

25 October 1965

## READING 4

Although most groups will want to go over the second part of last week's reading again, you will probably be glad to have something fresh from India to follow it. Dr. Roles writes about his visit to the Ashram on the first day:

While we were buying flowers and fruit near by, we could see many of the people from the Ashram coming out from the gate to welcome us and looking down from the terrace above. On entry our old friend the bodyguard (who sang the song 'Disciple and Master') gave us a smart 'present arms' and seemed delighted to see us. We had scarcely slipped off our shoes and taken our places when the chanting accompanied His Holiness to his throne with four of his disciples sitting near. Without fixing his eyes on us he was clearly observing how we were.

He began by saying with a smile that he had come to Allahabad on 13th September to keep his appointment with us. He realised that the war might have prevented us travelling and this was confirmed later by our cable; he himself had had to cancel some plans because of it. Now he had many duties at the Ashram and the Festival of Light was approaching. He had made arrangements, however, to see us daily till the end of October.

At a later conversation H.H. spoke about the Gunas as follows:

Sattva may predominate at one time and Rajas or Tamas at other times; for example, in good company or in company of a Realized Man Buddhi would take sattvic influence. In active life one has to use Rajas, for there can't be any activity without Rajas, and when going to bed one has to go in Tamas. In fact none of these at their proper place is bad, so one doesn't have to feel guilty about the presence of any of the three at a given moment. One should use them at proper place and time. A driver drives his car slowly in traffic and goes fast when out of traffic by changing his gear according to need. He is not really concerned about the gear but about his destination. This is the attitude we should have, using Sattva, Rajas or Tamas as need be and not getting involved with them. One has to rise above them, even rise above Sattva.

The next day Dr. Roles continued on the same theme, saying:

In my group we felt recently that we had been making a mistake about the three Gunas. We began to dislike Rajas and Tamas and to long for Sattva. There was much talk about Sattva, and we became very attached to it. Then I came across Lord Krishna's words again: 'He who shuns not the Guna which is present nor longs for that which is absent, and he who rises above the Gunas, shall become one with the Eternal.' This helped several people. Yesterday your Holiness seemed to be saying the same thing. The simile of the car driver not concerned with his gears but with his destination is very enlightening. Does the rise above the Gunas mean first not to be attached to our actions and their result?

H.H. Creation is full of these three Gunas. Everything is evolved out of these three Gunas and nobody can escape them. What we can escape is the clamouring for them, and once we have escaped clamouring for any of the Gunas things should be easy; but it

would be impossible either to collect one of them and leave the others, or use one of them, or leave them. This would be impossible because every man, every action and everything is full of the three Gunas. No one can escape, and we have to work in conformity according to the need. Attachment in any form to anything is bound to bring misery and bondage, so keep off the attachment, even to Sattva.

To meditate is to be in Sattva, but after meditation when you walk away from the place, or in any activity you take to, you come into Rajas; when you go to sleep you have to come under Tamas. To be in the world, to live in this creation one has to use Sattva for a certain period, Rajas and Tamas for certain periods. One should not think that because Sattva is better one should have it all the time. It would be against the nature and it will not be possible. So if one sees that Sattva is good, one should attempt meditation with more feeling and attention compared with other activities.

Creation is full of this trinity of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. This is the primal factor. The same three forces are repeated all through creation to its grossest form. For example – knowledge, movement, ignorance; creation, existence, dissolution; in Sanskrit grammar first, second and third person, or masculine, feminine and neuter gender, and so on. The pattern of three is created right through the first impulse in creation to the end product. A discriminating man should be able to see more of it, in every form of creation. But one thing must be kept in mind that although these three forces are working through creation, there is another factor which only observes the coming and going of three forces reacting on each other. There was a certain man who kept a placard with a reminder before him that 'Even this will go'. All experiences and impressions were followed by this reminder, and he ultimately became only the observer of events, without any reaction of pain or pleasure. Although we like to have Sattva, which is pleasant and better than the others, let us not hanker after it and be greedy about it. When Sattva comes we see it, and when others come we again just see them work and move on. Conclusion is that we must not be 'attached' to any, and keep observing.

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