

19 October 1964

**READING 3**

**PART 1**

From all your good questions, from memory of the beginnings of our own System, from close study of all the talks with the Fully Realized man, and above all from observations of one's own experiences, a general yet fluid picture begins to emerge. We can try to express it, but don't expect that we shall grasp it until a short period of Enlightenment comes to us.

As long as man has a body and nerves and brain he has to live in a house of three storeys. That is his fixed endowment, which only a human organism possesses. Lower animals like the earthworm have only one storey; most mammals have two storeys like the sheep; a few, like the dog and the monkey which can be trained, have the beginnings of a third; only man till now in evolution has the complete house.

The evolution of man himself consists in the transformation of coarse matters into fine, within each of those three storeys of his house. Our System has a very convenient and accurate notation for labelling all these matters or energies; use it or not as you like, but it is difficult to be precise without. The numbers represent their fineness or intelligence. Let us begin from the Aim as we did last week:

On the top Step – Turiya or Enlightenment – the ultimate observer (the Atman) is in command of the house. You will see from the figures that an octave separates him from the highest energy in the middle compartment of the mind and then another octave between that and the highest energy in the lowest compartment. The individual mind on that level can merge with the Infinite 'within the limits of the solar system', as you will see if you put there the numbers which would correspond to the Christian Trinity. But though glimpses could be enjoyed, that *merging* could only take place when Turiya has become permanent and what is called the 'Fourth Body' fully formed.

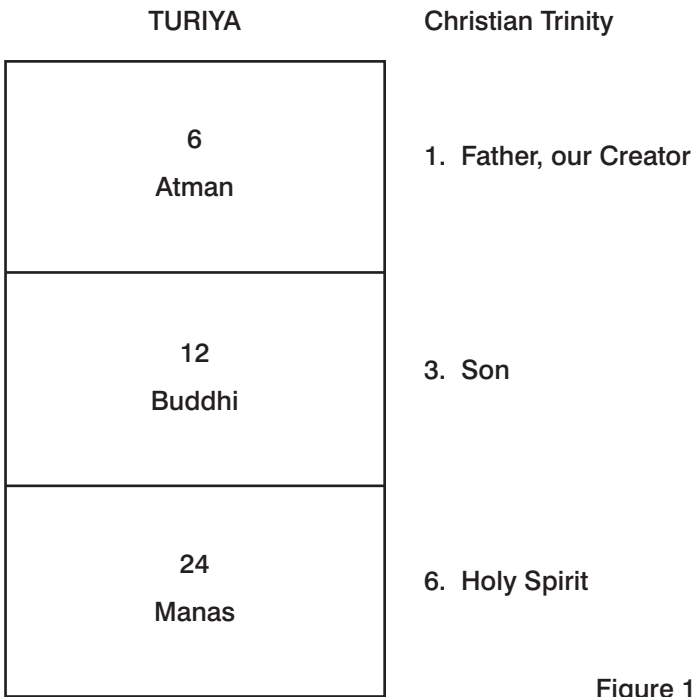


Figure 1

Now we must return to the state of affairs as it exists in the 'man in the street' who is wholly unaware of his possibilities – a man ignorant of himself. The System tells us that for him the highest energies in the three storeys of his house correspond with those of his physical body nourished by three kinds of food:

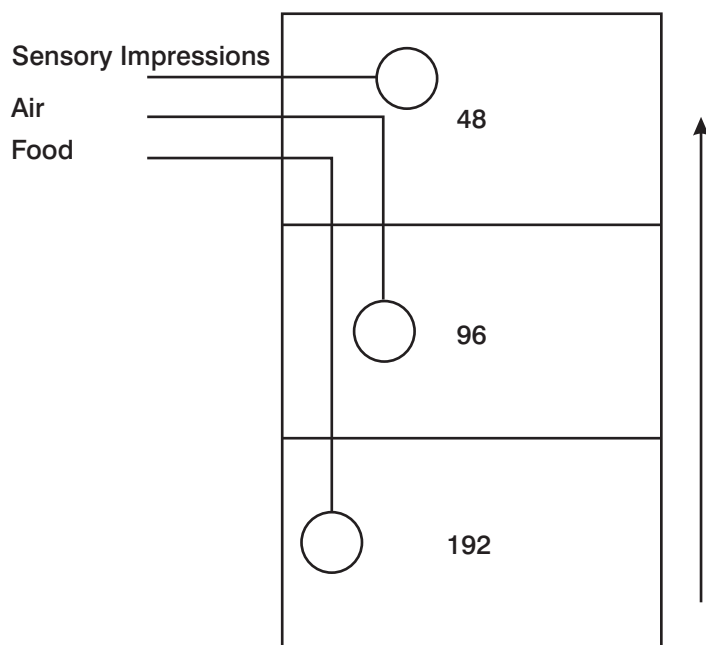


Figure 2

In the lower storey are the digestive juices and enzyme systems; in the middle storey is the hormone or chemical control, the 'intelligence' of the body; and in the top storey the roving mind (Manas) has usurped the position of the rightful owner and knows nothing higher than itself. The man himself knows through 192 whether he is hungry or replete, through 96 whether he has the glow of physical vitality and energy or is physically sapped; and from 48 regards every separate 'I' as himself and each of these 'selves' as separate from everybody else. The upward-going arrow shows that such a man's mental operations are almost entirely dependent on his physical body.

What we have to realise fully is that this picture of man shows only his transitional and not his evolved state. But the illusion that this is all a man could be is shared today by the best scientific minds of the West. One of the limitations of this mind was described very clearly by Sherrington (*Man on his Nature*, 2nd Edition 1951, p. 206)

Mind, always, as we know it, finite and individual, is individually insulated and devoid of direct liaison with other minds. These latter too are individual and each one finite and insulated. By means of the (roof) brain... finite mind obtains indirect liaison with other finite minds around it. The isolation of finite mind from finite mind is thus overcome indirectly. Speech, to instance a detail, illustrates this indirect liaison by means of energy between finite mind and finite mind.

And it is more important to remember that there is no mischief in the world which this usurping mind will not get up to. Near the end of Wu Ch'eng-en's book translated by Arthur Waley under the title *Monkey* (who in this allegory is the incarnation of human cleverness) comes a comical description of the relation of the Buddha with the Monkey to which Aldous Huxley (*The Perennial Philosophy*, p.165) adds:

And so, ... the Monkey within us turns back and, full of a bumptious confidence *in his own* omnipotence, sets out to refashion the world of men and things into something nearer to his heart's desire!

**PART 2**

How does evolution from this illusory state of affairs to the Truth and the Rightful Owner of the house begin? As a result of good impulses and resolutions formed, one of us gets to hear something of the secret or starts to practise a method like the meditation. If he persists the roving mind is gradually stilled and he begins to feel an inner pull from a wholly new direction. At this stage (4th Step – ‘The Pull of the Way’) the arrow for short periods reverses its direction. Naturally this is bewildering at first:

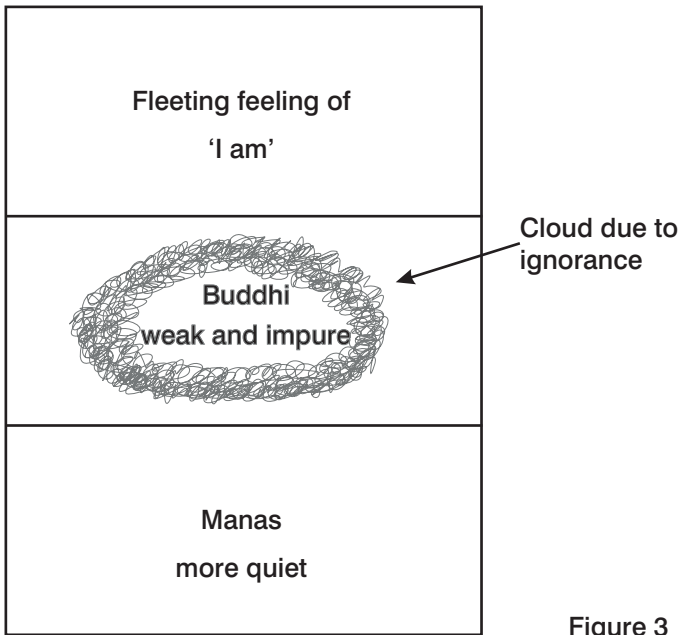


Figure 3

he feels only nothingness and he becomes uncomfortably aware of the ‘Cloud of Unknowing’ which separates him from the light of the Sun which he knows to be always shining. But if he persists, his mind begins to work on another level with better energy (Hydrogen 24) so that he doesn't easily forget the eternal presence of the Owner of the house. We see from the diagram (*Fragments*, p.319) that there are several steps in this individual evolution:

48	24	12	6
96	48	24	12
192	96	48	24
Step IV Pull of the Way	Step V Insight	Step VI Abundance	Step VII Turiya

Figure 4

And if you think about it you will see that the next step comes first in glimpses before it can be rendered permanent. When permanent they are called 'Bodies' – the 2nd, 3rd and 4th – different stages on the way to Immortality. According to the Shankaracharya it is the presence of the 2nd body (in his term 'the subtle' body) which provides the continuance of the Essence from life to life.

We should conclude with some quotations from recent talks, the second of which stresses the supreme importance for us just now of *confidence* – not the unthinking confidence of Monkey, but the sublime confidence of the servant in his Master (the Atman):

Said to A. on 14th August:

There is a kingdom of Manas to which people resort to get everything they can't get in reality. There they burn up their energy in fruitless activity, in deluding themselves and bringing about their own ruin. This happens when Manas rules over the domain of Atman – the servant imagining himself Master.

And to R. on 2nd September:

One should realise and feel that one is strong, capable of dispelling any disturbance, strong enough to control and command the servants (Manas and senses). It is absolutely true that the 'Atman' within is the most powerful of all beings and capable of doing anything. Keeping this in mind one can dive deep in meditation to realize him and thus take command over mind and senses and make them serve properly. ....

R. I felt a wave of confidence at the end of this meditation. After all, what are we all worrying about? In truth we are not separate from one another, nor separate from the Realized man and therefore from Atman. The clouds seem to melt away when one remembers that.

S. He is blessed who has that confidence. It is a grace. It is the outcome of all our efforts on the Way and of the Mercy of God. Here in India, though we have all this available Tradition, much of it in its natural surroundings, only one out of millions awakes to be Attentive and walk on the path. If in the West, when distractions are multifarious and life is full of material attractions, a group of people have risen to avail themselves of this confidence, this is very valuable. Those who come out for discipline, and with their effort awake and find this confidence, eventually exercise their proper influence in uplifting the masses. They are the blessed.

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