battle between the two of you. But if you can provide him with the facility of availing himself of 100 rupees whenever he needs them, certainly he will be quite prepared to give you your 10 rupees because in any case he makes a profit.

The same applies to the mind. If the gifts which you offer to the mind are superior to those which you have been offering before; if you make available the True Knowledge (the interesting questions) compared with what you have had previously and with which you have plagued your mind, certainly the mind will come and be faithful to you.

In one of the discourses at the Mela one of the speakers told of the time when Rama went to the Kingdom of Janaka, and there were many girls in the court of this gathering, apart from Sita. All the girls in that gathering were trying to attract the glance of Rama, but Rama never looked at anybody but Sita.

That was the story told by a speaker; then, when His Holiness came to talk, he developed this himself:

Here, Sita symbolises the prototype of this Universe – (the Mūla Prakriti) the blueprint – that first design which contains everything else. When Rama can see this prototype (which holds all possible designs and happenings), he has no need to look around for anything else – any difference in detail because, having seen the One, he has seen everything.

The same applies to us; if we can see the True Knowledge (the blue print), the Truth, we don't need to get lost in details.

Again, just as in the ordinary way, if we can see one thought

process, so we only need to see and understand one thing: how thoughts arise and to what they lead, and that Knowledge will remain for ever.

But you must also remember that in our simile of the behaviour of the husband and wife, the faithfulness must work both ways. It is not only that the wife must remain faithful to the man but it also demands faith from the man to his wife. As long as the Buddhi is supplied with the True Knowledge (which is the faith from the man to his wife), it is expected that the Buddhi (the wife) will respond to whatever one asks of her.

3rd AudienceFriday, 18th January

On Thursday afternoon we visited the Mela and on arrival were invited to sit on the side of His Holiness's platform. He was seated on his silver throne, with many Sannyasins sitting around him. When we arrived one was giving a discourse. He was followed by a 'Vyasa' (one who has been trained to tell these spiritual stories), who recited and developed a story of Rama, keeping the large crowd riveted for one-and-a-half hours with his colourful tones and gestures. Then His Holiness spoke for about twenty minutes.

R. (13) We felt very uplifted by the influences experienced In His Holiness's tent at the Mela; in particular, we felt the enormous strength of his great Tradition.

We gather that the Ramleela recitation was about the adventures of Rama and Sita in popular form? Could he indicate to us just the point of his own discourses?

S. The vernacular Ramayana appeared about four hundred years ago, in the late 16th century, when this great poet, Tūlasidās, appeared. He re-wrote the Ramayana in Hindi, greatly amplifying the ancient story. It was not very popular in the beginning, but slowly it gathered ground and today it seems to have superseded all other literature – Scriptures – in India, and has come to be accepted as the sovereign as far as Spiritual Knowledge is concerned.

This book does bring in all the True Knowledge which is given in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Purānas, and all other spiritual literature. The poet (who was also a Realized Man) has somehow brought in all the essence of all these different sources, and put them in one

single epic. The name of this is “Rama Charita Manas”, which means that it describes the exploits of Rama, or the character of an ideal man symbolised in Rama. This ideal man is not necessarily the story of a physical man, but in this story of the physical man is entwined the spiritual and the Divine man as well, so all the three aspects of our being – the physical, the subtle, and the Spiritual (or causal) – all these aspects are given in this book, and Rama stands as the symbol of the ideal man.

The story which we heard yesterday (so very well and humorously illustrated by the ‘Vyasa’), was in relation to the episode of the marriage of Rama after the bow was broken by him:

The marriage was about to be performed when Rama said that, unless all his friends were married, he would not get married himself.

The story tells that when Rama was born at Ayodhya, there were many other young boys born at the same period, and they all lived together. They had all come in the wedding procession of the bridegroom with his parents, relatives and friends, and all the ministers. These young friends of Rama’s complained to him saying that ‘Rama was getting married without caring about them.’ He then promised that he would not get married unless all of them were married, so the young girls of Janak-Puri were prepared to marry all these young men from Ayodhya.

The significance of this marriage, which is the physical marriage, is also related to the Spiritual realm.

Rama, here, symbolises the Atman and Sita (his bride-to-be) symbolises the Mūla-Prakriti; the marriage simply means the union – coming together. This Mūla-Prakriti is also said to be the Buddhi – pure Buddhi – the obedient wife of the Purush (Lord of Creation). The young men of Ayodhya represent the Jiva – the individual beings of this

universe. The young girls of Janak-Puri are taken as the Vritti* or the Shruti*, and they have to come together. Each individual has to acquire this purified Vritti, and bring himself and the wife to a state where the union of the Purush and the Prakriti takes place.

It was also described how the Sādhus, the Sannyasins, came to take part in the procession. It is somewhat unusual for the Sannyasins to follow a marriage procession, so it calls for an explanation for these holy men to be there:

The reason given is that the King of Janak-Puri, the Janak, is also known as Videha, ‘a man who does not consider the physical world as of much importance’ – a man who, though dwelling in his body, is not attached to it since he lives in the Spirit.

Janaka is a state or country where, with the prevalence of Knowledge, the physical body does not have much importance. This is possible only because there the True Knowledge is being discussed and practised in everyday life. So the Sadhus went there to experience this thing – how one could live in the body, inhabit the body and yet not be bound by the body.

Although the story is being told of the physical realm, it also has the divine or spiritual background behind it. In India this has been the tradition that, although the stories – the Purānas – do talk of the physical man and the woman, they are all constructed in such a way that they tell the real story of the Spirit and the Gods as well.

A. (14) His Holiness referred to ‘cloud that may come between the aspirant and the Guru’.

If, during the working day the main ‘cloud’ appears to be plain forgetfulness, can His

Holiness recommend any

* (Note by M.A.: Vritti = idea of the marriage of the individual and True Knowledge. Shruti = Vedic Knowledge (poetry).)

technique or method whereby the aspirant can keep the Guru in mind throughout the day?

S. During the working day one is involved in Rajas because one has to keep on being active. It is in the nature of Rajas that one thing you have to be forgiven is that you forget your longing for this – it is a natural phenomenon and it should be so. But, if it is natural to forget, it is also natural to remember; so, when one knows that one has forgotten, one should remind oneself of whatever one has forgotten and try to bring this forgetful state between two moments of remembrance.

If the darkness, which symbolises forgetfulness is contained between two lights, then it is very easy to cross the darkness without any help from outside because there is light behind and light in front.

So remembrance does reflect some Light in the darkness, and one can hold on to the Light that lies ahead and go through the darkness.

If there are two remembrances, then one would see that the forgetfulness in between them has no force of its own – it has lost its force and, whatever has to prevail in the individual, would be made available by remembering again.

There is a small creature called a mongoose whose nature is to fight snakes. Whenever they meet they fight. When the poison of the snake enters the body of the mongoose through a bite from the snake, the mongoose runs away and goes to smell a certain type of herb. By smelling this particular herb the poison of the snake is nullified, he becomes fresh. He then returns to the fight again. This process can go on as long as the fight is not over – so, it goes back to smell the herb, and comes back recharged for the fight having undone the effect of the poison.

Forgetting is very much like this poison which is being put in by the snake – the Rajas – into our nature (Prakriti). One need not bother about it, one simply needs to go and get the help of the herb. By remembering the Guru all this will be easy, and forgetting will have no bad effect.

A. (15) Even if the aspirant has absolutely no doubts about the Knowledge given by His Holiness, it is still necessary for him to experience it before it becomes his own. Should he wait patiently for this experience to come through meditation, the Shastras, the help of the Guru, or can he ask or do anything which will hasten it?

S. Ultimately one doesn't really need to do anything extra because the mechanics of the course we are going through are such that it will take place by itself. When one hears whatever Knowledge is being imparted here, one holds it in one's mind and that establishes a Sanskar,- some effect on the Essence of the individual. It is understandable that this will not immediately become part of the Self of the individual – it will not take root in the Self of the individual immediately because it has to go through other stages as well.

There are three stages in this type of work which we are undergoing, and trying to assimilate. The first is Srawana* – that you listen to the discourse of the teacher and try to grasp as much as you can. Having acquired something from the discourse, you would see that something does remain behind; everything will not stay, but something will remain in the mind.

* Srawana – hearing of the scriptures (Y.V.D.).

Then the second step – the Manana¹ – takes place; you think about it, whatever has remained in you. Having thought about that, you will see that quite a lot will have to be given up because you will wish to come to a central point while thinking about what you have heard. So the essence of all this thinking which has come from the discourses, will come into your Chitta.

The third step is Nididhyasana² – when you stabilise whatever has come to you through listening and through thinking. By stabilising these essences, in course of time you will see that all these three stages create some sort of power in you – Shakti; this Shakti is the pure Shakti of the Prakriti, Buddhi – purified Buddhi.

This Shakti is such that it always comes to the help of the individual in a new form – it is always ever new; so whatever the situations you will be put into, this power will give you such facility that you will meet the situation in an entirely new way. These are the three ways in which the forces will come to your help.

When one is coming into spiritual contact and under spiritual influences through the words which are being imparted to you, they are not only physical – they are not just words being heard, because through the words the spiritual influences enter the subtle and the causal worlds. They are being put in there automatically – this is an involuntary process: through the physical world some effect comes into the subtle world – the mind – of the individual, and is passed on automatically into the causal – the soul.

¹ Manana – constant thinking, reflection on the eternal verities; second of three steps on path of knowledge.

² Nididhyasana – profound and deep meditation; third step in Vedantic Sadhana (self-effort, tool or spiritual practice), after ‘hearing’ and ‘reflection’.

So this process of just listening to the words of His Holiness itself is not just knowledge on the coarse level but it is doing its work on the mind and on the soul of the individual. This will keep on creating the same Shakti going into the individual. All one needs to do when one is not facing His Holiness, is to remind oneself of all that has gone on here, all the Knowledge that one has heard, and go through it again and again. In course of time, and through the mechanics of our natural Prakriti, our Sanskar (Essence) will itself undergo a change – one need not try to hasten this process.

R. (16) May I ask if, in reminding oneself of His Holiness's words, one needs to do it in pure form without comment – without Rajas – just remind oneself of the pure words?

S. Recollecting or remembering, or going through it again certainly has to be done by Buddhi. Buddhi cannot be put aside, but it should not be allowed to play with it. While you are going through all this Knowledge again it is purifying Buddhi itself, and slowly, in course of time, the Buddhi will become pure and Buddhi must be used.

The questions and answers here do not really belong only to one individual. A question is not for the individual; it is for “Man”, for every man, so whatever one gets here could be used for any man anywhere, any time.

You can take the example of learning the Sanskrit language; in the structure of Sanskrit grammar there are different types of root forms, verbal forms, and

they are developed together with the noun forms which we call “form word”, and these attract certain endings so that they can be used in relation to person, gender, tense, etc. Though these are all declensions and conjugations yet, if you remember one form of declension, that will be applicable to all other verbal roots which have the same general form.

In the same way, if one knew the answer to one particular man’s problem, that sort of problem from any man could be tackled. The Knowledge which one gets here must be recalled again and again; and the effect of all this recollection or reminding oneself will automatically purify the mind. Then, when one is faced with the problem of any other man in the Society, or elsewhere, you will see that this help which you get from the Realized man will be useful for anyone, any time.

M.A. (17) Yesterday His Holiness spoke of consistency at the end of the answer to my husband’s first question. Is it this that can provide the thread of remembrance through the day and keep a little Light in the darkness?

S. There is a Shloka in one of the Scriptures (which he repeated, but of which the translator was unable to give us the original). The gist is that a good man who wants to go on the Spiritual path speaks what he feels, and does what he speaks. That is, he speaks from pure feeling. When he has impure feelings, he tries not to speak or rush into action or express them. A bad man does the reverse: he feels something and says something else; he says something but does something else.

If one really did speak what one feels, and do exactly what one says, then this would build up the inner strength of the man and, because of this clarity and unity of his mind and sincerity of his heart, the way will be fairly clear for him.

There is an example from the life of Rama when he went to Janak-Puri: he was taking a stroll in the royal gardens when he happened to see Sita there. He had only Lakshman with him, so he said to Lakshman: “Why is it that I had a glimpse of this girl in this garden? The tradition of our great family (of Raghu – Raghu was the first King of this solar dynasty called Raghurvansha) is such that the men of this family should never have a glimpse of any woman unless he was destined to marry that woman. So it seems that this girl will be married to me.”

This is the sort of purity one gets only if one follows pure feelings and expresses them in true words and does exactly as one says. If one learnt this System, kept this consistency, then one would grow – one would become more serious and have more strength of character. This brings unity into a man and creates a sort of depth, and to this unity and depth of the individual the glory of the Absolute descends, and then manifests all around all that one knows of the glories of the Absolute.

M.A. (18) What you have said, does that signify a certain order of action? You mentioned twice: “beginning with feeling, and then speak what you feel and do what you say.” Is this order important in this connection?

S. It is not only important but necessary, for this is the ultimate thing that happens – it belongs to the pattern of Nature. This is how things happen, but by ignorance we do not follow this

sequence, and complicate ourselves. Ordinary man – common man – does not go by this sequence. Men who want to go on the Way should follow this sequence.

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[Note: This sequence is the same as that described by Mr. Ouspensky as the highest of the six combinations of the Three Forces when applied to the activities of man.]

From the Ishavasya Upanishad:

Invocation: “That is full; this is full. When this fullness merges in that fullness, only fullness remains. Peace! Peace! Peace!

Verse 1: Whatever lives is full of the Lord. Claim nothing, enjoy, do not covet His property.

Verse 2: Then hope for a hundred years of life doing your duty in His name. No other way will prevent contamination with the effects of your deeds, proud as you are of your human nature.

Verse 3: A life not illuminated by Self-knowledge, condemns itself.”

4th Audience

Saturday, 19th January

R. (19) To get the peace on subtle and causal levels it is clearly necessary to give up.

Suddenly last night I woke up with His Holiness's words of personal advice ringing in my ears:

“Giving up can be done emotionally and intellectually at all times and in all conditions. Practice ‘giving up’ all the time, by regarding the body, the mind and the heart as belonging to Param-Atman and so offering all these back to Him.”

Even a little of this is found to be more effective than anything else. How can I make myself do more of it?

S. This observation is in keeping with the spirit of the first Upanishad – the Ishavasya. The first two verses of this carve out the central core of what can be said to be the essence of Indian philosophy. The complete Gita which we know, is almost an explanation of these two verses from this Upanishad.

The same thing given in these two verses is also given in the Bhagavad-Gita. Here Krishna says. “Whosoever sees the world in Me, and sees Me in the world, he alone knows Me, and he alone will transcend, and be relieved of the turmoil of this universe. He will be in bliss and he will have everlasting life.”

The essence of the first two verses of Ishavasya Upanishad is that all this Universe is filled with the Absolute. If one takes anything in the world and looks into its construction, one will ultimately reach the state where one will find the Absolute in everything.

For example: You can take cloth: cloth is made of thread, thread is made of the cotton, and the cotton-ball comes from the earth, and the earth is made of water, water comes from fire, fire from air, air from space (‘ether’),

and this comes from Mahat-tattwa, Mahat-tattwa comes from Apra-Prakriti; this in turn comes from Para-Prakriti, and Avyakta, the Unmanifested, is in the Absolute.

So, if you keep on looking into anything, you will ultimately come to the Absolute, that which prevails in everything. This is the process through which all things come to be manifested. In fact, the Absolute is not just within matter, but it is everywhere. It is not only the 'efficient cause' but the 'material cause' also. It is the efficient cause and the material cause – both are the Absolute; so the Absolute is within and without and the Absolute is everything.

The Ishavasya Upanishad says that the Universe is permeated by the Absolute. Whatever one sees in creation, whatever moves – one should use it fully and enjoy this Absolute everywhere, but one should enjoy it with renunciation. One should not try to hold it or covet it. Just because the Absolute is always everywhere one need not try to hold it; enjoy it – and give it up. So, 'giving up' is the most simple philosophy which promises complete fulfilment of the individual's life, also liberation after having enjoyed it. This is the meaning of that first verse.

The next verse says that, if one could live like this by enjoying the Absolute and giving up, one would desire to live a hundred years and, having lived it this way, none of the Karma – none of the actions through which the individual has to go during these hundred years – will bind him at all. They are no bondage for, in fact, he is already liberated; he lives in Liberation; and when the body is finished with he goes forth

with Liberation. Indeed, nothing will bind him, so this observation which you have given is the central philosophy. If one could practise it all the day, all the time, one would experience liberation within, and the real Liberation when liberation from the body comes.

We were given the following story some time ago, but the situation demands that it should be told again:

It relates to Prajāpiti, who is the teacher of the Gods, the priest of the Gods. His son, Kach, having gone through the proper education in the Vedic and Upanishadic texts, and having acquired all the knowledge that was to be acquired, came back to his father. His father asked him what he was intending to do. He said, “The essence of all I have learnt is that renunciation is the best medium for life, so I would like to go the way of renunciation.” So he would not take up the activities of the priesthood, and he would not help in the household activities either; he just stayed in the house.

After some time, the father asked him whether he had really renounced everything? As far as the father could see, his son had renounced all work but he still keeps on moving, eating, and using the amenities of the house. ‘So what about that?’ The son said, “All right, I will renounce the house,” so he left the house and went into the jungle and stayed there.

Then, after another interval, the father visited him there and asked him what the situation was? The boy said, “I can’t say I have acquired complete peace so it seems I have not yet renounced everything.” The father said, “Yes, of course, it seems so – your renunciation is not complete, otherwise peace would descend on you.” So he renounced the cloth which he wore, the food he ate, and all activity, yet he could not get the real peace of mind.

“Now,” he said, “the only thing left to renounce is my body, so I must renounce the body,” and he prepared a funeral pyre intending to jump into it. His father suddenly appeared and asked him to be sure that this would be the final renunciation. The son asked, “But once I have given up the body, what else will remain to bind me to worldly things?”

The father replied: “Your subtle body is not going to

die with your physical body, and the activities of the subtle body (which has desires) will make it keep on wandering, and will not subside after the body is burnt. You will get another body when you are dead because there will be some desire in your subtle body, so burning the body is not the final answer – you are not going to get rid of this creation.”

So the son said: “Well, what should I do if I cannot renounce, what else should I do?”

The father then said: “At last you have asked me a question, so now it is possible for you to learn something! Give up all your learning, and the final giving up – the final renunciation – will be the giving up of the very idea of renunciation. You are not giving up anything, everything is given up. By the idea of renunciation you are holding something in preference to other things – in fact, you are not renouncing; you are holding on very tightly to something lesser.”

The creation is such that everything is there in its own right – everything has a purpose and must fulfil its function; so it must keep on rotating, it must be used. Use everything and give up the idea that you are renouncing. Don’t hold on to anything in this creation. That can only be done by this final renunciation of giving up the idea that you have anything. In fact you have nothing. Everything is of the Absolute, everything is permeated by the Absolute; you use whatever you need, and the rest simply belongs to Him. This we must keep in our minds when we think of renunciation. (See also pp. 93 & 94.)

R. (20) On that subject could you read two of the questions I brought from London, because His Holiness has now answered them, I think.

(These were questions from J.S. and M.P.)

J.S. (21) – (the first question referred to): It appears that one’s individuality is only part of the “delegated adaptability” of Param-Atman,

so are we just to be good receiving stations and transmitters according to our level of understanding?

(Note: The second question – M.P.’s – is asked later on).

S. In answer to J.S.’s question, one’s concept of ‘I’ is of two types: the Real ‘I’ is the Atman, but the Atman by itself does not receive anything and does not transmit anything. It is there, and it is everywhere, just like the Absolute, so it does form something more, and that ‘something more’ is a part of this Universe, and we call that Ahankar, the Ego. This Ego is part of the Antahkarana, which includes also the Chitta, the Manas, the Buddhi, the body and everything. Atman uses this machinery to experience the Knowledge, the Being, and the Bliss. So this ‘I’ is now made into two – the inner one which is the Atman, and the outer one which is in the Ahankar.

To appreciate oneself as just “the receiving station and transmitter” is the best understanding one could have, because it is only the Absolute which has manifested itself as the creation, which is passing through and being manifested or expressed by Himself, which is the Atman.

When people don’t understand, and think that this Ahankar alone is themselves – that Ahankar alone is the ‘I’ and there is nothing beyond it – then they start creating boundaries, and these boundaries are made of the limitations of their understanding, knowledge, or the ideas which they have. It is not just the single body which creates the boundary, but everything to which the individual relates himself – the concept of family, etc.

This act immediately puts obstacles to the natural and full flow of energy from the Atman, and man lives by the little flow which he naturally cannot stop. Some boundaries are small and some are large, but in fact all this which is within the boundary or which creates a boundary, is not the real Self. The real Self is the Atman; it has nothing to do with this universe, and yet the whole design of this universe is there for its enjoyment. So, when you separate these two, it is only then you come into difficulties.

But, if you keep both together, and feel that you are the receiving station and transmitting, as a necessary part of the universe, then you would be able to enjoy the universe – you would be able to do what you are designed to do. If one wanted to find out the definition of Real ‘I’, then whatever you cannot give up is Real ‘I’, and whatever can be given up is the other ‘I’, which is the Universe.

R. (referring to the second of the questions he had brought from London): This is a question of several senior people who demand only direct contact with His Holiness, and not through anyone else:

M.E.P.: (22): Questions must be a sign of the work proceeding – unless one is making some effort, there are no questions. But of whom should the questions be asked? Surely (after some years) it is to ourselves that the question is asked, and from the Self only that the answers can come?

Yet again, if a man by this logic were to say, “I know all the answers, and so need no help,” would he not stand in great danger from

ego? Would His Holiness please show us how to resolve this everlasting paradox?

S. The answer is very simple. The Atman never questions because He has no reason to question, so whenever a question arises, it never arises from the Atman. It always arises from the Ahankar because Ahankar is not fully realized; it is not the Atman; it is not the Absolute; so it wants to know, and it is necessary that there should be questions because the full Realization has not taken place. As long as full Realization has not taken place, the questions must arise, but if one allows the Ahankar to answer the questions, then one will be in trouble.

Should one put the questions to the Atman? That could be a proposition. If the Atman has no questions, certainly He must know everything; and he must also know the question of the individual, so should one question the Atman who knows the question already ?

No, one cannot question the Atman – one cannot ask questions of the Atman. But one can pray to Him. Be humble, and put up a prayer to the Atman to resolve the question – that is a way to appeal to the Atman, and then the proper answer will be available.

R. (23) So they are quite right to want the words of His Holiness, because we could not have answered the question in that way!

S. In the Isha Upanishad there is something again very close to this question (His Holiness quotes verses 15 and 16):

15. The door of the Truth is covered by a golden sheath. Open it, O Nourisher! Remove it so that I who have been worshipping the Truth may behold it.
16. O Nourisher, lone Traveller (Prayer) of the sky! Controller! O Sun, offspring of Prajapati! Gather your rays; withdraw your light. I would see through your grace that form of yours which is the fairest. I am indeed He, that Purusha, who dwells there.”

One of them says that this Self is hidden by a golden sheath of this Universal Being, Universal Body; so the body, the senses, the mind, Buddhi, Chitta – all these form the golden body within which the Self is hidden, and then a prayer is put to this hidden Self.”

Translated this prayer reads:

“That which gives food to everyone, that which is the supporter of the Universe, and the One who gives like no-one else – that is the One who gives most, who resolves and keeps on regulating this whole Universe; who is brilliant like the Sun, who looks after all His children in this Universe and with all these glorious things –

O Self, who is in everything, please now remove this golden sheath so that the Truth, the real Understanding, and the full Realization of the Self can take place.”

So one does not question the Self; one only prays to the Self to resolve the problem.

A. (24) Is it right to feel that nothing belongs to me, even the Ahankar that is called Allan; that Ahankar is really only the instrument for the use of the Absolute?

S. The machine is certainly the individual, but there is some other element which runs the machine – which supplies the force to run the machine. This force is coming only through the Real Self, the Atman, who is called Allan, Lord Allan!

The body, the senses, and the inner instruments, they are also part of the name, which we call Allan. As long as the force which governs this machine is kept without any hindrance – as long as one does not claim it to be done by one’s own mind or body; if one recognizes that

all commands are coming from the Self within, and then are interpreted without any boundaries – without any further interpretation – then one will see that the Atman is acting through the individual.

One cannot separate the two, because it is in the design that the Atman will have to work through the Ahankar. But no boundaries should be created, and none of what is called ‘Allan’ can be removed from the real Allan.

M.A. (25) At the beginning of the answer to J.S.’s question, Mr. Jaiswal used the two words Antahkarana and Ahankar. It may only be a question of translation, in which case I would not want to waste His Holiness’s time, but I wanted to ask what the relationship between these two words in this answer was?

J. (26) It was my slip of the tongue saying Antahkaran first when Ahankar was meant; but we will ask His Holiness about the two words.

S. Ahankar is one of the parts belonging to the Antahkaran. Antahkarana is the internal machinery – internal body and it has got these four parts – Ahankar, Chitta, Buddhi and Manas which are just like the four gears in a car, and you use one gear for a particular type of speed. When you use one of these you get a different function; this is the difference between Ahankar and Antahkarana.

These four have four types of function: Ahankar gives the feeling of ‘I’; in Chitta you have all the knowledge and the memories (smriti); Buddhi makes the decisions and discriminates; and Manas

collects all the ideas which come to the individual – this and that, without selection.

R. (27) It is 10.45 and tomorrow is Sunday; do we ask to see His Holiness again on Monday?

S. As we have no audience on the 23rd we may come tomorrow, Sunday.

R. (cont.): But Sunday is a whole holiday for His Holiness we understand?

S. It is my holiday to talk to you.

On the 22nd we will have the Rasleela, and on the 24th we will have the audience followed by lunch at the Ashram.

5th Audience

Sunday, 20th January

R. (28) In a talk here this time last year we are told that His Holiness said: “One of the benefits of Holy company is that we learn from it that the deepest possible relationship that can exist between two things is that which exists between Ahankar and Param-Atman,” So no wonder we could not define it in words! Only experience in the presence of a Realized Man could reveal it?

S. In the realm of Bhakti – devotion – this relationship exists very closely between the Param-Atman and the Ahankar, and is used in the most positive manner. The individual in this realm looks at the Param-Atman in its manifest form and makes it the object of his worship. He sings the praise of this Lord (whom he wishes to worship) by proclaiming all the glories which are enshrined in this God and, because he tries to become One with Him through his emotion, he subdues or merges his Ahankar into the Being of the Absolute – the God. Then it seems that, because of this Unity, the qualities and the glories of the God are shared by the devotee himself.

Take Tūlasidās who, in one of his couplets, says that whenever you try to unite with any particular being (it could be a God or anything else), and you devote yourself entirely to the service of that particular being, then all the characteristics of that particular being will be shared by you.

When a devotee merges his Ahankar into God, then he starts sharing the qualities of God.

When you, for instance, take to the ideal of being a Man, then immediately all the qualities associated with Manhood are separated

from those of all other beings. One feels shy and ashamed of not being able to measure up to these qualities associated with being a Man, so one refrains from being like an animal. One always keeps that standard before oneself, because this manifestation of the Absolute as a Man – “The Ideal Man” – stays very close to the Ahankar of the individual, and then he behaves as a Man should.

This is how one can see that through the Ahankar, when it is Sattvic, then the qualities of the Gods descend on the man. When it is Rajasic, then he takes it as his own body – his own doing, and does not get the finer qualities of the Absolute. When he takes over the Tamasic aspects in his Ahankar, then he acts in a very cruel and rigid way and, in fact, he becomes less than a Man should be. If the Ahankar is Sattvic then the relationship with the Gods will also be Sattvic.

R. (29) That attitude is expressed, surely, by Sri Shankara’s Dakshina-murti – with the thumb, the Param-Atman, the Ahankar the first finger, and the other three fingers the Gunas?

S. This position of the hand is known as the “posture of Knowledge” – Jnanamudra. When the original Shankara was discoursing with his disciples, he told them that in one Shloka he would give them the gist of all the Advaita (non-dualistic) philosophy. In that Shloka it is said that:

Brahmasatyam	Jaganmithyā	Brahmajivaiva nāporah
Brahman is Truth	world is illusion	Jiva and Brahman are not different

(He shows the hand-sign); these three fingers (middle, ring and little finger) depict the three aspects which are the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas (or waking, dreaming, and sleep states). All the three aspects of the creation (which is involved with the Prakriti) are illusion, so are separated from the first finger which acts as the Jiva – the person – the thumb being the Absolute. The state of Unity is shown by the position of the first finger linked to the thumb; the Jiva is the Atman, it is with the Absolute and is just the same. So Jiva himself is the Brahman, and all this Prakriti (which is governed by the other three) is illusion and, therefore, is outside the realm of the Absolute (which is not involved, separate). This is the Knowledge symbol – the ‘Jnana-mudra of Knowledge’ (Knowledge hand sign) which is given in the Dakshina-murti or ‘hand-sign of Liberation’.

M.A. (30) I feel rather impertinent asking this question, as I don’t imply that I know much about this realm.

His Holiness has described the deep dive – the state of full meditation. Does this mean that we pass through the state of Samadhi to reach this, and is it the Mantra which leads us through, or has the Mantra been transcended before Samadhi?

S. What has been described to us as this profound, deep dive is the state of Turiya, which is beyond Samadhi. In Samadhi there is a state of equilibrium, but Mantra is still present there. When you go to the profound depth, then you pass through this state of Samadhi.

In Turiya, the Mantra is also transcended because, at this stage,

the three factors – the act of meditation, the Mantra, and the one who is meditating – all these things are lost into one Unity; there is no differentiation or any attempt to do anything, or any knowing of any particular thing; neither is there the movement of the Mantra itself. So that state is the real state of the profound deep dive.

There are three parts of the Mantra we have been given. (Here His Holiness repeated our Mantra twice in a long, slow, resonant way.) This also relates to another Mantra – AUM. You heard the way our Mantra was pronounced; there are three measures in it. You start with the short ‘R’; then comes the long ‘AAAA’, and then the closing sound of ‘M’ is lengthened, protracted. This is how this Mantra should be said (not aloud, but within one’s mind) so that all these measures come together; and the last measure takes one to the state of equilibrium, to complete peace or silence where everything comes to an end, as you have heard.

R. (31) But couldn’t one bring the state of Samadhi out into the world after transcending in meditation?

S. The state of Samadhi is a transitional state leading to Turiya.

The state of Turiya is like going to have a bathe in the Ganges. When you come out of the river, then you are a bit wet; you do not bring the whole Ganges with you, but you bring the effect of the Ganges and you feel fresh, and you take to any activity in a far better way than if you were tired, and unclean.

When you come out of this Turiya (which is the profound peace experienced by the Self), you take something of this great stream of Ganges with you – the great stream of the Absolute. You acquire some strength from it, and with that strength you deal with all the situations which are presented to you in the world.

Some time ago we were given the Seven Steps of Knowledge, and the sixth state was described as Padārthā-bhāwanī or Pure Bliss. In this state there is absence of all things and this is equated with Samadhi; but, after transcending this state, you come into Turiya where there is Unity with the Absolute – Unity with the Universal stream. When you come out of that, then you are better disposed to face the world and handle all situations.

R. (32) After hearing all this, we long to get back to improving our own meditation, making it better and better.

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R. contd.: May I now lead up to two more of the questions from London:

Mr. Whiting asked me to say that he gave the first talk he had here with His Holiness to the School of Meditation; he also gave it to me, and some of our people heard a recording of that first talk. It has created a profound effect on everybody. One of these questions arises from it:

Mrs. N.D.H. (33) His Holiness, commenting on the story told to Mr. Whiting of the ‘King crow and the young Swan’, said that ‘victory goes only to the natural man’. We know this is true, and yet one longs to experience it on the subtle level of Being; is there a short-cut?

S. It is not really necessary to look at the Work only on the subtle level, because the subtle level cannot be removed from the physical. There are two ways of looking at a thing, or finding the Truth about a thing: one way is Anvaya, and the other is Vyatireka. In Anvaya is the addition of things, in Vyatireka is the subtraction of things. Through Anvaya we find that there is this Absolute which brings out the Avyakta, and from the Avyakta you have Prakriti, which in threefold, then Mahat-tattwa, and further:

Ākasha – Vayu – Agni – Jala and Prithivi

Space ('Aether') – Air – Fire – Water – Earth

then everything which you see in different forms. This in how the stages of beings are being explained by the way of Anvaya. In these stages, the forces of the Absolute are descending and taking their place in this universe, so they are held in their place and their time only by the power of the Absolute.

There is another way of looking at this problem: you take a thing and try to find the Absolute within it. You say that the form which is presented before you hides something within it, so the flower hides the Prithivi within it. The Prithivi hides Jala within it, and Jala hides Agni, and then Vayu, and then Akasha, Mahat-tattwa, then Prakriti, then Avyakta, and then the ultimately hidden substance is of the Absolute. So you separate the fine from the coarse (Vyatireka), and keep on finding subtler things. These are the two ways.

When you look at the manifest world, then this is the Anvaya,

and looking the other way, through Vyatireka, you draw out the forces which are hidden in them; and with that experience and the Knowledge gathered from the physical world, you substantiate your subtle body. Having substantiated your subtle body to conform with the Knowledge and the Bliss derived from the physical world, you use that force of the subtle body to perform more efficiently the activities of the physical body. So these two ways must always be kept supporting each other.

If one thinks that it is possible to live in the realm of the subtle world alone, then what is the use after all of coming into this creation – into the coarse world – when one could stay in the subtle world? Then the Manifest world would become useless, without purpose; and we cannot say that, because it certainly has a purpose in this creation, and it must fulfil that purpose in full. In fulfilling the purpose of this physical world we can be united with the Absolute and, if we do not do that, we would not – in reality – have unity with the Absolute.

This also applies the other way round: one cannot just forget the subtle world and only enjoy the realm of the physical world, because that world will not be enjoyed by you – the greater and better part of this Absolute will be left without being enjoyed and known. So they must go together, simultaneously.

When one goes into the activity of the world one gets tired; and when one is tired one must draw energy from the peace and so one goes into sleep, only to recharge oneself.

Similarly, these two worlds of physical and subtle help each other, and we must learn to keep on working through both so that we may enjoy better and deeper realms of these two levels.

R. (34) Is it part of this that one experiences in meditation of ascending to the stillness and then descending, up and down the spine?

S. Yes, the description of this ascent and descent can be easily related to this Anvaya and Vyatireka. By giving up spending energy, when we proceed into the meditation, we certainly go down into the lowest part of the spine which is the Mūladhāra. Having come to the state of profound peace, then the potent energy rises on this ladder and works through all these stages of Swadhishthāna, Manipūrika, and so on, coming into the Brahmarandhra (the fontanelle at the top of the skull). That is where you are charged with fresh energy and, having come out of the deep meditation, you use this energy for any efficient work. The simile is right.

Here is a very ordinary example:

In the morning a shopkeeper gets up and goes to the shop after having a bath and breakfast and washing up. Then he opens the door of the shop, cleans the shop, and re-arranges everything in the shop in its proper place, and starts selling his goods.

He sells for eight hours, and after that he puts back all the goods which he has put on display outside, makes up his accounts, and then closes the shop and goes home to sleep after his meal.

This creation is also like a shop where you come to display your goods and get the proceeds from the sale so that you can live an easy, good and prosperous life.

So, this is the big shop of the Absolute, and it is in the pattern of our nature that we also must take part in the business – we also must keep on working on the physical level, and deriving substances of the subtle nature from this physical world to substantiate our being

for the next encounter in this world. This is how life must be kept on. One should not try to resign, or overdo anything on one of the levels.

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Second part of 5th Audience (re-written):

The conversation then changed, as some personal questions were put which concerned the attitude one should take up when someone very close to one has died. Unfortunately these questions reached His Holiness through the interpreter in the form of the longing of the bereaved person to communicate with the dead one; so much of His Holiness's reply was irrelevant. However, if one cuts that part out, there was a valuable message delivered to anyone in such a situation:

Q. Mrs. B.C. (35) (About the recent death of her mother, who was a keen meditator though only initiated in old age):

When someone dies with whom one is closely linked in life and love, although one immediately accepts the death of the body, there is a much longer time during which the relationship has to be relinquished on the psychological level. During this time there are many happy memories and many regrets for debts unpaid. I would be glad if His Holiness could comment on how to use this period so that it becomes positive – perhaps on both sides? Is communication between a dead and a living person valid for a time, or something to be got over as quickly as possible?

[Mrs. B.C. was thinking of how, perhaps, to help her mother, but the question reached His Holiness as concerned with pity for herself!]

S. The direct communication on the subtle level between the living and dead is certainly unnecessary and uncalled for. And it is also unnecessary and unnatural to blot out or erase the memory in the hope that one would be free; or that perhaps both would be free. This memory of the dead is only one-sided and, (since it is due to having lost the former association with that particular person, while one has not yet established other relationships), the memory of that person will be very much alive. But it will not last for ever; in time this will subside and be superseded by other memories which will come out of new and fresh associations. So one should neither try to erase it nor try to enliven it. In any case both are impossible.

R. (36) So, you seem to say that such feelings are all one-sided and all this subtle activity, these memories, do not help the dead one at all?

S. When an individual dies then he stays in the astral, ethereal realm, till he gets a new body. As long as he has not yet received a new body, it is quite possible that the memories about him will attract his or her attention. I can't say how long that is possible but it is certainly only possible until he takes another body.

[Then followed a rather gruesome story from the old epic Mahabharata designed to show how lightly Krishna regarded the death of the physical body!

This, continued His Holiness, is a very sad story, but the moral is that this creation is filled with many changing situations which are competing for the attention of the individual all the time. But this is just the passing world.]

There is, of course, something which is constant – the memory of the Absolute. That will never subside whatever happens, so if anyone tries to relate oneself

to the Absolute and be filled with the memory of the Absolute, then memory of this transitory world and the passing show of this creation will not torment anyone any more.

R. (37) This answer will greatly help our own family. His Holiness remembers that our daughter and her baby died in a car accident some years ago. Last month her son, now seventeen, died in three days of a rare and malignant fever for which nothing could be done. We keep asking ourselves why is it that in this branch of the family there is only one survivor, whereas in our son's family everything prospers – three children – success, etc. How to think about this?

The atmosphere must have been highly charged emotionally, for we noticed tears running down the cheeks of the High Court Lawyer who came to our meetings. But His Holiness spoke in a calm and detached – almost light-hearted – way.

S. There is a positive side to this episode, in that when one comes into this world then one comes from some other world. Having lived one's life in this world, one must return to that other world; so from the Samashti (the universal realm), one comes at birth into the Vyashti (the individual realm). When a person dies, that person is going back to the Father, and it is a moment of rejoicing rather than of sorrow, because he is attaining the ultimate state. And in relation to that there is a story:

In East Africa there lived quite a number of Indians, and once an Indian died, so the relatives took in procession that dead body for cremation. Some of the relatives were crying and weeping and wailing. On the way to the cremation ground, another Indian was negotiating a loan from an African. When the African heard all the wailing, he asked the Indian who was asking for the loan, what all these people were wailing about, since they seemed to be from his part of the world.

The Indian replied that somebody must have died, and perhaps they were going to the cremation and were expressing

their sorrow. The African asked, “What happens when someone is born in an Indian family – do they also wail and cry at that time?”

“Oh, no!” replied the Indian, “that is a time of rejoicing; when somebody is born we rejoice because we are united with that being and we wail when someone dies because of separation – we are separated from the being we love.”

The African replied that if this is the tradition of his country, he could not lend him any money. The Indian asked what the loan of money had to do with their wailing or rejoicing. The African said: “It seems that when you get something you rejoice, but when you have to give it back you are very sorry. So I don’t intend to subject you to such grief. I want to save you from future grief, so I won’t lend you the money.”

One should not, then, feel grief at all when someone passes away, because he is going back to the real Father, though leaving the temporary and physical father and mother. We ought to console ourselves and keep our attention directed to the real Father of all, whose family is spread throughout the world. When somebody is called back we should happily allow that person to go. If we keep on remembering him, we would be hurting that being because he will feel some attachment, some attraction because of the grief we show.

R. (38) We have a saying that “those whom the Gods love die young.”

S. Young or old we should feel happy that one of his children has gone back to his real home. This universe is the travel ground – we have come here only for a little while.

6th Audience:

Monday, 21st January

R. (39) Would His Holiness say anything about the subject of his talk at the Mela yesterday?

S. At the Mela, as all over India through the ages, there are two streams of discourses going on all the time, so we have the same two streams of discourses taking place in the Mela grounds:

One is the stream of Devotion – Bhakti – which covers the cycle of incarnations through which the God descends. Those people who are prone to the devotional set-up in their being can only respond to these Gods who are said to incarnate in physical form.

The other cycle – the other stream – is the Adhyatma, the Atmaveda, which preaches the unity of everything; insisting that the Ultimate Being is the Atman or the Absolute, which is, and is activating everything. This stream is the stream of Knowledge and is certainly a little harder to appreciate. Those who are strong enough and well-informed – who have appreciation of this True Knowledge and have acquired some understanding – they alone can see the Unity within which expresses itself through all the manifestations. So they do not run about – they do not take to much activity, and are not bothered by doubts about the inner and the outer. In knowledge they are satisfied and, with this satisfaction, peace and understanding they keep to such activity as is necessary – the needful activity – and they don't move around in confusion unnecessarily.

The others who belong to the devotional stream with its cult

of incarnations, have different types of Gods (with their saints or heroes); they try to worship them and listen to the exploits of these Gods and relish them. They hear different names, different forms and types of activity related to these Gods, and they like to dwell on these – enjoying them, remembering them, hearing about them, or even worshipping these Gods in different ways. Our Vyāsa at the Magh Mela belongs to that stream and he certainly appeals strongly to the common man; so the large gatherings which we see are attracted and held by this Vyāsa because he appeals to the devotional; and he describes the physical form and activities of the God, how he moves around and performs all his activities.

Yet there are some people in that crowd who are not much moved by this, because they want to understand the Self. There are many people who discourse on this mysterious unity of the Self. So,

many also come to listen to those who speak on these subjects. Thus there are these two different types of activity going on.

People wonder whether or not there could be a synthesis of these two. Is it possible to bring both these two factors together and enjoy them simultaneously? Yes, it is possible, because whatever is the Absolute (which we call the unified Being within), the same is manifesting itself in everything in this creation which we see – in words, in forms, and through the activities. So by whatever name we call the Absolute within, we also can partake of this Absolute in everyday life in every form, through every name, and through all sorts

of activities which all beings perform. This creates a completeness of the Being within and without; and this also is the sort of thing which goes on there.

We forget that we are the Master, we are the Absolute; but by discoursing about True Knowledge we come to know it again, just as we come to recognize individuals.

Someone's friend may go to act a part in the drama, so he puts on different clothes, different head-gear and makes up beyond recognition. But the moment he speaks, the sound reveals his identity.

Here, the True Knowledge is the sound through which one recognizes the True Self manifesting through all these different forms. One has to understand and find out this synthesis – that the Being within is also manifesting and taking part outside; and one has to find out the Unity; to hate no-one, and start working through Love. That will bring peace and Liberation.

R. This leads on to the question I want to raise about the synthesis which we felt very much at the last Magh Mela when we were with His Holiness:

We heard then a very amusing recitation from the Ramayana, about the adventures of Prakriti and Purush. It was said that, "When the Purush puts constraint on Prakriti (who only wants to please the Purush), then trouble ensues." Surely here, under the influence of Rajas and Tamas, the nature of common man shows the two sides which often come into conflict – the masculine or dominant mind turned outwards,

and the feminine or passive part of the mind turned inwards? There is much evidence now in scientific circles for the existence of these two sides of a man's brain. Since it is interesting everybody, I now ask:

R.'s Q (40) From the point of view of Self-Realization, can the conflict be resolved if, under the influence of Sattva, the Param-Atman becomes the Purusha and becomes the Supreme King above both parties? Then the situation explained by Tūlasidās to Mīra comes about where Purush is the Lord of Creation and Prakriti is His Creation – the Nature of this Universe?

S. This creation is a magnificent creation; it is perfect, beautiful and blissful. There isn't any scope for anything wrong or inferior in this creation. So the forms – the masculine and feminine – which we do see so predominant in our life are, in fact, equal; neither of them is superior, nor deserves any right to be either dominant or passive. But this whole creation (which is a perfect Drama) is played in different ways. If there was only one way, there would not be any drama; there must be many, and they must take their rôle and do whatever their rôle demands.

The usual concept which one comes across is that there should be a master, and this master should be served in many ways so that the glory of this great Creator may manifest through all these servants. The real Master is the Absolute, which this Prakriti is serving in manifold forms. But when one takes oneself to be the master, then

one falls into some sort of error because we are all governed by the Prakriti which is threefold. Whether male or female everybody is Prakriti – and everybody has this part of the Absolute (or Atman) – through which the individual is known, though Atman is always the same for everybody. Therefore a man and a woman are no different from each other.

[Somehow the interpreter had conveyed the idea that R. was speaking about sex differences!]

If, by our ego or Ahankar, we suppose that we are the master, then immediately the Prakriti (which is good, beautiful and pure) will start mixing things together, and adulteration takes place which is called Vikriti. Corruption takes place, and it is because of this corruption in our mind that we try to become dominant and to rule everything – try to govern everybody else, because we think that everybody is inferior and there to serve one. All our troubles and tribulations come from this corruption, adulteration, or Vikriti, which is only in the Ahankar.

Take the example from the Ramayana in which Rama represents the Absolute and Sita, Prakriti. But there is no sense of superiority or inferiority between either of them.

When we come across the battle of Rama against Rawana, Rama has never wanted to punish Rawana as such. Rawana, in his previous life, was one of the attendants on Rama (as Vishnu); but because he somehow developed Ahankar and thought that he was the great servant of Rama, he had to descend in this creation and correct his Ahankar, and get liberated.

So this attendant of Vishnu came here an Rawana symbolising the Ahankar, though actually he was a devotee of Rama. Rama never hated him because Rama can never hate anyone, for everybody is a part of Himself. It is the same Absolute in everyone, so he cannot hate even if he has to kill. He killed Rawana with love and affection, and when Rawana was killed he was instantly liberated. People ask: ‘If he was to be liberated, why was he killed? Actually, Rawana was never killed at all; it was the Ahankar of Rawana that was killed – Rawana was liberated from the Ahankar.

In this Drama of the Absolute one has to come to understand that there is no difference between the masculine and the feminine; everyone is to be the Master, and everyone must also be the servant and help each other.

R.’s Q. (40) resumed: But Hanuman gave his ugly servant a good smack on the head and knocked him unconscious; that was for his good?

S. Yes, Hanuman did try to wake Rawana up, but Rawana was determined to speed up the process of Liberation. There were occasions when some of Rawana’s ministers tried to tell him that he should return Sita and not become the object of the fury of Rama, which would lead to his destruction.

To this Rawana used to say: “I know who Sita is and who Rama is. I am keeping Sita knowingly because I want to get liberated; I must keep her. If I give away Sita, then there won’t be war and so no liberation; I must keep Sita in order to be killed by Rama and insure my Liberation. I am not going to budge an inch from this decision, and I will play this part as well as I can.”

So he did, and he got liberated.

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When Sita was captured by Rawana she was put into a garden and given one personal lady attendant. Sita used to collect all the flowers in the garden, and with them she

used to write 'R A M A' on the ground; then meditate and contemplate on that. After meditating and contemplating for a long time, she used to feel like Rama herself.

The same thing was happening to Rama in Pampapura, on the other side. He also used to think about Sita, and on many occasions he used to forget himself. Then he used to ask Lakshman, Jambawanta and others, "Who am I?"

This went on for some time. One day Sita said to her lady attendant, "It seems that I am so absorbed in the thought of Rama, that it is quite possible I might turn into Rama. If that did happen, would not the conjugal life of husband and wife be disturbed?"

The lady attendant replied, "That's only half the story, because from the other side Rama is also remembering you in exactly the same way. By the time you turn into Rama, Rama will have turned into Sita, so conjugal life will be restored and you will not be missing anything of this creation at all."

So this Prakriti and Purusha are working within each other in unison. Male or female makes no difference. When we come to understand this, we simply fulfil the rôle which we have to perform, and enjoy this creation.

[Note: We should see this story, therefore, as an allegory of the tripartite nature of each one of us.]

A. (41) Two days ago His Holiness mentioned praying to the Atman. Yesterday he recommended taking a manifest form of the Param-Atman as the object of worship. Can the disciple choose the Realized Teacher as the channel through which he prays to the Atman?

S. The first Sri Shankara (in the course of one of his poems describing Dakshina-murti) says that the Absolute, the Guru, and the

Atman are all the same. It is the same Unity which seems to be experienced in the world in these three different forms.

Those who resort to the Way of Knowledge (having acquired the Knowledge through the teacher), they always like to look within to the Self. Having acquired the Knowledge, the Self becomes the Guru. They do not see it as different; they see it as the Atman or the Absolute – not Absolute as a God, but Absolute as Atman. So for them there is no difference; they like to think and talk only about the Atman.

But for those who are on the devotional side, the God is of the Saguna (having a name and form); and the Teacher, who leads him towards this, seems to be very important, and they are seen to be working through the Teacher to the God.

A. (42) Would His Holiness say more about the inspiration by which the Teacher can help the disciple?

S. When the relationship between a disciple and the Teacher is established, it has to be mutual. Having established this relationship, the Teacher (through its invisible aspect) keeps on inspiring the disciple. Apart from the physical inspiration (the words which he speaks and the ‘disciplines’ which he prescribes), there is this other medium which touches the mind and heart of the man under the discipline. This is how the inspiration works.

If the aspirant keeps on responding to the inspiration which is given and does not create any block, then that stream will always be

working. If, however, the disciple ascribes the results to himself – establishing his Ahankar as the doer – then it is possible that hindrance will be created, and the flow of the stream will be interrupted.

So, it lies entirely with the disciple to respond to the inspiration by practice, and then to keep this channel open so the stream is always alive. If this is allowed to happen, then the disciple will see that he does get inspiration; and this inspiration is of such a nature that the disciple himself will feel that it is not of his own making – it is not the product of his own knowledge – and so this will keep on working for his development.

As we have been told, there are these two types of people – the one who works through Knowledge, the mind; and the other through the heart. It has been observed that it is a rare thing to find that both these sides of human nature could be working simultaneously with equal force; there is always predominance of one or the other in any individual. With the predominance of mind, at best they use the heart to enliven the mind, to recharge the Buddhi and the reasoning power, so that Manas and Buddhi work in harmony. Those who come from the devotional side on the other hand, use their Buddhi to establish the predominance of the heart over the mind. This varying relationship goes through all these two different types of people. One need not bother about the differences, for in fact both extremes are working for the same end. So the heart of the disciple will be open, and it will remain open if he both follows the initial inspiration and the impulses which are later

given to him to enable more and more new inspirations to keep coming.

A. (43) I have at times felt completely at One with the Shankaracharya. A friend in London who meditates and works in Dr. Roles' group told me that she, in meditation, had also felt totally at One with, and as it were, part of the Shankaracharya, even though she had never seen him in person.

It seemed to me at the time, and from what the Shankaracharya has said this morning, that this is quite possible; but I would just like him to confirm it.

S. Both the experiences are good and valid. This is how it should be.

One can see from the ordinary experiences of the supply of electricity, that there is a place where the electricity is being generated. It has to be used by different people in different forms; but it cannot be directly given by the generating board. It will have to come through some other medium. So, in each house, in each factory, a meter is installed so that the electricity from the generating power house can be made available for the individual to use for different purposes.

The teacher is very much like this meter. If one gets connected to the teacher, 'the electricity supply' will be available; then it can be used in lighting systems, or in fans or coolers or heaters or whatever one wants.

One should remember that, in fact, the power supply which one gets from the teacher is not the monopoly of the teacher himself; he is only the bridge (wire) – the connecting link between the Absolute and the

individual. In his own way he is there to connect himself to the Absolute. When the disciple is connected with the teacher, he is connected with the Absolute, and the force* of the Absolute passes through the medium of the teacher to the disciple.

[*Note: See “Shakti”, page 24, and any references to “Chetan Shakti” in the 1970 Record.]

The disciple, in turn, should also think that all this creative capacity (or the energy which is being made available), is not just for his own enjoyment, but for the use of everybody around him. Whosoever wants it should be able to avail himself of this energy. This is how this flow of real inspiration (which takes its origin from the Absolute) should be kept going, manifesting, and developing through all the forms of this creation.

M.A. (44) This explains why, when you get a little impulse in London to do something “beautifully” and you manage to follow it, you find yourself giving thanks for the help which seems then to be a fact.

S. The thanks are due only to the Param-Atman; as far as His Holiness is concerned, he is only a medium.

7th Audience

Tuesday, 22nd January

R. (45) From what writing comes the Shloka about “saying what one thinks, and doing what one says”? Would His Holiness very kindly repeat it so that the machine can record it?

S. It is from the Manu Smriti and His Holiness repeats it.

(Jaiswal will trace it and give us the proper reference.)

R. We wanted to put some questions from London to fulfil a promise. We think that His Holiness has answered all of them before, but if there are any comments he wants to make on these we would be grateful.

M.E.P. (46) It is clear to me that our idea of Param-Atman varies and grows, and therefore is imperfect. Only if it were unchanging could it be true; and so long as the object of meditation is unrealized must not the practice of meditation be in some measure lacking?

S. The Param-Atman alone is unchanging; it always remains the same. But this Param-Atman is also manifesting through all these different forms, which we directly encounter and derive Knowledge through them. It is quite possible, therefore, that our concept of Param-Atman would keep on changing as the Knowledge, and the level of the individual would be changing all the time. One does wonder (since one’s concept is changing), what really is happening. In fact, there is nothing wrong in all this; one’s concepts must keep on evolving, and the Knowledge and concept of Param-Atman will continue to become subtler and subtler;

but within this ever changing concept about this unchanging Absolute, there is one thing which never needs to be changed – that is the faith in the Param-Atman. If one has the faith – complete unchanging faith – then one should not worry about the changing concepts.

According to certain Systems, the ‘discipline’ (i.e., Sādhana – “systematic support”) has been prescribed, and Meditation has been offered to work on different levels. Whether the Meditation is working properly or not, only the individual can be the best judge. He will know what is happening within himself, and one knows that there will be difficulties which will be resolved only in the course of time. Unless the Meditation has become natural with the individual, he will have to continue to meet difficulties. Sometimes they are more, sometimes less, and sometimes they are not even there.

One never encounters difficulties all the time, because they arise from the influx of the Gunas. When Rajas is predominant, one might find that one cannot meditate. Under Tamas, one might feel sleepy or there may be a hundred-and-one different types of hindrances. We can welcome the hindrances and let them come, but on one basic condition: namely, that we are completely resolved to go on the way of Meditation and to achieve the object of meditation – have union with this unchanging Param-Atman, the Absolute. With this, let us journey on. Whatever comes, we accept it and keep on doing the best we can.

An example: In the Jaganath Puri (in the Eastern part of India) there was a devotee who was given a Mantra. There are two very similar Mantras – one is “Kreem”, and the other “Kleem” – but the object of these two mantras (the Gods

related to them) is different.

A devotee was given a Mantra for Kali, which is “Kleem”, but somehow he forgot it and started pronouncing the other one. He was a real devotee, and Kali did appear to him. She asked him whom he wanted? He said he wanted Kali, and she is before him.

But she said he was not pronouncing her Mantra properly. To that this devotee replied: “Well, since the Mantra which I am pronouncing has made you descend, I am sure there must be some good in it; and as long as I find the Goddess for which I am reciting this Mantra, I have no reason to believe it is wrong. I will keep on saying the same Mantra.” The Goddess just smiled.

One need not worry too much either about correcting the details of the Mantra and the System, for the mainstay behind all these disciplines is the heart and lies in the power of Faith. Once Faith is complete, all these minor differences of the various ‘disciplines’ don’t really matter, for in the alchemy of the heart everything is taken care of, and the process shapes itself as the devotee wants it to shape. Faith is the most important thing – Faith in the unchanging Absolute, and Faith in the Meditation. One simply steadfastly keeps on going and, in the course of time, it will become natural and give the needed Truth. All great men through the ages, the seers, the thinkers and the holy, have all done the same, and we also can do it.

M.E.P. (47) Of course the Will of the Param-Atman has to be acknowledged, but is not this precisely balanced against the desire of the individual at all times?

S. There is always a balance between the individual’s desire and the desire of the Absolute, but there may be certain different situations.

If the desire is good, then it takes the individual nearer the Absolute; but if the desire is wrong and bad, then it takes the individual away from the Absolute; so he gets far removed, as much as he has bad desires. In any case there will be balance, because there is not the possibility of the individual desire being something separate from the desire of the Absolute. It is a question of the level: What does one really want? Does one want one's own desire to take one away from the Absolute or nearer to Him? That one will have to decide.

If one has chosen to go nearer to the Absolute then one will have to respond to the good desires. One doesn't have to go far to know what a good desire is, because the individual is made in such a way that, immediately after the rise of a desire, there is something in the Antahkarana which always prompts one, and decrees whether such a desire is right or wrong. Immediately one knows whether a desire is right or wrong for oneself, one doesn't have to ask anyone. But because one is either in a great hurry to over-ride this call from within, or one decidedly wants to go away from the Absolute, one doesn't respond to this prompting.

One just has to realise – to see – that the desire of the Absolute is a desire common to all. For instance, everybody in the world wants knowledge whether he is English, American, German or Indian – that makes no difference, because it is in the nature of the Will of the

Absolute that every individual must get knowledge, so everyone wants it.

Then, again, everybody wants True Knowledge; there isn't anyone, any sect in the world (however much developed or undeveloped), which doesn't want Truth. Their ideas and concepts about Truth may differ, but nobody differs about Truth itself; everybody wants it.

One can take the example of addition – two plus two makes four. The name of four may differ, or the word for two may differ, but the answer of 'two plus two is four' will never differ anywhere in any language, in any nation, in any colour or in any creed.

So there are basic human things which everyone wants. Likewise, there is always basic agreement, and this agreement is the balance, and this balance is the Universal balance. If only people could see that there is a balance, and that something within one responds to this – if one could listen to that which is one's own, and follow one's own true prompting, one would certainly not go wrong. But people try to reason in such a way as to justify their wrong, and they promise to do it right later, so they do wrong now. The ultimate way to have a fair knowledge of right and wrong is either from within, or from the application of Reason which comes from the pure Buddhi.

R. That leads straight to the next question from A.W.:

A.W. (48) Why, oh why is it so difficult to know what one wants? What is the longing in the heart, the sense of lack, the discontent; and upon what should we centre our minds and hearts to bring the answer or resolve the conflict?

S. One can give several examples to answer this question:

There was an incident in Ayodhya, the capital of Rama's kingdom. Rama went to cross the Sarayu river, and a boatman met him but refused to take him. There is a lot of mythology attached to this passage in the Ramayana, and this boatman became very famous because of this passage.

A Holy man wanted to cross that river some time ago. Suddenly he remembered the story of that boatman and Rama. He was so overwhelmed by the memory of that boatman that he said to this boatman: "Today I will give you whatever you want."

The boatman answered very quickly, "Please arrange for today's meal." This holy man laughed and wondered why, when this boatman was offered anything – whatever he wanted – all he asked for was the next meal! Then, in his wonderment, he realized that the poor man had no vision beyond his daily bread – if he had had further vision he would have asked. So, in fact, he can't be blamed – he cannot ask for a thing he doesn't know. And he was given what he wanted.

When a man is a child, he only wants to play with toys; when he grows up, he wants books and other things. Later, he grows tired of books, and enters some other field of activity. Then he gets married, and things keep on changing from age to age and year to year. Unless a man reaches a state where he wants the real Truth – where he wants Truth, Consciousness and Bliss – but he must want it – he cannot have this longing unless he 'grows' on the Ladder, climbs the Ladder, and rises in level.

In Delhi there was a rich man who couldn't have children, so he adopted a boy from the same caste. After the adoption ceremony he took this boy into a motorcar shop in the main shopping centre in Delhi. They showed him all sorts of large and grand cars of every description. But the boy asked for the smallest car there was, though he was advised that only two could sit in it; and neither would his mother be able to get into it, nor could he take many passengers; so he was advised to have a bigger car.

He insisted that he wanted the small one, and said it would suit him. So he was given the small car.

In two years' time, he realized that it was too small and asked for a bigger one, which he was given. After some time, he asked for a still larger car as he needed one suitable for several passengers; and again, he was given it.

In fact, it is a journey of appreciation of what one really wants, and it comes only from the level of Knowledge and of Being which one has. One cannot fabricate the real question; one just has to wait.

All the leader can do is to give people the System through which they could come to the ultimate question a little quicker. But they will have to take each step themselves and come to that final question, the Truth about the Self.

R. There is a medical doctor whom I have known many years (who is a member of the School), who sent me several questions before we came here, and I tried to answer as many as I could. But I did promise to put a few of them so could His Holiness hear them and answer or not as he wishes?

Dr. M.C. (49) Among all the systems of medicine (Western, Chinese, Indian, ancient Egyptian), what is the real medicine?

S. All these systems of medicine which Dr. M.C. has mentioned are outward systems of medicine. The disease takes root in the subtle body, passing into the Essence (Sanskar), into the Causal body. It is there, as a piece of knowledge or a piece of emotion; and this Essence in the Causal body in course of time, fulfils itself as a disease in the human body – in the physical body.

The real medicine is none of these physical medicines; it is the Punya – the virtuous deeds through which the Essence (Sanskar) is purified

as in Meditation. Through the Meditation the Essence could be purified, and the effect which is about to happen could be nullified. That is the real medicine – all the others are there only to carry people for a time, and give them temporary relief.

Dr. M.C. 50 What is the best from the doctor's point of view – that the Atman be released from the bodies, or that the bodies may be made well for the good use of the Atman under the Will of the Creator?

S. The final disease is ignorance – final in the sense that the greatest disease is undoubtedly ignorance. As long as men are ignorant, they will be surrounded by different types of disease – physical, mental, and emotional of every sort.

If one really wants to purify the body and make it a temple suitable for the Atman to do its work, or fulfil the desire of the Absolute, all one needs is to do away with ignorance. One would see that everything would become clear, and the Will of the Absolute could be fulfilled by this body and the Atman within each of us.

In the causal body are the diseases – ignorance as well; and it works through the Sanchita* – Prārabdha, and Kriyamana which have been described previously. There are certain things which one will have to suffer which cannot be denied because we have a body, and when the time is ripe for a disease, it will appear. Man has to undergo that, but though all this can be checked and stopped, it has to be done through the proper application of the 'discipline' which has been given.

* See note next page.

By ‘discipline’ we collect Punya, and with the Punya the Buddhi is purified so that clear Reason appears. With the help of clear Reason one can cut away this ignorance – Avidyā – and that would be the final cure for the individual.

[* Note: The Vedanta distinguishes three kinds of Karma:

- 1) Sanchita Karma: the seeds of the destiny already stored as a result of former acts, but which have not yet begun to germinate.
- 2) Āgāmi Karma (? Kriyamāna): the seeds that would normally collect and be stored if one were to continue in the path of ignorance.
- 3) Prārabdha Karma: the seeds collected and stored in the past, but which have actually begun to grow and bear fruit in the shaping of actual events.

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Self-Realization immediately destroys the latent forces of the first and prevents the second; but the third has to work itself out in this life.]

R. (51) (to interpreter Jaiswal): Whenever His Holiness uses the word which you translate as ‘discipline’, he uses Sadhanā which really means “systematic support”; we have discussed that before?

J. Yes.

Dr. M.C. (52): People have been under ‘discipline’ and have meditated for ten years or more. Why do they still come to the doctor and say, “I am sick.”? What next should be applied?

Is it the science of observation? (Should not they learn the science of observation?)

S. Even your question has its origin in ignorance! The body with which an individual finds himself today is the culmination of all the deeds which he has performed in his previous life. The seeds of all diseases and sufferings are already stored there by the time he takes this body and comes into this world, and he is expected to complete the cycle – he will have to complete the cycle in some way.

The only way out is purification – only by purification can no further Essence (Sanskar) be created. When the man reaches to a state where he does everything naturally – without looking for any result – then the Laws of Karma do not bind him. That's where Liberation starts. But all that has been sown will have to be reaped.

If one questions why people who have meditated for ten years and yet come to receive medicine because they are sick, it is not because the meditation is not taking root. The doctor should understand the greater cycle of Laws, and try to help them there. This is, in any case, governed by the circumstances, the situation, and the outer influences such as the social circumstances in which the man lives. All these bring in certain types of disease for which the individual may not be directly responsible.

There was a Holy man and he had quite a number of good doctors among his disciples. Once he had an infection and developed an abscess which turned out to be very sore and septic. His doctor disciples asked if they could help to relieve him of the pain by operating, which would cure it in time.

To this the holy man replied that there are certain things which he has to suffer. It is not that he has to suffer only through this abscess; if this abscess is cured, there will be

some other thing, because the deeds of his previous life will have to be suffered in some way or other. They could cure him of this disease, but for him his whole body is the product of certain Sanskar. It is the result – it has in it all that his deeds have brought about, so the Holy man felt that the whole body was an abscess as far as he was concerned! Therefore, he would prefer this disease to follow its natural course, and would not take any medicine as he would like all his Sanskar to be finished in this body. He will allow himself to suffer and finish with this body so that he does not have to come back again into any form.

He died after some time, but the Sanskar also died with him. It is presumed that he did not return to this creation any more, but just lived in the Causal realm in unity with the Absolute.

So the principle of this greater cycle should be thoroughly understood before such remarks as Dr. M.C. has made are passed around.

There are two types of disease, or perhaps two types of effect of diseases: one is pain caused by physical illness, and the other is suffering like grief or sorrow which may come through the physical illness. Or this suffering may arise without a disease, because a number of people are seen to be suffering without any obvious disease of their body (or without any obvious lack in their life, for they seem to have everything); yet sorrow does not leave them, and they live in misery.

Physical disease certainly has its pain just because it is physical. The pain is physical, but this pain can be multiplied and increased with the addition of the sorrow which is internal – that is, mental and emotional suffering. So one can increase the effect or decrease it. There are examples of people who, having had physical pain, did not take to sorrow; so the physical pain came and, without much

effect, left them after it was due to go.

Paramahansa's RamaKrishna had cancer of the throat, and he was offered medicine which he refused. He said, "I am not grieving at all. The pain of the disease is there so that I may cry sometimes; but this does not really produce any grief in me – I am as happy as I could be, so I will go through this."

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A similar episode occurred in the life of the great poet, Tūlasidās. He also had some physical trouble, and he used to go for his daily bathe, passing through the Shiva temple in Benares. The trouble went on for two months.

After two months someone told him of a particular herb which he could apply to produce a very quick cure for this trouble. Tūlasidās said he had had his trouble for two months without any solution being offered to him. Now, after this length of time, medicine is being offered but perhaps the disease is about to end? He did not take the medicine, and the disease – having fulfilled its cycle – vanished.

Pain produces comparatively little suffering. If one can professionally help to relieve people from this physical pain, that is good. But the greatest and most extensive pain arises from grief, which is internal. Greater service to humanity will be fulfilled if some remedy is given on this level together with the physical.

J. It seems that His Holiness takes Dr. M.C. to task over his questions.

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(We were then told that, owing to traffic conditions for the special day at the Mela, the Rasleela was postponed until Thursday night.

After our audience on Thursday morning we would lunch in the house of one of His Holiness's disciples.)

8th AudienceThursday, 24th January

The Allans and Jaiswal spent Wednesday morning at the Mela. It was a very special day as it was the fifteenth day of the month's Mela; and also the day for pilgrims from all over India, and thousands of local families, to go for their dip in the Ganges at the confluence. We heard that the souls of all the great saints are supposed to descend on that day too, to take their dip, so it is indeed a very holy day.

There were constant streams (like great waves) of pilgrims. The roads near the Mela area were closed for traffic, and everyone made the journey on foot. The newspaper this morning reports that there were more than a million pilgrims on this day, and the Allans and Jaiswal had spent two-and-a-half hours walking among them.

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M.A. (53) We had a most moving visit to the Mela yesterday morning and found it a wonderful experience. We saw all the people carrying back the pots of holy water after their bathe, and remembered His Holiness's advice to dive deep and let our pot be filled in the ocean of the Self. We were lucky to be there, and we were also able to purchase a very nice English and Hindi copy of the Ramacharitamanasa. One felt one saw a glimpse of the great Spiritual tradition of India.

S. This Ganges (which originates in the Himalayas at Gangotri near Badrinath and Kedarnath) flows through the Himalayan range, comes into this plain, and keeps on flowing until it reaches the end of the journey and merges with the ocean. When one hears the sound produced by Ganga in the Himalayas, there is a particular sound which comes from this river; it is "Hara, Hara", and this 'Hara' is the name of Shiva, Shankara.

The meaning of 'Shankara' is 'auspicious – that which does good

and brings peace'. This Ganga has mythologically been said to have passed over the head of Shankara and to have come into this creation from the flowing locks of his hair. Certainly it brings that sound, and all that is within that sound – “Hara, Hara”. It keeps on flowing irrespective of whether anybody is paying faith or homage, is giving respect, or defiling it; it is totally unaffected by all that, but keeps on eternally moving.

In the same way, this stream of human life should also be taken without caring about respect, honour or dishonour, pleasure or pain; one should simply keep moving until one reaches the great ocean of Bliss which is the Self, or Atman or Absolute.

There are certain occasions when the time is far more auspicious to have a dip in the Ganges, and it is not only in the Prayāga or Allahabad that one sees this gathering. Right from Gangotri, down to the end of this Ganga (which is Ganga-sāgara), every five or seven miles there is always somewhere – a strand or ghāta built (according to the area) – where people can get together and have a dip in the Ganges.

The tradition is that if one has a dip in the Ganges, and until one takes to any new physical activity, anyone who looks at someone who has had a dip, will also share the same Punya as the one who has had the dip. So many people come here to take a dip, and take some of the holy water to their home with the same holy feeling, keeping this water until they come back again.

At one place Shankara has described how Ganga is so pure and

cleansing for all types of troubles of the human body, mind and heart, that one drop of Ganges water is enough to cure them all; and if one had a dip in the Ganges the effect is certainly great. So the Ganga has been hailed as one of the great liberators of this country, and we all pay our respects in some way.

R. (54) As we succeed in diving more deeply to the emotional sphere so, when we come out, do we not need to pay more attention to the outward expression in gestures, and particularly in speech? His Holiness's words are so apt and so gracious; has he some advice for us?

S. At a certain place in the Vedic text, there is a Mantra "Rāsa vai sak", which means that the Absolute is certainly the Rāsa or Bliss. Rāsa is the sweet taste, and this is described as a stream – the great ocean of sweetness, the Bliss. In this is soaked the whole creation, so each manifestation manifests some of this Rāsa, the Bliss. It is into this that one has to take a dive. Having come out, one will have acquired certain energy by which one would be able to bring the attention, precision and efficiency into every sphere of one's participation in life – into one's activity and into one's speech.

The other aspect of this can be seen in the lives of certain incarnations and great men. There are some incarnations which are for special purposes:

For instance: we have the incarnation of the boar, Vārāha – of Vishnu descending as the boar, where his function was simply to get the earth out of the water. Then, having established the earth in its proper position, that aspect of the incarnation of Vishnu was over.

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There was another one in the form of a great turtle.

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Then the Matsya, which is the fish incarnation. This ‘fish’ incarnation was simply to safeguard the different types of seeds of all the species of the universe. It is similar to the story of Noah’s Ark: the fish takes the boat holding all the species, and brings it to a high spot still above the water level, and ties it there. Since then, the whole creation has been able to keep going.

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After that you have the incarnation of Krishna, which was one to depict the most exemplary life of the householder. Right from the beginning of childhood, one can see that – how he met all these demons and punished them; then created the most artistic dance-forms (which we call the Rasleela).

Afterwards he retired to Dwārāka (See p.145). Here (with his Queens) he established his kingdom renowned for its justice.

Next, he conducted the Mahabharata war, and once again established a reign of Dharma, giving to the world the book called the ‘Bhagavad-Gita’.

In one of the chapters of the Bhagavad-Gita (see p.viii) dealing with Sthitaprajna, he describes the ideal man as one who is always completely composed; and how he moves, what he eats, how he speaks, what he does – there are all kinds of descriptions given about him into which one can look.

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Then one can take the life of Rama, which is said to be the ideal, or perhaps the most measured – a Maryada Purushottma, ‘the greatest man, who established the measures for human life.’ One can read the Ramayana and discover from all these episodes how he dealt with his own life and regulated it; then how he regulated this universe, establishing once again the rule of Law.

From all these aspects one can get a glimpse of how to regulate one’s own body, one’s movements and speech; and that the more one partakes of this Rāsa – the Bliss – the more energy one will have to do that in a better way.

R. (55) In trying to dedicate one’s actions to the Param-Atman, one finds there is much unworthiness in our thoughts, our words and our casual postures and actions that one could not possibly dedicate to

the Supreme Self. If one wants to do what one says and say what one thinks, it seems to be a full-time job!

S. In dedicating to the Absolute or to the Self, the most important part is the heart and that is very simple. If that is properly achieved in its simplicity, all the rest should not bother one because nothing else is very important. One can see from so many examples that this is so. Here is one:

There was a great elephant who was proud of his size and strength, but when he went for a bathe he was caught by a crocodile in mid-stream and dragged out of his depth into the deep water. He was helpless and couldn't do anything; but just when he was about to be drowned he happened to catch with his trunk a lotus flower floating on the river, and offering that flower to the Absolute, to his God, he begged Him to save his life. So pure was his offering, that the God came running barefoot from his throne.

One might wonder how one could dislodge the Absolute and cause Him to come barefoot from His throne by just a little flower! But it was not the flower, it was the spirit behind the flower – it was the heart which prayed.

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The same is true of Draupadi: on one occasion she had given a Saddhu a very small piece of cloth. Then occurred the episode when she was being dragged into court to be stripped by one of the Kauravas. That little piece of cloth came to her rescue. It enlarged in length so much that those who wished to undress her grew tired and gave up the attempt. Her honour was saved by just that tiny strip of cloth.

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There is another story of a saint called Rantideva, who took just a little water and offered this small amount of water and, in doing so, achieved Liberation – only a pot of water as against full Realization!

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One can see the same thing in one's ordinary life: a father does everything he can for his child, and while feeding him sitting on his lap, the child might take a little of the food and try to put it into his father's mouth. Now, that tiny piece of food which the child puts into the father's mouth pleases him so much that he goes into ecstasy; then all the troubles brought on by the child are forgotten.

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There is another episode from the life of Lakshman, the younger brother of Rama. When he was a child, he had a bit of a temper and one day he got very cross. He picked up a stick and broke all the chandeliers in the palace, and anything made of glass, and destroyed quite a lot. It was reported to the King, their father, by the Minister that just now they had seen this bad boy, Lakshman, in hot spirit doing all that damage. The King told them to call the priests to celebrate the occasion by opening the doors of the treasury, distributing alms and (he added), 'Let's have music and singing.'

The astonished Minister said, 'I hope I expressed clearly what Lakshman had been doing.' He thought the King was trying to be funny! But the King said: 'Well, it's nice to see that my small son is growing up and has gained enough strength to do all these things. So don't you think this is a cause for rejoicing, and that we should rejoice together?'

S. contd.: So we must understand that the Absolute is not really interested in the details of the bad behaviour of mankind during the growing-up period! The Absolute, or the Atman wants the human heart in its simplicity and directness. When that has been dedicated, everything will follow in the course of time, and one need not worry whether man's actions are small or big, good or bad, efficient or inefficient. That doesn't matter – the real dedication He requires is only of the heart.

A. (56) When one has acquired some bliss (emotional energy), why is it easier to retain it when doing physical work than it is to retain it when doing mental

work? Can His Holiness help us to retain it longer whatever we are doing?

S. One can take this example:

When a master is personally present, then his rule prevails everywhere – all the servants obey his commands and do exactly what is expected of them. But when he is not there himself, then the rein is slackened a little, the servants are apt to relax, and sometimes they don't attend to what is necessary. This is very natural.

The same applies to us: when the Self is known to be present, the physical work is done well, but when He is overlaid by some form of mental activity, then the attention is lost and the work is not properly regulated (controlled). All one need do is to feel the presence of the Self.

If one can call to mind the Self when engaged in mental activity (an accomplishment made habitual by training), this will bring in attention, and one will experience the bliss not only when engaged on physical work, but during mental activity as well.

There are two types of servant: one is the personal servant, of whom there is only one; while the others are general servants, and there may be many of them. The personal servant has established some kind of union with the master, whether he is present or not. All he is concerned with is looking after his master's interests. Whatever happens, he will not evade his work. The master knows this, and trusts him (he doesn't have to be watched).

The general servants are chiefly concerned with their own benefit, and this they derive above all from the master's pleasure. So, when he is present, they are only too eager to work to please him; but when he is absent from their minds, they are more concerned with their own interests, the master's being forgotten.

The same applies to us when the Manas, Buddhi and all the complex internal functions behave like 'general servants'. Similarly, the sense

can give pleasure when something is demanded of them; but when the Master is not there to keep them in order, they will be like the ‘general servants’ and follow their own interests, doing whatever they please for themselves.

If, however, they are trained in such a way that they become personal and devoted servants then, whatever happens, they will all the time work properly for the Self.

R. These few remaining questions from London: the first two are about the heart, and His Holiness has really answered them fully already, but perhaps you could read the first two out.

J.S. (57) When, for a while, ego is quiet and one’s rôle is being naturally fulfilled, Love seems to be the unifying force, and discriminating mind seems to work within it – is this the right relationship?

K.S. (58) How may the heart be opened?

S. In response to K.S.’s question about ‘opening the heart’, when one brings to one’s knowledge the different aspects of the glory of the Absolute, then one feels grateful for the bounty which is being provided for the individual, and immediately the hard heart melts. If one feels, however, how little one is, compared with the glory of the Absolute which is being manifested all around; then that will open the heart. So, being grateful alone is the key to opening the heart.

As for J.S., this is exactly what is meant by the “Unity of thought and word and deed, when you think and say what you feel, and

do what you say”. This, again, is very much connected with the opening of the heart itself. One penetrates into the stream of the Rāsa, the Bliss, through which everything can be properly and nicely regulated, and one ceases to feel any difficulty in one’s activities or one’s relationship with people.

R. (59) Like the words of Lord Krishna – his description of the man who has passed beyond the Gunas: ‘the same in honour or dishonour, the same to friend or foe; leaving all initiative to Me – Krishna – so he is always the same.’

S. That is well-quoted, and Krishna has twice said similar things in the Bhagavad-Gita: – In one verse he says that: ‘One who has no feelings of respect or disrespect, who treats everything equally, he is one of my great disciples.’

Similarly, almost the same is quoted: ‘He who renounces all initiative, is completely detached and indifferent to respect or disrespect, etc., – that man alone is the stable man, the steady man; he has reached the Self, he is the Self, he is Supreme.’

So, if one could achieve such a state where one is beyond the Gunas, the three types of activities (Prakāsha = Light and Knowledge; Pravritti = desire and activity; Niyamana = regulation of measure), if one could rise above these things, that is the state of the real Self.

R. (60) If we may bring this visit to a conclusion by telling His Holiness he now has two groups in Mexico – one English speaking, one

Spanish speaking – and they both wrote to me before we came and sent His Holiness their deepest thanks for the gift of the Meditation and all the Knowledge too. His Holiness' words sound very good in Spanish!

Yesterday I had a letter from Mr. Rabeneck in New York saying that his senior group expressed the wish to thank His Holiness very much for all his help in the last year or two, and especially for the answers to the questions which they sent direct.

S, All the wealth which you are taking from here is their own wealth – it is the wealth of all these people who are simply getting it back. His Holiness is only the medium; it is their Knowledge.

His Holiness offers his blessings and good wishes for the development of all the members of your Society wherever they are.

His Holiness has very much appreciated the signature in Hindi by M.A., and he blesses her in her search for Realization. In turn, he asks you to give to others.

CORRESPONDENCE 19747th February – Magh Mela talk

S. The Magh Mela – which is held here annually at this time of the year on the sands of the Ganga – is such an old custom that none can say when it began. Records say that it has always been there. People come and camp on these sands for thirty days under conditions of strict discipline, shunning worldly pursuits, leading a holy life, and spending all their time reading holy books and listening to holy talks. This institution did not die down with the passage of time but lasted through the ages as it has been fulfilling a real necessity all along.

Since the dawn of civilization, man has been striving to know the relationship between himself and his Creator. But a jungle of conflicting ideas makes his line of thought terribly confused so that he begins to take the right course for the wrong one and the wrong one for the right! He is also unable to find his way even with the help of the multitude of holy books available. The Mela brings him into direct contact with clear-headed and Enlightened people, and thus helps him to find his way again.

Everyone wants light, except the thief and the owl. These two possess a perverse mentality. Yet, even if hundreds of owls combine to decry the sun, their view would not count for anything.

In the midst of worldly involvements and frustrations, such a perverse attitude can develop all too easily. It makes us consider righteousness

as unrighteous and unrighteousness as righteous. When we begin to think “I am this,” “you are that,” we begin falling prey to delusions and ignorance, and to act under blind propulsions instead of hard reasoning. These propulsions are neutralised by Satsanga, (i.e. gatherings around some Enlightened teacher).

Some people consider thought to be a useless exercise of the intellect. But Reason is the only way to determine or forestall gain or loss. It can tell us the difference between entanglement and freedom. Entanglement is to think “this is mine,” and freedom is to think “nothing is mine”.

Good-natured people use the gifts of Nature without spoiling them, so that not only they but also others may benefit from them. Evil-natured people misuse them and render them harmful to themselves and to others.

A good railway passenger would use the fittings of his carriage carefully though he does not consider them to be his own, and would leave them intact for others to use; while a bad one may damage them or even steal them. The same should be our attitude towards worldly objects during our journey through life – to use them carefully without considering them our own, and give them up cheerfully when leaving.

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A foreign visitor raised a question this morning as to the usefulness of the ancient rituals of worship like the “Yagya” in the world of today. Yes, let the rituals continue even today, but in a changed form. Today’s worship is holy action; not cheating anybody

is worship. In no age and in no country was sinning considered holy; this is also the case today and in all countries. In every country observing the law is prescribed and breaking the law is prohibited.

Satsanga – “good company” – is of three kinds, viz., holy persons, holy books, and the Param-Atman. We should prefer holy persons in the first instance and, if they are not available, then holy books. If these, too, are not available then, of course, the Param-Atman is always at hand.

The Saint and poet Kabir has said, “I became sad when I saw the mill-stones turning round and round because, caught between the two, no grain of corn could escape being reduced to powder.” Similarly, caught between the two wheels of earth and heaven, hardly anyone escapes. But it is noteworthy that the grains at the axle remain intact.

In this case the axle is Param-Atman. These who stay near Param-Atman escape.

23rd March: R.'s message to His Holiness before his departure to Badrinath:

“He has made everything so happy for us that we all wish him joy and peace in the high and sacred Ashram at Badrinath.”

R. added: “We have played to a few lovers of Meditation the recording of his voice and his pronunciation of a Mantra in a special way. This had a very special effect. People ask, “Does this way of pronouncing supersede the way we were originally given, or does it come at a special stage in the course of a “deep dive”?” My answer so far is: ‘It seems to come naturally sometimes. Why don’t you try to get internal guidance yourselves – just as I am trying?’

Is this right or are there some further instructions from him?”

25th March: R. to Dixit:

“Following up my letter of yesterday on the subject of the way of pronouncing a mantra recommended last January: when I was initiating somebody last week, I asked them at the end of the second minute whether there was any change in the rhythm of the mantra – ‘Was she pronouncing it more slowly?’ Her reply was, ‘Not more slowly, but more long-drawn out.’ So it is evident that this can happen naturally at a very early stage.

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For myself, I have felt it necessary to return to the thought of the Param-Atman at all moments of remembrance, and at the present

a summary you, Dixit, sent from the 1972 Mela of the teachings of the Gita is being a tremendous help – particularly this (as a summary of everything to do with meditation): “For two half-hours a day, give up worldly duties and obligations and surrender yourself completely to the single care and protection of Param-Atman. He will save you from all evil concerns and therein would lie the end of all your worries”. This works so well with me that I can’t think there is anything more to say!”

19th May (via Dixit) His Holiness replied:

“No answer. The better the pronunciation, the more capable it would be of propelling the mind into the core of the Atman.”

17th April – Dixit, referring to R.’s letters of 23rd March and 5th April,* remarked:

“The benefit you get from the half-hours of meditation and the thought of ‘Brahmasatyām Jaganmithyā ‘ are a great inspiration to the people here also.”

(* not included here)

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26th April: (Dixit)

R. enclosed the following question from Mrs. Sundararaj of Malaysia:

The other day the thought struck me that Self-Realization is “just to Be.” One cannot change anything in the world, but one just watches and goes on ‘being’, every moment. Nothing spectacular happens like sprouting wings, but one just comes to rest in oneSelf. I wonder if this is on the right lines?

19th May: His Holiness replied (Dixit):

Self-Realization is not “just to Be”, and it is not correct to say that nothing spectacular happens when it comes. On the contrary, it is the greatest thing on earth to come to rest in oneSelf. It means riddance from poverty of that Knowledge which exists above sub-human instincts etc., and it means dealing with the affairs of the practical world from the high level of your own real Self.

As such, no achievement in the world could be greater. This is absolutely true and so it follows that:

It is quite normal to get worried when something is lost. Then we are extremely delighted to find it again, although we have not got anything new. Therefore, forgetting the Self is to sink into difficulties, and realizing the Self is to emerge into a state of plenty.

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re 'personal servant':

In reply to R's request for further information:

S. The "reliable personal servant" is your own purified Manas. The purified Manas brings happiness both in the practical and Spiritual fields, while the polluted one is the source of the various troubles. Dedication to the service of the Param-Atman and to other people in thoughts, and actions, at all times and in all circumstances is the way to stabilise your mind in your own great Self.

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Dixit concluded:

His Holiness sends you the following message: "... While replying to your questions, I also send my good wishes and blessings to you all. I shall be back here in the first week of July."

21st June:

Reference His Holiness's reply of 19th May re 'personal servant', R. commented: "At seventy-two, I found my old 'personal servant' constantly taking the views it had forty years ago and refusing to admit anything new!"

2nd July (Dixit):

His Holiness laughed approvingly to hear about your 'personal servant' feeling old at 72 and refusing to believe that anything could

have changed from about forty years ago.... He said that what you are doing in the circumstances is right, and sends you his blessings and good wishes for your success.

25th June: His Holiness replied:

We should handle our faithful servant – the Manas – very gently and encourage it daily to make progress, using methods of love and Sattvic ideas. In spite of being a mere servant, its powers are great, though it is very small as compared to the Atman. If we use force or fear to reform it, we cannot attain the same success that we would achieve by love and holy thoughts. We should all the time keep on reminding this servant of the fact that the Atman is eternal, whereas sensory pleasures are only momentary.

Of course, difficulties do arise in the course of changing the addiction of the Manas from bad to good company; but, ultimately, we can win. We should never allow ourselves to lapse into a state of helplessness, and should always be the master of our own house. In the Gita, chapter 2, verse 3, Krishna urges Arjuna to shed petty weaknesses of the heart and get ready for the impending battle:

Thus, we should always see ourselves in our full stature, which is very great. The old servant can really be trained to give up its old habits, just as a civilised person would not put deteriorated food into his mouth.

You remember the story of the fight between the mongoose and the snake? When the snake bites the mongoose, the latter runs away to smell the herb which neutralises the poison; and then comes back to fight so that, finally, it is always the snake that is killed.

In the present context, sensory pleasures are the ‘poison’ and awakened thinking the ‘medicine’; and it is the Atman that wins the battle.

I send you my good wishes to win your battle; and this, in itself is a medicine!

25th June contd.: Questions from New Zealand.

a) Relation of the Antahkarana (causal level) to Atman.

S. Antahkarana is the cause. A cause is that which leads to something. All the visible and invisible perceptions of ours are from the Antahkarana.

An example: The Antahkarana is like a mirror which, on account of the dust of ignorance covering it, has stopped showing things clearly. Thus the Antahkarana is unable to show up the Atman in its pure form.

Holy intentions, holy thoughts and holy actions remove the dirt of ignorance; then the difference between Atman and Param-Atman etc., vanishes.

b) Is Antahkarana a combination of the subtle elements in man, namely – Ahankar, Chitta, Buddhi and Manas?

S. Antahkarana is the root, the source of these. The Manas, Chitta, etc. arise from it.

c) If the Antahkarana was absolutely clear ... would a man be such as Jesus ...?

Not only would a man be such as Jesus, but he is already so.

In spite of this being the case, the dramatisation of the world is responsible for showing differences in behaviour. Any form that has gone into record once is never repeated again; this is a noteworthy characteristic of it.

Dixit added: Regarding your remarks about the Divine Body, His Holiness observed:

“Divine qualities are still within our reach, if not the Divine Body.”

The 4th July is “Guru-Purnima Day” when many followers of His Holiness visit the Ashram to pay their respects. As last year a greetings cable was sent to him expressing love and gratitude from all those people round the world who welcome his teaching as relayed through us.

On the same day the following question was sent by letter:

R. “It seems that the ‘personal servant’, Manas, can be purified and to some extent controlled, by attending to one’s own small routine actions – how one sits in meditation, how one moves and walks and talks, as well as what actions one permits. Even a little of this practice, combined with keeping Param-Atman (who witnesses everything) in the memory as often as possible, gives most repaying results which make one long for complete union more than anything else.

Would His Holiness say that I can get this union by continuing this way I am going, or is something more required?

In other words (like Prajapiti’s son Kach near the end of the story),

I am at last asking the question: ‘Well, if I cannot renounce this way, what else should I do? Am I also holding on to something very tightly instead of renouncing it?’”

S. replied: Giving up is nothing except to understand the real meaning of “giving up”.

Ordinarily if we give up a certain thing we immediately develop an attachment to something else.

As Kach’s giving up (in the story – see 1974 Record, p.32) was originally a giving up of external things, therefore he did not get peace even when he gave up all of them. But when he understood the real significance of giving up he found that by giving up the very “I-ishness” (Ahankar) of giving up, the giving up of all the things connected with the Ahankar (all the “I-ishness”) followed as a natural consequence. That is true giving up.

Subsequently, Kach’s practical life was that of an ideal man, namely carrying out all the duties and obligations of a practical life without any feeling of “I” in his mind.

S. further commented (i.e., that “giving up” leads to Enlightenment):

At the beginning, when a man in training goes on duty for the first time, he finds difficulties, but with further practice he is able to act naturally and smoothly (appropriately) as his experience ripens. Ultimately he achieves mastery and purity in this art.

By continuing practice of this kind we are able to discover our own powers. This is the advantage to be got by “giving up” in practical life.

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9th July: R. sent further letter, but –

S. felt (Dixit wrote) that this letter conveyed your feelings, and not any specific questions.

You are right. If Buddhi could work in the Light of the Atman, then there is nothing more to desire. So, you got a taste of Liberation; but it should come on naturally and effortlessly.

12th July: The following translation of a prayer by Tulasidas which Raghynath Singh (the “Gun Man”) sang before His Holiness recently, was sent to R. by Dixit:

“My Lord, shall I ever be able to mould my life so that –

Through the Grace of the always merciful Rama, I shall acquire the behaviour of a holy man?

I shall be satisfied with whatever I get and shall not want anything from anybody?

I shall always be engaged in doing good to others, and shall observe mental and bodily discipline in all my thoughts, deeds and words?

When I hear a harsh and unbearable word from my ears, I shall refuse to burn myself in its fire?

I shall give up all worries and anxieties originating in the physical body, and shall take pleasure and pain alike?

Shall I, Tulasidas, ever get an unshakeable faith in devotion to Param-Atman by keeping to this path?”

(From a well-known collection of Hindi poems called “Vinaya Patrika”.)

30th July: (R. to Jaiswal, forwarded from Ashram in Allahabad to his new address in Benares.)

Considerable confusion exists because “Buddhi” is invariably translated as “Intellect” – which in the West always means thinking. But one of my dictionaries points out that:

“The verbal root budh means “to wake up, to rise from sleep, to come to one’s senses or regain consciousness Buddhi (the gerund) means “returning to consciousness”, recovering from a swoon.”

This is just what I have been experiencing again lately at night or in the early morning where I have felt exactly like Lakshman after his dive into Maya, when he came out of the water and approached his brother Rama with tears in his eyes.

I should much appreciate your opinion as to whether some better English equivalent could be found so we can more easily distinguish between the two aspects of ‘mind’ – Buddhi and Manas.

7th August: J’s reply:

When I go to see His Holiness again I will present your beautiful observation. For your new findings about Buddhi are much more illuminating, yet the word intellect doesn’t fall short in any way.

Intellect is derived from the Latin inter and legere, which means “that which can be read between the lines”. The idea of this compound word is to see or read or gather what lies hidden between the relation of two things, events or motives.

Since it has always been told us that it is only the Will of the Absolute which is the Law that can be observed by reading or seeing or gathering what lies behind these related things, so it all comes to waking up, does it not? By reason we are told to wake up to the ratio of the things, events or motives, all measured in the Will of the Absolute or the Law.

12th August: R's reply:

Having had several more episodes of 'waking up' and seeing "that which lies hidden between the relation of . . . things, events or motives", I find that it is only when the heart is melted that the Buddhi can do this quite easily and naturally. The trouble about words like 'discipline' (being a true disciple), or 'intellect', is that everybody teaching others is not awake and uses them in the wrong sense, which has devastating effects on all the people!

In the story of the Parrot it was said: "There was an intellectual who liked to attend the discourses of a Holy man and never bothered to put the instructions into practice." It was not the intellectual, but the parrot who could "read between the lines" and get the true meaning of Liberation, when the Holy man pretended to be dead. But the intellect keeps this 'parrot' in a cage and forgets to put its questions. It's like "Personality and Essence" as described in our Western System.

So one had better use other words – "discernment" (Latin, cerno = I sift), or "insight" for the "Fifth Step of the Ladder (Asaushakti =

loss of attachment) when a man starts looking at things as they are, or seeing what is there.”

I agree that ‘Reason’ can often be understood rightly, and taking always the reasonable line leads only to good and not to bad results. This is what Einstein and other great scientists have been able to do when, by a very simple equation, they could “put the whole thing in a nutshell” – but that demands giving up attachment to personal prejudice, as Einstein said in his memoirs.

26th August: Dixit to R.:

... Mr. Howitt, while sending some questions, writes from New Zealand to say that he is most anxious to visit His Holiness in September. After obtaining His Holiness's views in this connection I am replying to him today and follows:

“So I consulted H.H. last night. He said that he would be available here throughout September and would be away from October to December. But in case of visitors under direct guidance of Dr. Roles, H.H. feels that if they come with prior knowledge of Dr. Roles then this kind of co-ordination would facilitate the work of Dr. Roles as well as of H.H., and would at the same time make the visits more fruitful to the visitors themselves. I therefore hope that you would get into touch with Dr. Roles in the first instance and let us know what he advises.”

... The other thing is that one – Marianna Rothen – of Mr. Rabeneck's New York group has come out to India recently at 24 hours' notice and is at Kanpur, also intending to visit Allahabad within a week. She writes to me from Kanpur saying that there was no time to write to me in advance, but Mr. Rabeneck very much wanted her to contact me. The letter also says:

“Also, if it is permitted, may I visit the Ashram of His Holiness?”

I told H.H. about this and he has no objection. More again. I am enclosing a copy of the photograph of H.H. we took during the Guru-Purnim function.

August – Account of how Marianna Rothen’s trip to India came about, and her visit with His Holiness.

Miss Rothen: My going to India came about very strangely. I had been planning to go to Greece after the summer session of our school was over, but because of the trouble there, I put off making a decision about it. August 16th was the last day of work, and that evening I received a phone call from a teacher in my program with whom I had worked on occasion. He is Indian, and I had once casually mentioned to him that someday I would like to visit India. He said that he had just decided to go home to take care of some family matters and to visit relatives in various cities in India, and would I like to come along. He would be leaving on a 10:00 flight the next evening. I was astounded. But I did ask if Allahabad would be one of the places he would be going to. He said yes, and invited me over to discuss the matter further. I hesitated, but then thought I would go over and find out more. After talking I found that his motives for inviting me were entirely good and that it just might be possible to make all the arrangements necessary for departure the next evening. But I left making the decision until the next morning when I called Mr. Rabeneck. He asked if I thought my acquaintance meant well, and when I answered yes, he quite unexpectedly said, “Well, why shouldn’t you go?, .. yes, go!. And if you go you must try to meet His Holiness.” He added that he would write to Mr. Dixit, our interpreter, and gave me his address.

The next few hours were spent in a flurry of activity. Douglas Halleck inadvertently happened upon the scene and helped out a great deal in getting ready. And I was off by 6:30 that evening.

We landed in New Delhi, visited Kampur and Lucknow, and arrived in Allahabad on the morning of the 28th. I went over to see Mr. Dixit as soon as I could, and he told me that His Holiness was at the Ashram and telephoned to see if it was all right to go over at once. It was, so we took a rickshaw to the Ashram, buying flowers and fruit on the way. We went into the Ashram and up to His Holiness’ room. He was seated cross-legged upon the bed, while a secretary was sitting on the floor taking dictation. She was dismissed.

I made my offering of the fruit and flowers to His Holiness, he casting keen glances at me the while. Mr. Dixit made an obeisance to him, which I attempted to imitate, and we seated ourselves on the floor in front of him. His Holiness is the most beautiful person I've ever seen. As Dr. Roles described in one of the papers his gestures and movements are different from the ordinary in a subtle way – they are perfect yet not 'controlled'. He began by asking how it was that I had come to India, and I told him. He asked how I knew he would be in Allahabad, and I said I hadn't known. Then he asked what I liked best in India, and I replied "You!" He laughed and then asked what I liked next best. I answered that it was the people I had met – Ravi's relatives – who had all been so kind to me. He said that it was important to develop love for what is best and highest in the world. Then he asked what my aim was. I said, "To live a good life". He said that that would take a lifetime. I indicated that that was all right with me. I think it was at that time that he said Atman is silence.

His Holiness then asked if I had any questions, and I asked about two things which had been very much on my mind since I have been working with new people. The first was what is the most essential thing to give to new people. His Holiness said he had discussed this with Dr. Roles, and that, in any case, the people who come to us are not 'new' – their coming depended on their past.

I then asked how to help those who have trouble meditating. He said the trouble was probably in their method of application. Just as there are different remedies for people who are sick, there are different remedies for those who have trouble in their approach to meditation. They should have support from people who are very experienced. I persisted by saying that some people who have been with us for several years still can't seem to bring themselves to meditate. He asked if I had heard of the visual method of approach. I said no. He explained that people who have difficulty with the mantra could draw out a beautiful representation of the sound "RAM", which they then could concentrate upon until it be

seen with the inner vision. That eventually it would become full of light internally.

He asked if I had any more questions, and I said no, feeling that I shouldn't occupy too much of his time. But I did have two questions from Mr. Rabeneck, which I now put. The first was, "Can Ahankar through constant "giving up" be brought to become a devoted servant of the Self without any residue of ignorance?" His Holiness said he would answer this at length through Mr. Dixit.

The second question referred to the story of the Turtle and the Scorpion ... what did the scorpion represent? His Holiness said he didn't remember the story. I told him that I did and asked if he would like me to tell it. He said yes and I did. He still didn't remember it, and asked what it had been told in connection with – I didn't remember that. Then he said that the only story he remembered about a scorpion was one in connection with a holy man. One day a holy man who was bathing in a river saw a scorpion who was drowning. He wanted to rescue it and picked it up intending to throw it onto the shore, but the scorpion stung him, and he had to let it drop back into the water. He tried again and was stung again. This happened several times, until at last the holy man succeeded in casting the scorpion to safety. His Holiness went on to say that the moral of the story is that the nature of a good man is always to do good, even in return for evil.

He asked if there were anything else. (Really I wished I could have asked to just be allowed to sit there all day and look at him).

I then expressed the gratitude of the whole group for his guidance and asked his blessing for everyone – which he gave and wished us all quick progress toward Self-Realization.

I was to have gone that evening to the talk he usually gives, but I became very ill as soon as I reached home and was sick all the next day as well. We had to leave Allahabad on Friday morning, so I never saw His Holiness again.

20th September 1974 Mr and Mrs Howitt's First Visit to the Ashram.

With the temperature already in the hundreds, we visited the markets to buy some fruit for His Holiness. We also had to wait while a garland was threaded from tiny white flowers, and we did not reach the Ashram until 10 past 10.

The outside of the Ashram is not very imposing; it is covered in bars, to keep unwanted people out. The entrance to the Ashram is an archway where a dark chap, bare from the waist up, stood guard. We were admitted because he knew Mr. Dixit.

As you go through the archway gate you come straight into a covered way. On each side was a raised platform with a door at the back. You could see into these rooms and they were like the small cells that are usually associated with monks. I became familiar with the occupant of the "cell" on the left, a very happy, friendly man of about 60. He gave one the impression that he had discovered that happiness was the secret of life. He was surrounded by incense, portraits of deities and of course Guru-Deva.

This covered way extended about 30 feet to open into a large open garden area surrounded entirely by the Ashram itself. Straight ahead is another slightly raised walkway at the end of which was a small room. In this room were two life-size stone statues. One was of Guru Deva and the other of the original Shankara.

Just at the end of the covered way, on the same side as our blissful friend, was a flight of stairs leading to the first floor. Along a veranda and you arrive at the Audience room.

We were signalled to enter the room. There was His Holiness sitting cross-legged on his throne. What an impressive-looking man, far more so than his photographs. He signalled for us to wait at the back of the room. It only took a second to understand what the delay was, for from the right-hand window one of his disciples was producing two chairs – how thoughtful.

Before going into meditation, His Holiness spoke to Mr. Dixit at some length, then started chanting. When the meditation finished, Mr. Dixit explained what he had said:

H.H. “There are three points I would like to make: First of all, I know about your background, that you belonged to the group of Mr. MacLaren and then came over to the group of Dr. Roles. Mr. MacLaren and Dr. Roles are receiving equal guidance from me and I am equally pleased to see both of them. They are equally competent to guide the people of their groups.

Once you start a change, the seed of change is sown into the mind, and then there in a habit of making and breaking connections; this stands in the way of your real progress.

Secondly, I am sure of this, that whatever group you join you must stick to it, for as far I am concerned I am giving equal guidance to both of them.

Thirdly, about Dr. Roles, he has been in contact with me for many years and during this period I have given him enough material to benefit anybody and everybody who wants to take to meditation, and answers to all questions are available in the material given.”

At this stage it was still not at all certain that His Holiness would answer questions. He had indicated in his cable to us, sent by Mr. Dixit, that, though we were welcome to visit him by the end of September, his programme was such that he would only be able to answer our questions by letter. So Mr. Dixit suggested by way of approach, that we ask if we could come again to meditate with him.

Mr. Dixit: May I ask His Holiness whether you could come here to meditate with him?

N.G.H.: We would be very pleased to visit whenever we may, but that is up to His Holiness.

Afterwards Mr. Dixit confided that at this point he was certain there would be no questions, so in his kindly, considerate way, he said:

Mr. Dixit: There are evening meetings also held here every day. Just a few people come. There is no invitation but there is some chanting of hymns and at the end His Holiness gives a brief talk which is in Hindi of course, so you won't be able to follow it.

It seemed obvious at this point that His Holiness was prepared to stay, so Mr. Dixit said: "Shall I ask His Holiness about the guidance of your group in New Zealand?" and I said, "Of course."

Q. Mr. Dixit then asked His Holiness something on the guiding of the group in New Zealand.

H.H. I have already given some guidance on this point. It was probably when the question was raised as to how to deal with a person who had joined your group. This was some general guidance. If there is any particular point on which you wish further guidance I will try to help your difficulties.

At this point I spoke to Mr. Dixit about how I was with Mr. MacLaren for about 15 years and how when I moved away, Dr. Roles clearly understood my reason for doing so. I said I was very happy to work under Dr. Roles' guidance. I said that I had certainly not journeyed to Allahabad to cease being under Dr. Roles and to come under His Holiness. I didn't feel I was wandering around looking for a guru at all. At this point Mr. Dixit spoke to His Holiness again.

H.H. What I want to impress on you is this; once you give up one thing and adopt another the mind has a tendency to give up the other thing also. For example, you have given up the group of Mr. MacLaren to come to the group of Dr. Roles. What happened in the case of the group of Mr. MacLaren because it has happened once, it can happen again, this time with Dr. Roles. The same kind of thing happens again – this is because the tendency of the mind to do such a thing is open, and if it does happen again and again, you lose your way.

What I know about both groups in this: Mr. MacLaren is very strict on procedures and rules while Dr. Roles is not so strict on procedures and rules, he simplifies things. His method is mainly based on love.

I have been guiding and giving clarification to both of them showing how love and very strict following of the rules are both equally good and essential. If procedures and rules are followed without love, then the whole thing becomes dry. If it is followed with love then in that case, it acquires sweetness. I have been emphasising to both the groups that there should be strictness about rules but that there should also be love.

This change has not only happened with you, it is happening here in the Ashram in the case of so many people. The really difficult thing with this sort of happening is that one is likely to lose one's way. This in the whole of the trouble.

At this point I impressed on Mr. Dixit that I did not change from Mr. Maclaren due to the strictness of the rules. I re-stated how I was prepared to follow the guidance of Dr. Roles.

H.H. The noise of this clash should not reach my ears, that is, the noise of the clash between the two groups.

There are two things:

One is what the Manas (mind) wants to do and the other is what your Buddhi (intellect) dictates. If you follow the dictates of the mind and do not listen to what your reason says, that is not good. At every step you have the conflict where your mind wants one thing while your intellect tells you another thing, so one should learn to suppress the voice of the mind which is not guided by intellect.

N.G.H. Is there some way that one can begin to recognize for sure the voice of the intellect (Buddhi) as distinct from mind (Manas)?

H.H. The dictates of mind are based on personal likes and dislikes; you can always know them. I give a simple example:

There is a particular disease of the digestive system; the stomach gets upset and the peculiarity of the disease is that you want to eat sweet things and sweet things increase your illness. Your mind tells you you have a craving for them while your intellect will tell you to avoid them. That is how you have to judge whether it is in your mind, guided by personal likes and dislikes, or whether it is your intellect speaking.

At this point His Holiness interrupted Mr. Dixit. He had heard him using the word 'mind' and he wished to elaborate on the word used.

H.H. What is commonly called 'mind' is all contained in Antahkaran (Inner Organ) which on the causal level is all one, but on the subtle level is divided into four different functions: Manas is that part of mind which thinks of this thing, that thing, – I will do this, I will do that. That is Manas. Buddhi is something like reason (wisdom) which tells us what is right and wrong, and Chitta is that which thinks, 'Yes, I will do this, I will do that.' Ahankar is that which is something like Ego – 'This is my mind, this in my intellect' – my this, to everything, that is Ahankar.

So mind is divided into four parts according to different functions that form the basis of knowledge. When we deal with mind we deal with it in accordance with four classifications of its functions.

N.G.H. Would it be possible for my wife to ask a question on meditation?

H.H. That will be all right.

B.R.H. I find great difficulty in meditation. There is constriction in the mind, and tension. The efforts I make to attend to the mantra do not meet with success – giving only further tension. Could His Holiness give some suggestion as to the approach to meditation – or something that could be practised during the day that would help the meditation?

H.H. What is the tension?

B.R.H. It appears to be discomfort and tight pain in the head. It is not, evidently, related to a thought or particular thought pattern that I am aware of; it is there most of the time; I have had medical advice and there seems to be nothing physical.

H.H. How do you meditate? Sitting on a chair just as you are sitting? (Yes).

The first thing is this – that you sit with back perfectly straight, and second thing is that during meditation of course you recite the mantra. While reciting the mantra there should be absolutely no stressing any part of the mind – it should be perfectly smooth – and the feeling should be like that when you go to meet someone whom you love dearly. For such a meeting, when you are going to meet someone whom you love, there can be no question of tension – there is no tension at all. Simply – during meditation – what you do – you are going to meet your Atman which is the object of your greatest love. When it is seen to be your greatest love there is absolutely no question of tension – so this way you will descend into the depth of Atman – you reach the region where everything is perfectly quiet and perfectly still. All tensions and things like that are left very far behind, for during meditation when you recite the mantra, the effort should be to go deep into your own Atman – for Atman is the subject which everybody loves dearly and going to meet someone whom you love – there is no question of that, of tension. Going into meditation with the same spirit as you are going to meet your dearest.

21st September, 1974 Mr and Mrs Howitt's second visit to the Ashram.

During the first audience His Holiness invited me to ask any particular question concerning difficulties arising with the group here in Wellington.

On the evening before I left for India, I had a number of people to Ponsonby Road. I asked them if there were any particular questions they wished me to ask the Shankaracharya. Nearly all their problems seemed to be centred around the idea that here, in Wellington, conditions were such that it brought up the conflict of the draw to environment as opposed to the desire to meditate etc. Bearing this in mind, I worded the following question to His Holiness:

N.G.H. New Zealand is a relatively self-sufficient country economically. Its wealth is based mainly on agricultural products. It is a country the size of England but with only 3 million inhabitants. We know no real poverty or slums.

This easy life makes it easy to immerse the mind in the pleasures of the senses. Those who have been meditating for some time find a strengthening of a desire for the True Self, but it also produces a powerful conflict between desire for the spiritual world and the enjoyment of sense objects. There is this strong polarity.

What can strengthen the spiritual pole?

H.H. Because the people in New Zealand are well off, they are therefore more entangled in worldly affairs than others – this line of reasoning is not correct. Even the man who is in trouble and difficulties can become involved (be even more entangled) in sensual pleasures and things like that. This is all due to Sanskar, the tendencies of the mind which are acquired from past actions in this and past lives. It is due to this, but not due to affluent living.

People of all sorts come here to the Ashram, some are exceedingly rich. The Rajahs, the princely orders here in India, have been abolished by the Government, but they are very rich. They come as well as the absolutely poor people. So involvement in sensual pleasures is found in both classes of people, the rich as well as the poor.

Apart from Sanskar, these things are also acquired from the environment, the society in which one moves – company. So apart from Sanskar, the other thing is the sort of company in which people live, for this is also influencing one's line of thinking.

N.G.H. This is what we are trying to do in New Zealand – produce a group of people to be good company in the spiritual field.

H.H. I support your line of thinking. Good company is like medicine for a disease, just as when someone is ill, a remedy is prescribed for him. Satsang, this is a remedy for social ills. The medicine is always prescribed in a particular dose in order to do maximum good.

Similarly, the sensual pleasures are not to be given up altogether, for they have been created for a definite purpose, and so they should be utilised in proper doses. Total giving up is not prescribed. We should make use of them in proper doses. To a certain extent, we are also able to judge in what dosage we take that which we get in good company.

We need to acquire a certain degree of control, and this control is acquired through observance of rules. When rules are observed that gives you the power to keep yourself under control.

N.G.H. Dr. Roles guides his people and sends us material, is this where we would get these rules from? Would these rules be our relation with Dr. Roles?

H.H. This is right. What you receive from Dr. Roles is especially for acquiring the power of making self-control effective and the establishing of rules. These rules have been laid down after a lot of trial and it has been found useful, so that anybody who follows them acquires the power to keep himself under control.

N.G.H. Does one get these rules from Dr. Roles? Can I check if this is why His Holiness said ‘that is right’?

Dixit. Yes, that is right. So this question, I think, has been answered – ‘What can strengthen the spiritual pole’?

N.G.H. After returning from His Holiness yesterday, a number of times I became aware of different likes, dislikes, doubts and uncertainties in the mind. The words of His Holiness came in and there was that that knew the whole situation even to the memory that man is not anything he sees, feels or thinks. He is eternal; this knowledge brought ease to the mind, and detachment. The whole situation was accepted as it existed at that moment. Is this what His Holiness was referring to yesterday?

H.H. Yes, this is right, this is what I meant. But remember that though the man possesses the Manas, the Buddhi, the Chitta, what possesses these things is called Manu. This is what I was referring to yesterday.

During the first audience, His Holiness described the four different functions of mind. When reading it through, I discovered that the descriptions for Manas and Chitta sounded almost identical so I put the following question:

N.G.H. His Holiness said yesterday that ‘Manas is the part of the mind which thinks of this thing, that thing – I will do this, I will do that’. Of Chitta he said, ‘It is that which thinks – Yes, I will do this, I will do that’. The descriptions of the two parts sound very similar; could His Holiness clarify these a little more?

H.H. I will explain the subject clearly.

Now the one individual performs different duties – for example, he is a judge; when he goes and sits in his court he functions like a judge, decides cases. When he comes home he is no longer a judge. To his wife he is a husband, he behaves like a husband; to his children he is a father and behaves like a father.

Similarly, the Antahkaran performs four functions and this Antahkaran is the same but on different occasions performs different functions. So when we perform the function, 'I want this, I want that', it is Manas; when it performs the function 'this is wrong, this is right' it becomes Buddhi; so according to the function, the same thing is performing, only it has got a different name.

N.G.H. And the function of Chit?

H.H. That which thinks of past, present and future.

N.G.H. Is it then like a memory bank of previous actions?

H.H. Yes, it holds the memory.

N.G.H. So, in a way it can have a lot to do with keeping the direction of a man's life, particularly if he went with externals without discrimination. It is Chit that keeps memory and produces his actions?

H.H. Action takes place through our organs of action and Manas. Buddhi decides what to do and what not to do. Manas supports the dictates of Buddhi. It is Manas that commands the organs of action to do a certain thing. Manas keeps control of everything, and out of that the Buddhi decides what to do and not to do. Buddhi commands and the final order to perform a certain action comes from the Manas. When this order comes, the organs of action then complete it. The direct order to the organs of action comes from Manas, it doesn't come from the Buddhi.

Buddhi decides and then Manas supports that decision, and when a decision is supported, then it passes on to the organs of action. Only then is it actually performed. There is no direct connection between Buddhi and the organs of action. Buddhi takes orders from Atman and Manas takes orders from Buddhi, while the organs of action take orders from Manas.

N.G.H. We were once told that when an object is seen, the image is taken back and the man only goes into action when the ego links with that image. That the ego must connect with any desire for

the man to go into action. Would the desires that move a man arise, but not move him physically until the ego comes in?

H.H. Now the Ahankar (Ego) is of two kinds: pure and impure. The pure Ahankar is related to Atman and impure is related to worldly objects, this is my wife, my life, my house, this is my wealth, and so on. This ego does nothing. It doesn't command actions.

The pure Ahankar is that which only considers itself to be the Atman and that is all. It is bad Ahankar that makes us think that this is my body, my mind, my Chitta, my Manas, and things like that. It is the root of all our entanglement in worldly affairs. It is this thing which eventually gets liberated.

The pure Ahankar is already liberated. It is this impure Ahankar we are trying to liberate. So good society, reading holy scriptures, coming into contact with Mahatmas, helps, for it is this Ahankar which is subject to bondage and freedom.

N.G.H. (to Mr. Dixit) Please thank His Holiness and tell him it has clarified this subject very much for me.

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His Holiness then turned to Mrs. Howitt and spoke to her about her meditation.

B.R.H. I have found, when sitting down to meditate, it takes a long time for the mind to begin to give up its activity. On first sitting down, if I attempt to hold in my mind the idea given by His Holiness, of going to meet the loved one, and repeat the mantra at the same time, then the energies appear to conflict with the mantra. However, when I do not try to repeat the mantra immediately but only hold in mind the idea of going to meet the loved one – the object of one's greatest love, then the energies running in the mind lessen and it is easier to repeat the mantra. I find the words of His Holiness bring comfort also when remembered at other times, and lessen the habitual concern in the mind. This sense of comfort to the mind strengthens my faith, and I don't feel the need to strive so painfully.

H.H. You are quite right and you continue like that. Next time you come here, just tell what improvement you feel by adopting this method. By keeping this within the mind while reciting the mantra as though you are going to meet something that you love most dearly. If you do your meditation with that spirit it is going to benefit you continually. Next time when you come here on Tuesday, His Holiness would like to know what progress you have made by following this method.

You talk of darkness, but there can be no darkness without light. Do not be afraid of the darkness, there is light beyond it; now, without the light, for example if there is complete darkness then even a small light – that will shine out. But when the place is completely illuminated the small light appears very insignificant, almost negligible. So just as is happening in your case – inside is full of darkness – it does create fear, but do not be afraid of that, there is light shining beyond it. Have full faith in it – that there is light and that will remove your fear completely.

There was a man standing at his door on a completely dark night. He wanted to go to a place ten miles away – the road full of darkness. He had a small light in his hand and with this tiny light in his hand, he was thinking, – ‘I have to go ten miles and this lamp throws light only for a few yards; with this how can I cover a distance of ten miles? So he stood thinking about this. Then a man who knew better, passed that way, and asked, ‘What are you thinking about?’ He expressed his difficulty. He said, ‘When you go ahead, this light is going to move with you and as you go ahead, all the darkness will be left behind and you will greet your dearest.’

Similarly, the little light you possess, that is fully capable of taking you to reach your ultimate goal. Don’t be afraid that your own power is so little, so negligible; it is little, no doubt, it is not illuminating the whole of your path, but whenever you move forward it is going to illuminate that distance which you are covering at the moment and as you go ahead it will provide light further ahead, so no need to lose heart.

When we sit down for meditation, we experience some sort of darkness. We know that it is darkness. What is darkness? It is absence of light – acknowledging the existence of darkness is also acknowledging the existence of light.

N.G.H. I was wondering if it would be possible to finish by asking that first question about the work of Dr. Roles and the work of His Holiness?

(I am not sure what question Mr. Dixit asked His Holiness at this point for I was referring to a question I had prepared beforehand and written down. Mr. Dixit did not remember the written question so I suppose he simply said my above question to His Holiness. Anyway, here is His Holiness's answer).

H.H. Did Dr. Roles give any special direction about the methodology of meditation?

N.G.H. Dr. Roles has given me help with what happens to the mantra and the stages of meditation. To sit down for half-an-hour twice a day with back straight; to start the mantra in the mind as a thought. Then the mantra goes down, becoming finer and slower. There comes a point where the heart becomes involved. At this stage the mantra takes over and works by itself and is full of strength, power and sweetness. If one follows one is drawn into a state that is very still. One is no longer caught up with external movements, having lost all desires, and all that happens is that one sits, resting in the mantra. That is what I understand to be meant by meditation.

H.H. I will give you some very important hints about meditation. There are a few fundamental principles which need to be observed in order to derive benefit.

Posture is most important; I was invited to the Ashram of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, to have a look at a number of people who had come from various countries and were training there. I saw that they were lying there in different postures. All were in wrong postures one way or another. There was not a single person who

was sitting correctly.

The important thing is that you sit in your chair with the spine absolutely correct; you should not sit on an easy chair in a reclining position. If you keep the body in any position other than with the spine straight for a length of time it may create disease and make the person lose faith in this technique of meditation. Losing faith, he will be disillusioned and go away. These are the two very serious points: the risk of disease and of losing faith.

The method is corrected like this: you should sit for half-an-hour in the morning but be sure it is in the correct posture on a chair, one that will keep your spine vertical. Then begin to pronounce the mantra with the lips shut as lightly as you can. Sound the mantra as loudly as you can inside with maximum effort. Then decreasing the effort gradually, till the mantra finally merges into the heart. This process should not take you more than five minutes. Then complete the rest of the meditation, but if the mind gets disturbed again, repeat the above process once more.

Repeat the mantra and decrease the effort gradually. This in the end becomes almost effortless. The pronouncing of the mantra becomes almost completely effortless. It should settle down into a condition where no effort is being made.

N.G.H. I will certainly practise the method of meditation His Holiness has given and let him know what happens next time we see him. (to Dixit) Please thank His Holiness for all the time he has kindly given us.

H.H. I sincerely desire the benefit of everybody in your group and all who come into contact with me. It is the Will of Param-Atman that I have been able to give you time and tell you the things I have. This in the purpose of the whole object in giving directions to people who come to me from England and America. These things are meant for everyone's good and benefit.

24th September, 1974. Mr. and Mrs. Howitt's third visit to the Ashram.

I made the mistake of going through the day's proposed questions to His Holiness at Barnetts Hotel before we left for the Ashram. Mr. Dixit is so keen and meticulous that in working to get the best comprehension of our questions we lost track of the time. Suddenly it was five minutes to ten, the audience was due at ten, and we had still to purchase offerings. We got the offerings on the way, but we were already well on the way to the Ashram when we discovered the tape recorder was missing. Returning for this made us nearly half-an-hour late.

N.G.H. Would you please thank His Holiness for this opportunity of being with him. I have practised the method he has given me yesterday, so firstly I would like to explain what happened in meditation since following this guidance.

In starting the mantra this way it has more power, is more vibrant. It seems to vibrate all over the body, especially up and down the spine. By decreasing the effort slowly the mind movements come to rest. Other thoughts intruded very little. It was like shutting the door to them. There seemed more light in the mind. I seemed very alert, alive and awake inside; the body was passive and still, like in sleep. The mantra was fine and drawn out, active in relation to passive mind and body. Several times attention wandered but the mere memory of the mantra brought joy and happiness. There was no effort other than to follow. Tensions fell away. After meditation the heart was lighter and there was an inner happiness.

H.H. Before practising meditation, one should know what meditation is. You expressed some inertness, some sleepiness – that is not meditation. Meditation is a deep state of rest.

You get rest during sleep also, but in that rest Tamas predominates. Meditation is the rest of Sattva. Full rest is that when vibrations stop; that is real meditation.

Usually during meditation, something external comes into

your world. For example – if you have a full night’s sleep, say six hours, you get refreshed. Nothing from outside has come into your body; but if you get four hours, or even two hours, instead of a full night’s sleep, then to some extent you feel refreshed, but not fully.

This rest which you get in meditation is Sattvic due to release of Sattva. So even a half-hour’s meditation makes you entirely fresh. I must remind you that during meditation no energy from outside comes into our body, the energy is already in the body.

How then do we get rest? Because these energies, vibrations and agitations subside and their subsidence makes you feel fresh.

The object of meditation is to give you energy for all your actions – worldly and non-worldly; for these you need energy; so, as you meditate, that energy goes on accumulating. We also expend energy during our daily work.

Here is an example. If you have a bank account, then you get a certain interest on it. The energy you get from meditation is that remaining in the body, but out of this energy there is also interest, like with a bank account. You use that interest for carrying out your worldly jobs.

N.G.H. What is the main source of loss of energy during the day?

H.H. (laughing) In one word – excesses. (– at this point His Holiness reflected for a little and then continued).

Overwork, over-eating, and over-sleeping. Over-activities like these three things. For gathering energies there are ways and ways. Yoga, True Knowledge, meditation, and even medicine. But out of all these the one which is most easy is important to us.

There are two things which should be within our thoughts – to practise meditation, and secondly we should have time to devote to these two. But from these two considerations the method of meditation is easiest – within our reach not requiring any effort and does not require extra time.

(At this point His Holiness directed His words to Mrs. Howitt. He spoke of her meditation as he had dealt with it on the previous visit.)

H.H. I would like to elaborate on my reply to your question. I wish to explain further that method of imagining you are going to meet the object of your greatest love. This idea is not meditation itself, but it has the aim to drive out other thoughts. For example; you are sitting here and a number of people are seeking an interview with you. Then someone who is most important comes to you, and you ask the others to wait while you attend to that important person. Similarly, this idea of going to meet your most beloved person is only to keep out the other ideas. The real thing is the mantra. When you have succeeded in driving out other ideas from the mind, then the stage comes when the mantra takes you in and real meditation begins. If, when you have gone into meditation you are again disturbed, then during the second disturbance the idea is not necessary for the mantra will do it.

(Then His Holiness turned again to N.G.H.)

H.H. Start the mantra first of all with the lips shut with great force and go on decreasing the force. Ultimately the mantra also goes away; in a state of bliss you forget that this is mantra, that you are meditating. All these ideas have vanished. The meditator, the meditation and the object of meditation merge into one another and we no longer remain conscious of their separate existence.

B.R.H. What is it that repeats the mantra?

H.H. Mantra means the same as Atman, your own Atman; and Atman is the root of it. So when you are totally absorbed in meditation, then in that case it stands to reason that mantra and Atman become one.

Here is an example: take a pot of earth, it is made of earth. When the pot is destroyed it comes to an end, it mingles with earth. Like this with the mantra; as long as we pronounce it, it is a sound but when it merges into Atman it is Atman – the same thing taking a

different form. Under one set of circumstances, earth became a pot; similarly under one set of circumstances mantra is a mantra and in different circumstances mantra becomes Atman.

I will explain this concept further – (pointing to a bowl of fruit in front of him).

This is an apple; – what is it? Apple is merely a word. You try to describe it. It is fruit. Fruit! All right – but what is the apple? – It is sweet! All right – but the question is not answered. What is it then? It is the fruit, the tree, everything, but still the question is not answered. Apple is apple.

Similarly, with this mantra. The mantra is a sound. Now when it pervades the heart, it becomes one with the Atman. When it is pronounced externally, it does other things, worldly things.

For example, with the mantra RAM, it has got energy, fire, love and things like that.

Pronounced externally it produces these things. But taken inside the heart it gives peace, bliss, rest – things like that.

N.G.H. to Mr. Dixit: What word does His Holiness use for heart?

Mr. Dixit: Actually, he did not use the word heart, he used a difficult concept – Antarmukti. It means something like a cutting off of our connections from the external world and centring our thoughts completely inside.

N.G.H. How would the mind work in meditation in a man whose Buddhi had been purified?

H.H. The four divisions of the mind do holy actions when Buddhi is still (pure) and according to your wishes. If you want them to do particular things, a particular action, they will do it. If you don't want them to do anything, they will take rest. (laughing)

They are your good servants when Buddhi is pure, they obey you and carry out your orders properly; but when Buddhi is not pure then they become like a bad servant. They even disturb you during meditation.

26th September, 1974. Mr. and Mrs. Howitt's fourth visit to the Ashram.

N.G.H. What is the state of the mantra just before it enters the heart?

H.H. The more subtle the mantra grows the more it spreads into the body. As you go on pronouncing the mantra more and more slowly it moves towards its root, the Atman. When the mantra dissolves into the Atman, the Atman and the mantra no longer retain their separate entities.

When the heat of the sun falls on the ocean, water vapour rises. It comes down again to earth in the shape of rain. By means of rivers it flows back again into the ocean.

Similarly, through desire (Sankalpa) or intention, start reciting the mantra. This is like the vapourisation of water and vapours rising into the atmosphere. The subsequent falling of water in shape of rain and its going back to the ocean through rivers is like merging of the mantra into the Atman.

N.G.H. Now that it has been clearly understood and established that Dr. Roles is my teacher or guru, could His Holiness explain the best and most valuable relationship between Dr. Roles and myself, that is, the rôle between a teacher and disciple or follower.

H.H. Accepting his word without argument; there should be no questioning in the heart about what he says. Whatever he says you take as the absolute truth, this would be the feeling.

N.G.H. What part does His Holiness, the Realized Man, play in this relationship between Dr. Roles and myself?

H.H. I am not the guru of Dr. Roles, only a helper. Dr. Roles' guru was a Russian, Ouspensky; when he left the earthly body he told Dr. Roles that he would eventually find an Indian guru. Then Dr. Roles made a search for such a person. Ultimately he came into contact with myself. One visit, along with a number of other people, he was given a lot of questions and as a result of those questions

and answers I failed him. I put him in the third class as a safeguard against becoming over-conscious of his own wisdom. He was developing a sort of pride for his own wisdom, an ‘I know everything’ and this is the way to forgetfulness. But after his contact with me had continued and strengthened, he was given a first-class pass. Because he who says that he knows, does not really know anything, and also he who says that he knows nothing is equally ignorant. The criterion of knowing really is that 1) one should not be proud of one’s knowledge and, 2) one should not have any doubt in one’s mind.

I quote the example of Gargi and Yadnya-valki:

Both of them are very learned people. Gargi asked Yadnya-valki, ‘Are you the most learned man in the world?’ Yadnya-valki replied, ‘No, I’m not, but I bow to those people who are learned. But even so, if you should have any questions to ask I will try to answer them and I will try to satisfy you.’

Again:

There was the story of the devotee who each day would bring a poem to his Master. Each day after reading it, his Master would say it was terrible, no good at all. So, one day, the devotee came to him and said, ‘Here, for a change, is a poem by another poet – a well-known one.’

After reading this one, his Master said, ‘This poem is beautiful, most wondrous.’ Then the devotee said, ‘It is my own poem; I only said another had written it. Why did you say today it was beautiful when I said it was written by another, while every other day you found my poems so bad?’

His Master said, ‘Now you have done this thing I cannot help you any longer; there is nothing I can teach you now; please leave the Ashram.’

The story of Yadnya-valki is to illustrate that this would be the attitude of a person who knows.

To bring out this very fact Dr. Roles was given a low place to begin with, so that his path would not be hampered by the feeling that he knew everything already. Ultimately, when contact between Dr. Roles and myself developed, I played this part only – I used to help him by giving answers, not in the capacity of guru.

Otherwise there is no difference between Dr. Roles and myself. From the point of view of body, Dr. Roles and I are separate, yet from the subtle point of view we are not so.

N.G.H. What should be the relationship between myself and the numbers of people in the group in New Zealand who are seeking realization of the Self?

H.H. Just as a father has several sons and one of them is more intelligent, more capable than the others, and although he is more pleased with that son, in his heart of hearts he has the same regard for all his sons.

The same should be your attitude. You should be careful in handling them. Amongst your followers some will be more sincere and more intelligent. They are grasping more readily – others not. Although your behaviour to both kinds of followers would differ externally, internally you should have the same feelings for both. This is very important, not treating them differently from the heart. Of course externally you have to modify your behaviour towards each according to individual requirements of both the sets of people. But your internal feelings should be such that you treat them all alike. The more intelligent and capable should meet separately. For the sake of progress, groups should be kept separate.

N.G.H. Your Holiness stated that Dr. Roles is on the Way of Love. What are the basic rules and regulations traditionally followed on the Way of Love by the householder?

H.H. Love (Prema) and Knowledge (Tattva Jnāna) are the same thing, but the function of Love is to join together and that of Knowledge is to tell, to illuminate. Love joins the two things, Love joins to the Param-Atman, Love of guru joins to guru.

Ordinary knowledge, all that is within our knowledge, that is Jnāna. Love (Prema) and Knowledge (Tattva Jnāna) are the same thing but the function of Love is to join them and that of Knowledge is to tell. The special knowledge about Atman is called Tattva Jnāna, elemental Knowledge. Most Mahatmas consider only Tattva Jnāna to be the True, Essential Knowledge.

In Love, Knowledge is helpful. For strengthening Knowledge Love is essential. In the absence of Love, Knowledge would not be powerful enough to influence people. Knowledge only helps us to decide what is right and wrong, but it cannot alter things; Love can alter things.

If we know somebody to be good then we develop a respect and regard for him, then we approach each other very closely until the two Atmans become one. Love and Knowledge, both are powers of Chitta. Without Love, Knowledge is incomplete and without Knowledge Love is incomplete because in the absence of Knowledge, Love would go away. If there is Knowledge, then Love would be maintained. As Love increases, Knowledge also goes on increasing. Without Knowledge Love is not expansive; and without Love Knowledge is not allowed to play its full part.

Both are essential; Knowledge creates Love and then Love has Knowledge to establish its roots.

N.G.H. What form of rules and regulations does His Holiness think would be best to suit New Zealand?

H.H. I do not want to lay down too many rules. Whatever rules I have already given should be followed. In following them, if any doubts arise, then they can be resolved.

N.G.H. Could His Holiness give some general hints on the care of people who are meditating? I have noted carefully what His Holiness has said of the straight back and the mantra coming to rest in the heart. After people are initiated, what guidance do they require to gain fullest benefit from meditation?

H.H. All necessary instructions have been given and subsequently you have to watch whether they are being followed correctly. You have to be very watchful. Actually, no course of instruction can lay everything down, for you have to deal with individual problems as they arise. In order to do that effectively you have to keep a constant watch over people you are initiating into meditation. It is natural that some deficiencies should be found and their removal could not be codified completely. They have to be

removed by applying tact, and a method of applying tact cannot be included in a set of instructions.

If the person is not sitting correctly, he should be told to sit correctly; if his mind is agitated, he should be told some sweet words which would calm the mind. There are ways and ways of improving the performance of the trainees. It is up to the trainer to choose the best from amongst them. They mustn't be left, or then a wrong habit will be formed.

Here is an illustration of this:

The instructor of the Pandavas, Dronacharya, who instructed young boys in the art of warfare, and told them everything, wanted to test them. He hung a dog upside-down and wanted his pupils to shoot an arrow in such a way that the arrow goes through his mouth and comes out from the hind-part. He asked each of them to do it, and each said it was impossible. 'First of all put the dog straight, otherwise we can't do it, while he is upside-down.' So everyone expressed his inability to do it.

Then Arjuna, the cleverest of the boys, was asked if he could do it. He said, 'Yes, I can do it.' He went there and made a sound – 'Hsssss!' (hiss). When Arjuna did this the dog at once turned in front of him, so his mouth was in front of him and immediately Arjuna shot the arrow right through the mouth and out the hind-part. During the course of instruction he wasn't told to hiss.

So problems like that might arise and you have to tackle them in the best way you can. It all depends to what extent you can use your own intellect.

N.G.H. I find we have two main kinds of problem; people who have excessive thoughts in meditation, and the other people who have very dreamy and sleepy meditation.

H.H. For those who are over-thoughtful, they should be asked to shut down their file of thoughts and difficulties and do away with them completely. By doing so, the process of accepting this and rejecting that will stop. They should just think it is time for me to go and meet my own most blessed Atman. External things, that file of accounts of the external world, should be closed for the moment. Now, this is the thing that you are going to do. Just as

when you are very busy or overworked, you feel sleepy; then the sleep compels you to give up dealing with these things, to go and take rest and go to sleep. In the same way an over-thoughtful person when he tries to go into meditation should just stop – give up his thoughts and think that now it is time to meet the Atman.

People who are dreamy, for them you should use the method of Bhāwanā (Emotion). The method of Bhāwanā is to be emotional, to have a good kind of emotion. Emotion, minus its temporary nature, it should be lasting. They need feelings of a lasting nature.

Those who are dull-minded, for them the method of Bhāwanā is to be used. Dullness, sleepiness, etc., are the results of inertia and to remove it some sweet words may be used to arouse them to activity.

B.R.H. I would like to ask what seems to me to be at present the most important question. I feel myself to be so much at the mercy of bad tendencies, seeing no good ones in my mechanical behaviour. Sometimes I feel very frustrated indeed. How can I get glimpses of that great dignity and power of the Atman within which will enable these petty, selfish concerns to fade, and enable me to follow reason and set the intellect free to make right decisions?

H.H. What do you think yourself to be?

B.R.H. I find I'm confused in that. My intellect tells me I'm not the body, I'm not the mind, but I find it hard to act as though that is true. My behaviour doesn't follow my intellect.

H.H. Your actions are not following your intellect (Buddhi)? This should be the worry of your own intellect – your intellect should take care of it, not your Manas. Your intellect will take care of it. Buddhi acts like the manager, Atman the proprietor. The burden of running the whole show rests with the manager. The proprietor undertaking the duties of the manager, that is not right. They should perform their own functions. If the proprietor begins to fulfill the duties of the manager, then it will get into worry; it will get the worries of the manager.

H.H. My best wishes for your progress and the progress of your group are always there. It will be the happiest moment for me to know that you are progressing and that you are continuing to progress. I want you to inform Dr. Roles about these audiences.

FIRST DISCOURSE AT THE ASHRAM

(at which Mr. & Mrs. Howitt were present)

26th September, 1974.

The talk of His Holiness at his Ashram last night was explained to me by Mr. Dixit.

His Holiness said that ‘work’ (Karma) can be done with worldly desires or with no desires at all. The same with prayers (Upasara), you pray to God in order to get some worldly gain or get rid of worldly troubles.

But prayers are of four kinds (Mr. Dixit couldn’t remember them all). One of them is Ardu; this is used when one is in very serious trouble, like a cry for help to God. The final kind is without any desire or request for personal gains, – doing it merely as a thanksgiving offering or repayment of a debt.

He then told a story of a king and a woodcutter;

Once a king came across a woodcutter in the forest and found his job brought him in enough only to provide the barest essentials. Asking him why he lived in such circumstances, he said he could not obtain a better job. The king then said: “The next time you are in my capital, come to the palace and see me. I will see you get a better job.”

After a while the woodcutter arrived in the capital and went to see the king. He was ushered into an ante-chamber and told to wait as the King was saying his prayers. The woodcutter waited for an hour and then he said; “May I see the king at his prayers?” The servants said, “of course”, and showed him a small window through which he could see the king at prayer. He saw him bowing and praying most earnestly. Eventually he finished and came out to the woodcutter, who was pleased to see him.

With an astonished look on his face the woodcutter asked: “Why do you pray, you have everything in the world that you could desire – a beautiful palace, a great number of servants, a beautiful wife and children, food served on dishes of gold. Why, then, do you pray? What else could you wish for?”

The king replied that, great though his wealth was, he prayed for even more.

“Then you are nothing but a beggar,” replied the woodcutter, “I am better off as I am.” So he turned and left the palace.

His Holiness was conveying the fact that anybody who lays claim to bodily goods is no better than a beggar.

Mr. Dixit said his own Master – Guru Deva – told them in a discourse that even the biggest worldly thing is too small for us to ask Param-Atman to give it. To Param-Atman the greatest worldly things are insignificant. He is too big a personage to whom we could go with such a petty request.

His Holiness continued:

Param-Atman looks after all our interests, even without our asking. You need not make a request for anything. We see people having all sorts of troubles; we feel that Param-Atman is unjust because he has given all sorts of comfort to one man, and another man who appears to have done nothing very wrong, is leading a miserable life. Because of this, people lose all faith in the Param-Atman; but Param-Atman gives everybody what each individual deserves, what is good for him. Everything cannot be good for everybody.

Once a holy man, who had a reputation that whatever blessings he gave to people were always fulfilled, came to a village, so people flocked round him with their worries and troubles. A very poor man came and said: “Your Holiness, I live under very hard conditions. I find it very difficult to find money for even my simple wants. Could you give me this blessing, that I have enough money?” He said, “I could do that, but you will repent of it.” The man said, “How can I repent if I get money? I will be only too happy to.” He insisted. “All right,” the holy man said, “you will have a lot of money.”

Another man came with urgency; this man wanted to have children. Again, he was told, “You will repent of it,” but he insisted, and again the holy man said, “All right, you shall have your wish.”

Then a woman came, whose husband was very cruel; he had turned her out. She wanted him to take her back. He told her also she would repent of it, but granted her wish.

Then the holy man departed.

The first man now had a lot of money and everyone wanted to know him. One night robbers tried to rob and kill him. His parents and relatives wanted money out of him and no matter how much he gave them, they were not satisfied. People who were his friends before now became hostile. One night his servant mixed some poison in his food and gave it to him, but by sheer luck he gave some to his dog first and it died. Then he got fed up and said, “Oh, what is the use of all this money? – let me find this holy man again. He must take back the money and I will be quite alright as I used to be.”

The second man who wanted children got the children alright, but they were born with very bad minds and were a lot of trouble and this man and his family became notorious all over the village. People avoided him because he had got such spoilt children.. He also got fed up with all of this and also sought to find the holy man.

Finally, the lady who wanted her husband to take her back, was taken back. But her husband would get drunk and give her a good beating every night. She also said: “I don’t want to live with my husband any more.”

So all three started in search of that holy man to find him and request him to take back his blessings, which they found they didn’t want after all.

The story illustrates how Param-Atman gives every individual just what he deserves.

His Holiness also said:

The word ‘Swami’ has several meanings – the owner, the Lord; the ‘owner’ as in the sense ‘I am the owner of this’. But ‘Swami’ can also mean someone who merits greatly.

Mahatma is a Swami, Param-Atman is a Swami, all of us are ‘swamis’ of something or other.

SECOND DISCOURSE AT THE ASHRAM

Saturday, 28th September, 1974.

Here is a talk given at the Shankaracharya's weekly gathering at the Ashram, saying at the outset that he was speaking in continuation of our questions:

Param-Atman is the only reality and the only Truth. The Atman has an unvariable connection with Him. But though everybody knows this, it is surprising that they find no charm in it. This is due to the gulf of ignorance that lies before us. The question is how to bridge this gulf.

The whole of mankind has a desire for the good; no-one wants the bad. This is so obvious that it needs no proof. But in spite of the desire for good, our efforts are directed towards the bad. Thus, while sowing the seed for evil, we want the fruit to be good. In other words, the means to happiness is disliked, and the means to unhappiness is liked. We knowingly fall into a ditch and then cry for help. We go on piling up troubles, and a stage comes when we are unable to bear them any more. Then we pray for death, thinking that death would take them away. Sleep also ends our troubles for the time being, but we get them again when we wake up. Same is the case with death.

We do not see any thorns in the seeds of a thorny tree. But if we sow those seeds we shall get the thorns all right! If we do not want the thorns, then let us not sow their seed. Similarly, the seed of trouble is harmless to look at. But we should know that it would produce trouble and therefore we should not sow it.

We really should transform our nature. But we cannot do so solely by our own efforts. Our efforts and the grace of Param-Atman must both be there in order to be successful. Coriander (haldi) powder is yellow and lime powder is white. But mixed up together, a paste with the lovely red colour of safranin is produced. Similarly, our efforts plus Param-Atman's grace when joined together, work for our uplift.

A poor old woman used to earn her living by cutting wood in a jungle all day and selling it in the village market in the evening. But she was spending all her earnings the same day. One day she decided to cut more wood in order to save some money for a rainy day. But the bundle became so heavy that she could not lift it and night fell. In her sheer exasperation she cried out, "Oh, Death, better take me away!"

Death appeared and said that it had come to take her away as she wanted. "Not that," she said, "I had only called you to help me carry my burden."

So we sometimes wish for death when in trouble, but we fear it when it really comes. This is not so with those who give up attachment to the body beforehand.

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A Mahatma was in the habit of tying up his little belongings into a bundle and putting it away every morning. Someone remarked that it was very foolish for him to waste that much time day after day as if he was going for a journey. He replied that it reminded him to be always ready for his final journey and thus giving up love for the physical body. This attachment for the physical body is the root cause of all the evils in the world'.

Even better than the actual act of praying is holding the thought of Param-Atman in the mind. We can only pray for a short time, but we can keep this thought in the mind all the time. Param-Atman is very generous. A little thought of Him melts His heart.

If our Manas becomes stronger, then our Buddhi becomes correspondingly weaker. But if Buddhi becomes stronger, the pull of Manas gets weaker. As Buddhi must come to rule the Manas, it should be stronger. Even a little attachment with the world can push us into darkness. What is darkness for everybody, is light for the Realized Man.

We wash our body day after day with soap to make it clean, but it goes on becoming dirty all the time. There is no end to this kind of dirt. The same is the case with the mind. Surrender to Param-Atman removes the dirt of the mind.

Just as a son has some elements of his father, (we call them ‘genes’) similarly all of us carry some element of Param-Atman. But merely knowing this is not sufficient.

For example, we all know that wood is inflammable. This knowledge by itself would not create a flame. When we rub two pieces of wood vigorously together, a flame appears from the wood itself without application of any external fire. Similarly the flame of Knowledge springs up from the rubbing together of our thoughts, and it burns away all that is undesirable.

To know is merely knowledge, but to acknowledge is to love. Yet even to know and to acknowledge is not enough; we should also think.

Constant holding in the mind the thought of the guru-disciple relationship is enough. Till when? Till there is Eternal Life in the body. Devoting the mind to Param-Atman and forming mental images of Param-Atman should be a constant practice. Then life would flow naturally and doubts would dissolve by themselves.

Part of letter of 15th October, 1974
from Nolan Howitt after his return to Wellington:

I must say Mr. Dixit did an excellent job. In checking through what he had said verbatim with the tape, there was very little missed. He even said at one point that he had heard Jaiswal in action and he felt he did not suffer in comparison. It became obvious to me that here was a man who had been a devotee of Guru Deva, or rather who still is a devotee of Guru Deva. He said he had given his heart to him and there could be no other teacher for him. He spoke of how he still visits the Ashram and likes to be of use to His Holiness whenever he can, out of his great respect for his Master. He described much to me about the relationships of Guru and Master and in all the sincerity of the man came through. One knew very clearly that what he spoke, in most cases, were the clearly remembered words of His beloved Master or His Holiness. Together with what Mr. Dixit told me and the words of His Holiness, the following picture began to emerge.

It seemed there are at least two clear-cut stages in the relationship between a Master and His disciple: in the first stage, as Mr. Dixit explained, when a man is convinced he needs knowledge and guidance to move on the Way to Self-Realization, he seeks a guru, a teacher. He said that a man is expected to test His Teacher in any way he can.

He told the story of how when Guru Deva was seeking for a guru, he came across a teacher who was a Sanyasi. Now a Sanyasi is not supposed to have any dealings with fire, does not cook his food, etc. He knocked at the door of his Ashram and when the Teacher appeared he explained his search. The Teacher asked how he could help him and Guru Deva replied, "Would you give me some fire?". This made the Teacher angry but, wondering if he had heard right, he asked again what he wanted; – he replied, "I would like some fire!" The now furious Teacher said, "There is no fire here, this you should have known!" To which Guru Deva replied, "Then where did the fire come from that I have just seen flare up?" And with this he turned around and continued his search.

He said when a man is satisfied with the answers he is given to his questions, then he starts working under and seeking the guidance given by the teacher. It seems this relationship slowly deepens. Of this relationship His Holiness seems to speak when he says, “I am not the guru of Dr. Roles, I am only a helper.”

Also a guide in the development of this seemed to come from His Holiness when he said of such a relationship, “Accepting Dr. Roles’ word without argument. There should be no questioning in the heart about what he says. Whatever he says you take as Absolute Truth; this would be the feeling.”

Further on, His Holiness seems to be speaking of the development of this stage when he says, “Ultimately when contact between myself and Dr. Roles developed, I played this part – I helped him by giving answers – not in the capacity of guru.” When he says ‘otherwise there is no difference between Dr. Roles and myself’, I take it to mean that in turning to yourself, you are able to help me by giving me answers just as he helped you and me. He seems to clear this by saying that ‘from the point of view of body, I and Dr. Roles are separate’. How I understood this was that when the relationship develops and love and respect grow, another relationship is possible. In His Holiness’s words, “if we know somebody to be good, then we develop a respect and regard for him.”

The true relationship between a guru and disciple seems to be in His Holiness’s words, “Then we approach each other very closely until the two Atmans become One.” In this true relationship it seems the guru would be aware of this situation approaching and could help. Would this take place on the subtle level? It would seem that when the two Atmans become One it becomes known to both, but what is known is the sameness. His Holiness seems to hint at this by saying you and he are not separate from the subtle point of view. Also functions, etc. are different on the physical plane.

CORRESPONDENCELetter from Mr.Dixit:Allahabad, 1st October 1974

My dear Dr. Roles,

I have received all your letters during August and September relating to questions, Mr. Howitt's visit, messages to His Holiness, etc., and also the last enclosing a cheque. A big letter from Maurice E. Pickering for Mr. Howitt reached me just now, but it is now too late to catch Mr. Howitt here. As he also gives me the freedom to make any use of the questions he sends, I shall try to put them to His Holiness when he comes back. He has again gone out for a long tour this morning. I shall be grateful if you could kindly tell him this when he meets you.

It is a sad thought that so many letters from you just piled up with me as never before owing to my own inabilities and very much against my wish. However I feel myself more free now. H.H. has replied to all your questions and also those from Mr. M.E.P. The answers are enclosed. Besides this, I am also sending a discourse which H.H. gave at his routine evening gathering at the Ashram on 28th September as he had replied to your questions on the same day and said at the outset of the discourse that he was speaking in continuation of his answers to your questions.

The Howitts had fairly long sessions with H.H., almost as long as yours, though not daily. They had all their questions answered and tape-recorded with myself doing the interpretation. They also typed the recordings and I filled in a few gaps found here and there. And they had some boating with me to ?Sangam on the river, as well as

getting their own share of the digestive trouble which our Allahabad food always gives as a gift to visitors!

Yes. They are very good and simple people. I liked them very much. Besides H.H. and myself, some others at the Ashram, who thought that they could talk English and know enough also lectured to them; but the Howitts gave them all a patient hearing.

Now answers to your questions:

Letter dated 20th August, 1974:

In order to make the untrained Manas quiet, it is useful to keep the spirit of service, in whatever work you give to it. No action by itself is high or low, good or bad. It is the motive behind it that elevates or lowers it. Even the lifting of baskets can be great for peace of mind, whereas even Samadhi accompanied by attachment would not give any.

Letter dated 28th August 1974:

The greater part of the Ahankara is unseen because it is hidden by the smaller part which is nearer – or so it is said. But in reality a smaller thing cannot cover a bigger one. It is the Buddhi that gets covered and gives the false impression. A little particle getting into the eye causes much trouble; but when it is out, the eye responds to light and the vision is clear.

The words, “You seem to be going through life with deep imagination” were used in the best sense, and no scope for uneasiness was intended. Only a full approval of your attitude was meant. But

if the expression “with increasing realization” suits you better, please take it that way, as increasing realization is also there.

Your suggested three alternatives about “getting the Antahkarana to concentrate”, viz:

- 1) Being still within even when one’s body is active.
- 2) Mental stillness when mind is revolving over some problem,
- 3) Dedicating one’s movements or praying to the All-knowing Param-Atman.

His Holiness considers all the three to be right and then adds that we should put all our actions, whether good or bad, as they are and as we know them, before Param-Atman most easily, unreservedly and unhesitatingly – without any attempt to hide anything.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from Dixit, 19th November, 1974:

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About H.H. giving audiences to individuals in a group: H.H. had explained to me last time that as quite a lot of material has already been collected by you over the years, you yourself are now in a very good position to remove the difficulties of your followers in the most suitable manner as you, personally, know their troubles and attainments. As such, they need not take all that trouble of coming to India just for that. Therefore the idea of such people coming through you is to give you a chance of solving their problems if possible.

Another point is that in the past, some people have tried to contact H.H. with the purpose of obtaining material for running their own separate groups. This could mean a mushroom growth of mutually unconnected groups, and managing them all from here would become a very heavy task. H.H. finds this difficult, but as you know, everybody is welcome to attend his public discourses at the Ashram as well as at the Mela.

Although I wrote a number of letters after this with questions, the mere fact of writing these questions gave me such good answers that I asked Dixit not to bother H.H. with them as he was much away and very busy. The sequel to all this comes in a letter from Dixit of 9th March 1975, as follows:

The absence of His Holiness from Allahabad for several months, the consequent accumulation of Ashram work for him, and then his programme at the Mela festival in the New Year combined in such a way that you and your group in London had to go without any word from him for the longest period I can recollect. I, myself, also had more work at the Mela to do this year in connection with a Brahmin camp up there for the first time, which took some six hours of my time daily from the 28th January to 26th February. All that is over now.

Our work and the dust of the Mela gave His Holiness some bronchitis and fever and a doctor had to be called. While he was still unwell I attended a talk at the Ashram on 25th February in which he said he would not give a discourse but would like to answer questions; so someone put a question about the food we eat in connection with the Gunas:

S. The three kinds of food relate to Sattva, Rajas and Tamas as mentioned in the Geeta, chapter XVII, verses 8, 9 and 10. A food imbued with Sattva is helpful in increasing Sattva Guna and, in fact, realization of Param-Atman is only

possible during the time when that predominates. It is not only the article of food that can be coloured with Sattva, Rajas or Tamas, but it is the quantity also. Sometimes the quantity taken can be more important than the meal itself. Even Sattva producing food, when taken in excess quantity, would produce Tamas. In Sattva, there is remembrance instead of forgetfulness.

Swami Bhaghat ananda ("Dandi Swami"): The food is not only that which we take in with our tongue. Whatever we are taking in with our ears, eyes, skin, etc., is food. The whole world is polluted. Without introducing the idea of Param-Atman everything is impure. The holy, mental outlook achieves the purification. The mind also eats. The characteristic of Sattva is happiness and a calm and balanced intellect. When there is happiness, there is Sattva. There is happiness when the food is pure.

Nobody can attain purity by holding on to the false. The false is dirty itself, so how can it make us clean? Unfortunately we are besieged by falsehood on all sides.

What is happiness? As long as our consciousness (Chitta) is not at rest, there is no happiness at all. When the Chitta is at rest, and the Buddhi is steady, then it is happiness.

S. The happiness that lies between two states of unhappiness is not true happiness since it has a beginning and an end. Real happiness, being a natural property of the Atman, has no beginning

and no end. When the Buddhi likes nothing and dislikes nothing, then we are happy; but the pleasures which arise from transient things are not happiness.

Detaching the Buddhi from the favourable and the unfavourable – both, and applying it to the Param-Atman is happiness.

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(Dixit's letter continues):

His Holiness has fully recovered now. I attended His discourses at the Mela as usual, but because of the demand for them he had to dwell mainly on the Indian epics day after day and, therefore, there was not much for Western audiences. The following, however, are points I picked up from his talks:

1) Liberation is the ultimate goal to which a believer in Vedanta aspires. But one who believes in Bhakti and practises it, already achieves Liberation before he could go ahead and complete his theoretical knowledge about Bhakti.

2) Param-Atman gives more Bhakti to a man, than a man could ever hope to give to Param-Atman. Some lines from Tulasidas about Bhakti were quoted:

Without the Grace of Param-Atman one cannot know His greatness.
 Without knowing His greatness you cannot fix your belief in Him.
 Without fixing your belief you cannot develop love for Him.
 Without love Bhakti would not deepen; for the Bhakti would dry up like the
 moisture of water.

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(re Dixit's letter of 9th March 1975):

This question in a letter of mine led up to the only answers that we have recently received:

Letter (dated 12.2.75):

We have been concentrating recently on what he has said about "Meditation as a journey from Vyashti (individual) to Samashti (Universal)." It seems now that one can look at things from either of two aspects as atoms forming a larger whole (like trees in a forest or drops of water in a lake), or one could look at the whole aggregate as One and that these two points of view may be combined in the idea of Vyashti and Samashti.

Answer (dated 9.3.75):

I agree with your thoughts and consider them very good. I suppose the answers already available with you would cover all the questions you might get. By keeping your view directed from the individual consciousness (Vyashti) towards Universal Consciousness (Samashti), a channel for the flow of energy is formed. The mere remembrance of this principle gives a complete answer to all the questions that arise.

(S. concluded):

My good wishes for your health and happiness so that you may continue to provide the required guidance to your world-wide organization as hitherto.

And Dixit ended:

Regarding your request to visit him in October next (1975), he tells me that he has already booked a special train for an all-India tour from September 21st to November 21st.

In the following two discourses by His Holiness at the Ashram the words Jiva or Jivatman and Param-Atman occur frequently, being another way of expressing the expansion of the feeling of 'I' from the limited and subjective to the Universal and objective view. The interpreter explains:

'The Jiva is really a part of the Param-Atman as a drop is of the ocean, but in the present restricted sense it is better to translate it just as 'man'.

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Morning meeting of 4th March:

The Jivatman, by itself, is as incapable of achieving anything as a fly caught in a spider's web. Innumerable worldly obstacles caused by Maya (illusion) are there to obstruct its efforts. He is free from these cobwebs of Maya only when the Grace of Param-Atman frees him. Therefore, what seems secure may turn out to be most insecure, and the insecure most secure.

Once Yama, the god of death, came to Dwarāka (see p.78) to see Krishna. The Garuda, the lord of the birds, was also there. A little pigeon was chirruping overhead and the Garuda suspected that Yama had come to take the pigeon away; so he at once flew the bird away as fast as he could to a cave among the inaccessible heights of the Himalayas and asked him to stay there. Then he returned to Dwaraka at top speed. Seeing Garuda very out of breath, Yama asked the reason. Garuda explained that he had transported the pigeon as fast as he could to a cave in the Himalayas which Yama could not reach. Ho, ho, ho laughed Yama heartily and said, “Well done, my friend! It was there, not here, that the pigeon was destined to die. Thank you very much for your assistance. A python sitting in that cave has already made a good meal of your pigeon.” So the Garuda saw how futile had been his hasty action.

[Comment by interpreter Dixit:]

Regarding this story, I can recollect a parallel incident from real life. It happened in the great Mela of Allahabad in 1954 when 100 people were crushed to death in a stampede. It happened because a solid mass of people was moving down the slope towards the Mela, so tightly packed that feet moved forward automatically under pressure from behind. Then something happened in front which forced the people to retreat; but no retreat was possible. Caught between the pressure from in front and behind, many men, women and children were trampled upon and killed in a matter of minutes.

That day a member of my staff had planned to give the treat to himself and his family at the Mela. He got leave off work, rose at 4 o'clock in the morning and had meals cooked for picnics at the Festival. His two children wanted to stay back and do their home-work instead. The father scolded them for such lack of spirit; they went, but under compulsion. They died in the stampede while the parents survived. The grief stricken father ran hither and thither like a

madman crying that he had driven his own children to their death.

This shows how an act done with the best possible intention can sometimes lead to entirely opposite and unexpected consequences.]

(Discourse continues):

S. Thus the ways of Param-Atman are beyond human comprehension. Many things are happening around us – some good and some bad – and we are unable to explain them. We wonder how Param-Atman, who is good, could cause or allow bad things to happen. But ‘good’ and ‘bad’ are just comparative notions. There cannot be anything good unless there is something bad by contrast.

These notions of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ constantly create conflicts in our minds and do not allow us any peace. The way to get over all this is to dissociate ourselves from the events viewed and associate ourselves with the viewer of the events – the Param-Atman.

Param-Atman is the cause of everything and is everything. The world we see is nothing; it was never anything in the past and will never be anything in the future. Param-Atman is, and is everything. He is the friend as well as the enemy; he is the saint and the householder; he is the beast and the man; he is the sorrow, the attachment and everything else.

Such things worry us as they do in a dream; yet nothing of the dream remains when we wake up. What else could all this be except the most wonderful show?

Once Vidyasagar (a well-known author and reformer) was watching a theatrical performance in Calcutta, which showed in a very realistic manner the terrible atrocities directed by the rulers on their subjects. The show was so realistic that the reformer stood up and hurled a shoe at the stage. This created confusion in the hall. The organizer appeared on the stage and said: "This shoe is the greatest possible tribute to our skill."

If a man-made show could be so effective, what can we say to a show staged by Param-Atman? But even while causing all this, Param-Atman does nothing at all.

Understanding this sheds all the burden from the mind, just as waking up removes all the tensions of a fearsome dream. Actually for pacifying a troubled mind nothing could be more refreshing than to regard everything as part of a show staged by Param-Atman. Weep if you must, and laugh if you can, but that underlying thought should be there.

The past is never exactly the same again. Stop worrying about it; keep cheerful, for cheerfulness is your real shape. The clothes you are wearing must wear out; the smoothness of your skin must go; wrinkles must appear on your face; your body must lapse into the coils of Time. Take all that in your stride, and play the part assigned to you.

Second Discourse at the Ashram on 10th MarchThe Param-Atman and the Jiva

S. While Param-Atman is never in doubt, the Jiva always lives in doubts. Owing to this he is always wanting miracles to happen in order to establish his faith. But even if a miracle does happen and his faith established once, that faith is shaken again and again by subsequent doubts, and he wants fresh and repeated miracles to re-establish it. He fails to realize that he is constantly living in the midst of the most wonderful miracle – the world.

So much so, that even his own 6ft. body is such a miracle that science can only wonder at it without understanding (or being able to make) a single particle of it. The total market value of all the material in it (carbon, calcium, etc.) is hardly 4 rupees, and yet what miracles are built out of it!

Again, it is in the very nature of the Jiva to be undergoing some change every moment. These changes continually lead him to a state of indecision and forgetfulness so that he is never sure of himself. Thus he is unhappy. By contrast, one who has risen above his Jivatva (individualism) is always sure of himself, never loses sight of his goal, and never changes it. We also should try to rise above our Jivatva and be in constant touch with the Param-Atman. Then we shall be happy, because unhappiness cannot stay with the Param-Atman. In fact, the thought of Param-Atman alone can dispel unhappiness immediately. For happiness, therefore, the shedding of the separate sense of 'I' – (Jivatva) – is essential.

By nature, the Jiva is a worshipper of magnificence. He is apt, therefore, to be led away by worldly glamour which he can see with his eyes. But the magnificence of Divine wealth (see the opening verses of Chapter XVI of the Gita) is not visible to the eye, though it is those that really matter.

Param-Atman can be pleased, but the Jiva can never be pleased for long. Again, the present, past and future exist only for us, and do not exist for Param-Atman, which lives in the 'present' only.

What we call "good" and what we call "evil" – both exist in the world as necessary antidotes to each other. At times the 'good' becomes proud of itself and therefore ceases to be 'good'; then the 'evil' arises to destroy it. Similarly, when the 'evil' outstrips its functions, it is destroyed by the 'good'. We see examples of this in history (and especially in times like ours when everything is in the melting-pot).

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- 25 Learning Sanskrit language – answers to one man’s particular problem solves other people’s similar questions.
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- 43 Turiya like bathe in Ganges – some strength from stream of Absolute felt afterwards.
- 46 When tired one renews energy in sleep – deeper realms of physical and subtle worlds should be enjoyed.
- 47 Shopkeeper at end of day’s activities returns home for sleep after meal. In big ‘shop’ of Absolute we must work on physical level to derive subtle substances to purify Essence for next life.
- 54 Sound of voice reveals identity of friend acting in drama – True Knowledge ‘sound’ by which one recognises True Self manifesting in different forms.
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- 86 Good and bad railway passengers' use of carriage – worldly objects should be used carefully and not considered our own. . . .
- 90 Loss and recovery of an object – forgetting Self we sink into difficulties; realising Self we merge into state of plenty.
- 92 Old (personal) servant and old habits – we should see ourselves in full stature.
- 92 Antahkarana like a mirror – holy intentions, thoughts and actions remove dirt of ignorance.
- 94 With practice, man in training overcomes difficulties and achieves mastery in his art – with continued practice of 'giving up' we can discover our own powers.
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