

Saturday 4 November—Morning

R.A. At a certain stage in the development of meditation there seems to be a barrier blocking final unity. Is this illusion? If so, can one destroy it? If not, how can one overcome the barrier?

H.H. The last barrier to the Atman is Ahankar, the feeling of ‘I’—I am the one who is meditating, or I am the one who is about to go over the barrier into the unity. As long as one sticks to this the unity is impossible. We have to learn this and make sure in oneself that when one reaches to a spot of this nature, one should drop even the idea of the feeling of ‘I’. Everything is to be given up even the sense of ‘I’. Once the sense or feeling of ‘I’ is given up, then only the unity is possible.

A certain man went to a Holy man to be initiated in meditation. He was asked as to what things he saw on the way. He said that among all those things I saw I remember a donkey very well. He was then asked to remove him from his memory. The poor man tried hard, but failed, and expressed his inability to do so. The Holy man said that the art is to drop the memory.

This memory or the feeling of ‘I’ is the greatest and the last barrier to meditation. The man who meditates or the man who observes must be dropped so that he is able to merge into One.

R. It was possible in the night (remembering the story of the arrow-maker) to have no movement for quite a long time, but still the feeling of ‘I’ remained there in the stillness.

H.H. When one knows that one is still one is not still, and when one knows one is at peace, one is still away from it because the great barrier is still there to recognize ‘I’ and its relation with peace and stillness. In complete peace or stillness there is no ‘I’.

Prajapati is the Teacher (Guru) of all the Devas (Gods). His son Kach was sent to Ashram for study. He was taught the Vedas and the Shastras, and also the Upanishads. The essence of all his knowledge was that he should give up everything to be at peace. When he came home he did not start any work, so his father asked him as to why he is sitting there lazily. He said, “I have realized from reading the Vedas, Shastras and Upanishads that to be at peace one must give up everything, so I have decided to give up all work in order to remain happy.”

His father said to him that he was still enjoying being at home and the services of the servants, so he left house and went to the forest to live alone with Nature. But when he found that he was not at peace, then he asked his father for advice. Father said again that perhaps there was something else which he could give up. The son gave up the tree under which he lived and also threw away his garments and moved around the banks of Ganges.

Even then he was not in complete peace so he thought that his body should also be given up and he collected wood and lit a fire and was about to jump into it. His father came out from a hiding-place and asked him to answer a few questions before giving up his body. The father said that according to nature and your being you will have another body when you have left this one by burning. This means you will only exchange one for another, and this cycle will go on through eternity. Should you then give up this body? The son was now completely at a loss, and asked his father for guidance.

Then his father said to him, “To give up all, you have only to give up the feeling of giving up. This, your Ahankar, who is trying to give up everything else, is still with you. Once you give up Ahankar, then there is nothing of yours to give up.”

R. It seems to take a long, long time! Some people perhaps are more egoistic than others. (H.H. laughs).

R.A. *What is it that gives up? What is it that surrenders?*

H.H. That which is never absent from anywhere.

R.A. *And part of that substance is in me?*

H.H. Yes. A part of that substance is within you and also you are within it. It is like the water of the Ganges and Ganges water in a bottle. Break the bottle and there is no individual trace of that water when mixed in Ganges. As long as we associate the Self with the body, senses, Manas, Buddhi, desire or the feeling of 'I' (Ahankar), we are separated and bottled up. Cut out Ahankar and there is no separation.

R. *I hoped there could be a peaceful co-existence like that quotation from Mundaka Upanishad.*

H.H. Quotes the passage in Sanskrit. (Book III, 1):

"There are two birds, two dear friends, who have made their home on the self-same tree. The one pecks at the sweet fruit, while the other looks on in silence, not eating. The first is the human spirit, who feels sad and bound in by ignorance. But on beholding the power and glory of the Universal, he becomes free from sorrow."

H.H. They certainly co-exist as long as they are sitting on the tree of creation and one of them is enjoying the fruit of the tree. These two sweet friends are the Absolute and the Atman. The Atman is involved with the creation and its fruits. It feels as if it is seeing, eating, sensing and enjoying the world, and in doing so gets attached with the world, whereas the Absolute, although in and with the creation, is in no way involved with the creation and only watches and enjoys. One does not see and understand that the changes take place in the Prakriti and not in the Atman. Atman is not subject to change. If it was, it could never be liberated and then the Prakriti would have been Absolute which is impossible. One who understands this becomes very light and walks in freedom without carrying the load of the world. He is one who enjoys the drama in true sense and never associates himself with the characters of the drama. Our job is simply to watch and enjoy.

R.A. *Is one entitled to ask for help or should one trust the Teacher to know one's need and act as necessary?*

H.H. The Master, full of Grace, knows the difficulties and picks up the message and comes to the rescue without being asked. The impatient disciple when he gets excited with the so-called difficulties jumps up to seize the nearest opportunity to ask for help. Even then he gets the help no doubt. Best is not to ask, because whatever is necessary will always be provided by the Master.

R.A. *H.H. has talked about levels of meditation. Are these related to a person's position on the Ladder?*

H.H. Yes. The position of a person on the Ladder is very much related to the levels of meditation. But Gunas also play important rôle. The Gunas are everywhere. People have Gunas and the places have Gunas. There may always be a possibility that the influx of a certain Guna in a person or place will change the level of Meditation. Men with Sattva will have better meditation, whereas men with Rajas will have thoughts visiting them, and men with Tamas usually find a nice corner to sleep. Thus the level of meditation is decided by the position on the Ladder, availability of Sattva in him, the Gunas in the place and time. All these factors interplay to make up a level of meditation.

Here in India when we see a predominantly Sattvic person he is immediately given the meditation; others with Rajas are advised to go through Scriptures, rituals, keertan, etc., and the Tamasic are asked to do physical services, exercises and ceremonial rituals so that they can improve their Being and come up to a stage when they can meditate properly. In case of collective meditation, the tamasic people should be either separated or put with the extra rajasic people. Men with controlled Rajas can easily be accommodated with Sattvic. This will keep disturbances away and will also create better result due to interplay of Gunas, and the Gunas can be thus displaced for easy working.

R.A. Are the majority of people predominantly one way or the other, or the majority of people evenly balanced with the Gunas?

H.H. The nature of these three Gunas is such that one of them is bound to be in predominance in every situation. The equilibrium of Gunas means dissolution of the creation or the person, which is not possible. These Gunas are not constant in their relation all the time. They keep on changing their quantity. One might be in predominance now and the other might be predominant later, due to desires, attachments or outer influences. Job of the School in guiding people is to see the predominance of Gunas and arrange them in such a way that one is helpful to the other and not causing troubles.

R. I want to be clear, when he refers to somebody as predominantly Rajas. From the point of the three rooms of the house, he could drive fast cars, want to be active in sports, excitable in feeling or emotionally, or mentally be talkative or domineering. There are many manifestations. Does predominance refer to any room or just one room of the house?

H.H. The talkative intellectuals, excitable temperamentals, sentimentals and those who became angry quickly are weak compared to those who can perform quick actions and are efficient. Those who drive fast cars, like quick sports and quick actions and can perform them efficiently, are with Rajas, so they do better meditation.

There was a Marwari (tradesman) who used to get excited very much and was in the habit of thinking without purpose, calculating his designs and so on. One of his well wishers took him to a satsang (gathering). There he sat behind in the last row and due to complete lack of interest he was soon fiddling with the shirt of the person sitting in front of him. Later on he was asleep, and in his dream he was selling his cloth.

After discussions with the client in the dream he was asked by his client to tear a piece of cloth of few yards in length. Having heard this the fiddling fingers got busy and tore the shirt of the person sitting in front, and soon opened his eyes to see what he had done. The other man was furious. The Marwari promised to give him six yards of new cloth and begged him not to make a fuss. He then also realized the futility of too much thinking and calculating.

Saturday 4 November—Evening

R.A. Could we know what H.H. says when he opens the meditation?

H.H. In the Indian tradition, right from the Vedic age, this has been a common practice that whenever we start a work we remember some auspicious Mantra and also remember it when we finish the work. The Sanskrit writers always started the book with some sort of auspicious prayer and also when finishing the book. This is to inaugurate a work with peace and remembrance of the Absolute so that we may be able to complete the work without difficulty and pay thanks on completion of the work, so that the other works may also be well begun. The one which we have just now heard means that: “Let us begin work together, rise together and make efforts together so that we may enjoy peace.”

R.A. Are such sentences to be said only by the Shankaracharya or can this be said by other people starting meditation?

H.H. It is not only for the Shankaracharya to say this, but anyone can use this when starting or finishing work of meditation. People in general also use this. It is said so that one can be at ease and attentive to perform the work with ease and peace. One can say the Mantra or one can say something similar in one's own language, like the Christian prayer of the Lord.

R. He gave us this before. We have on occasion used this. This phrase is very happy one and people have often asked for it. So we may use it more now?

H.H. This is quoted in Vedas, in Mandukya Upanishad and also in some other Upanishads.

Opening words of Mandukya Upanishad (Translation W. B. Yeats)

*“May our ears hear the good.
May our eyes see the good.
May we serve Him with the whole strength of our body and mind.
May we all our life, carry out His Will.
Peace, peace and peace be everywhere.”*

... and Isa Upanishad:

*“That is full; this is full.
This fullness comes from that fullness,
When this fullness merges with that fullness, only fullness remains.
Peace and Peace and Peace.”*

R. I noticed then (during the 20 minutes meditating together), I was very much relaxed, and though I wasn't sitting up straight, yet I feel fresh and easy since then. Sitting straight sometimes gives a feeling that I am meditating, but that didn't come this time.

H.H. It is not necessary to be stiff in body when one is meditating, because any sort of stiffness is possibly only by reason of Ahankar (ego-feeling) clinging with the body, which screws up the body and one feels tight and constrained. This is not good for meditation, so one must always be relaxed. This relaxation shouldn't mean body becoming loose and unstable. When one is entering within from without one must see that the body should take a natural position. This will give a natural balance to the body which will be neither stiff nor loose. The transferring of attention from without is possible when the body is naturally balanced, so one must acquire a position which is natural.

R. Could it be said that his Buddhi sets the general direction of a man's life, what he goes after? And will it follow that when H.H. says that the man's last desire sets the pattern for next life, this is due to how his Buddhi is pointing at that time?

H.H. What you say is true, and changes in direction are also possible; and all through life in different atmosphere, circumstances and likes and dislikes, one gets fixed in ideas. He might like many, but one of them is most dear to him, and at the last moment this dearest liking does not leave him and he goes with it and sets a sort of new pattern for his next life.

J. Asked if this last desire was intentional or accidental.

H.H. The last desire is the climax of all our strivings and beliefs. If one has undergone a life with discipline and manages most of his life in conscious state, such men will have a desire with a conscious origin, whereas others who have not had a discipline or faith have accidentally just one of the many desires. It really makes not much difference because they all originate in ignorance.

A few days ago four sanyasins were going to Badrinath on pilgrimage. In Rishikesh the leader asked them to leave any money they had, or leave the party because food and shelter will be available free on

the way, and if one wanted to use extra money others might be distracted. One of them had a sum of four guineas which he buried under a tree with certain mark. On the way this man died of cholera. When the other three came back to Rishikesh they decided to unearth the money to use in Yajna on behalf of the dead man. When they dug it up they found a small snake sitting around it. This must have been the dead man who was so attached to his money. They killed the snake and let his soul free from this bondage and performed Yajna to help his soul.

Attachments are very strong. When one has to leave home one always picks up the dearest thing first.

R. *Wouldn't it be the moment when Guru might put into his mind the real thing?*

H.H. The disciple who is under a Teacher learns how to be with real ideas all the time so he will naturally do the right thing consciously, and if something is really missed and he falls short, then the Teacher would take care of his next life.

R. *I remember, he once said, if one turned his mind to him even once a day, he would enable one to remember one Self. Since that time Teacher and Atman seem to have gradually become One.*

H.H. The major part of the play in liberation is the responsibility of the Teacher. The disciple has only to remember the Teacher, and it is because of the remembering certain things are happening within towards transformation, but the Guru plays the major rôle in liberation.

R. *This was very much like our first Teacher, Mr. Ouspensky said when I asked him "If I would have to look for him in the future life?" He said, "What can you do, you will be little baby—very scientific little baby?"*

H.H. (Laughs) Remembering the Teacher is very essential. In Bhagavad Gita Sri Krishna says to Arjuna, when he had practically finished his talk on the philosophical aspects of man's life, "O Arjuna, you have only to remember Me and fight, for the rest will be done by Me."

Mrs. Douglas-Henry. *In the Middle Ages men of the West practised religion because mostly they feared damnation and hoped for salvation. The Church was their refuge, ex-communication a punishment severe as death.*

After the Middle Ages, religion in these countries gradually lost its hold over the lives of men in general.

And to-day? To-day many Western people are turning once again towards inner discipline and learning to practise it. What are they looking for? What is it they desire? Not safety now, not salvation, but Realization: to become as their Maker intended them to be: to understand something of the Love of the Creator for the created.

And what does this desire mean in terms of a man's spiritual development? An advance, surely, from those earlier days when the driving force in the pursuit of religion was fear rather than love?

H.H. The world is not divided between East and West, neither have the religions divided the world. The world is One, and whole of the world is governed by eternal rules, and religions only preach these rules. These rules are so composed that they show what is right and what is wrong. Right is that which is according to the rule and wrong is that which goes against. If at all there can be any division, then the world is divided between the ignorant and the wise. The fear of damnation is for the ignorant and not for the wise. The wise uses his discrimination and conforms to the rule of his own accord and not from fear. The ignorant is blind. Fear helps him to conform to necessary rules. These two should not be confused. The religion which shows fear of damnation also shows the way of liberation, the liberation from fear and misery. The trouble is with the so-called 'intellectuals' who would see the rules, but don't like to act according to them. For such people it is only a matter of talking or writing.

'Dharma' is the word he uses which is translated as 'Eternal Rules'.

R.A. Would it be possible to put new life into older religions?

H.H. The religions never get old. They are eternally fresh, so one can never infuse a new life into an ever new thing. What really happens is that those who are responsible for conducting religions don't discharge their proper duty connected with the religion. They fail to connect the people to the religion in proper way. It is only for the wise men of today to bring out the Truth of the religion and let people see for themselves. The misguided guardians of religions will then correct their way or leave the office.

When asked further as to what should one do after seeing the mess, he said:

Use discrimination and let True Religion which is lame (always) work together with statecraft, which is always blind, and make use of both for a happy and peaceful life. As they are, separated from each other, both are facing decay and people have to face misery and unrest.

R.A. Does Shankaracharya see, now that the world is drawn closer together by modern transport and communications, does he see any form of universal new religion?

H.H. The nature of human beings or the nature itself, always likes to go to the end of the way. This can be a way of destruction or construction. Left to itself, it will not look back unless it reaches the end of the way. The world today hasn't reached the end of the way of destruction, so as they cannot see the destruction by themselves they would not look back; unless they are given the light of True Knowledge. It seems there is still time when they could look back.

R.A. I had a private talk with Morarji Desai (Deputy Prime Minister of India) the other day. He is obviously a man of great spiritual inclination and yet he seemed so tied down and restricted by others that he hasn't got the freedom to move the way he wants. Now, how can he or others (for there are many others like him), get help?

H.H. Such people, like Morarji Desai, who have good ideas and are inclined towards spiritual values, and like to do good for the common man, are surrounded by vested interests, who simply want to do everything for themselves. If some good idea or plan is initiated by others these men in the middle utilise their brain to make the best selfish use out of these ideas and ruin the whole purpose. Since they are in great majority nothing good can pass through them.

J. What should they do, people like Morarji Desai?

H.H. They should be steadfast in their ideals and right values, and keep engaged on whatever best they can, and wait till the people demand a change. This turn in what the people want may arise out of extreme misery or it may come from Grace (for whereas the Grace of Knowledge and of the Guru come only at necessary moments, the Grace of the Absolute is always present). At that turning-point the energies and ideas of these special people will be useful. Such people, then should keep trying to improve their Being and express their good ideas in their actions. This helps to improve the atmosphere and later on becomes a force on a larger scale.

R. We have to-day had a letter from Mr. Rabeneck in New York with a message to you:

"With luck this letter will be in time to reach you in Allahabad. If you have a chance please tell His Holiness that we are trying our best to expand our contacts both for giving meditation and for enlarging the group. Lately I have been reading some of the easier sayings of his to the Group and especially to the newly initiated members. His sayings are much appreciated and create such a good atmosphere for meditation. Please pass on to His Holiness our deep gratitude and ask for his blessings and encouragement to carry on as we do."

H.H.'s message: Blessings and good wishes for Mr. Rabeneck and his groups. They should be assured they are always connected to this end, and whatever is possible within will always be done for them so that they can also gather some mass and improve upon their work.

Sunday 5 November—Morning

R.A. Does the individual person with a name have an existence as such for the Teacher or is the Teacher only concerned with the individual's 'Real I'?

H.H. The relation between a Teacher and disciple always starts with name and form. Just as when one goes to meet another person one approaches the dwelling-place and sees the sign-board, then the house. Entering the house he gets acquainted with the person. This acquaintance grows in depth and after some time they become close friends. Then all these sign-boards, the house, the appearance of the person don't matter any more. Thus the acquaintance is then established on the subtle level. In the same way, the relation between the Teacher and disciple starts with name and form and slowly reaches the subtle level. When still deeper it reaches on to the causal level. The causal level relation is an Atman to Atman relation. When they can't meet physically, then the subtle forces come to play the necessary part. This is how the disciples are helped or answered in their questions and doubts. These are the three levels of relationship.

R. No one doubts that Shankaracharya's influence can reach people in many countries, and is so reaching them. There is only the doubt in many of us as to whether our weak voice reaches to him. What helps that? Does accumulation of Sattva express this cry to him in Sattva?

H.H. The relation between the teacher and disciple living apart is established through the medium of the cosmic subtle body. When the cry of the disciple is in tune with the cosmic subtle body which acts as the head office, then all the necessary branches are connected. This is how the disciple is easily connected to the Teacher. There should be no doubts that the voices of disciples do reach the Teacher through subtle body.

R. We understand that actually during the meditation, especially when the finer levels of Mantra are being transcended, that no influence is received at all. This is completely silent or nothingness. This relation with the Teacher can come at other times, unexpected times or after meditation?

H.H. During deep meditation, when one transcends, then there is unity and in unity there is no manifestation; here one would not be able to experience any sort of relationship, because relationship exists between manifested and separated. Thus during the state of unity one would not have any manifested relationship; if one did, it was not proper meditation.

R. There one is not experiencing anything, yet I always remember Shankaracharya's farewell to us at Rishikesh, the first time we met him; he said, "Goodbye, and in meditation we shall be meeting." So when in unity we do meet, but we do not experience?

H.H. Your observation is correct. The relationship through the physical body is subject to time and space, whereas the relation on the level of subtle body is not bound by time and space, but it is bound by necessity, by the need for it. But on the causal level, there isn't any difference or division at all. This relation is always there. Here is an illustration. The space surrounded by four walls is different to space outside it; once you break the wall, both become one. In physical body we have such barriers of separation; in subtle body there are no such physical barriers but only of consciousness. One is united when one remembers. In causal body there is never any separation.

R. There is a great research going on among the scientists about how the little tortoises find their way from South America across the Atlantic Ocean to a small island. They swim under water and still find their way. Is this through the subtle body?

H.H. There is a fundamental difference between human beings and non-human beings. Human beings are provided with Buddhi, and if they don't use it they can't learn anything; but other kingdoms don't have Buddhi. They are guided by their instincts, or one of their senses has super quality. Thus dogs can smell far more acutely than any human being, and with this quality they manage their life. Likewise other species have some extra quality to make their life safe and practical. [*Bats and dolphins use sonar.*]

R.A. I want really to ask an adaptation of the second question. Can people on the lower level of the ladder than the Teacher make contact on the subtle level with people they are trying to help?

H.H. Yes, this is possible, provided the helper has established relation with Teacher. Once this relation is established, the help can pass through.

A certain person wanted to be disciple of a Teacher. The Teacher asked him to stay with one of his disciples first before being initiated. This man went to the disciple and was amazed to find him just living as a householder. He first hesitated to waste his time but due to the long journey he decided to stay there. This householder's son was to be married soon, so after introduction he took the man to show him the arrangements. After showing all the rooms which contained things to be used in marriage, he came to the last one. Here the man in great astonishment asked, "Why should you store these things which are to be used at a funeral?" The householder said that his son was to die after three days of marriage and all this is also for him. The man asked then why marry at all! The householder said that his Teacher had advised him to do everything without the feeling of gain or loss, success or failure, respect or disrespect, and do all that is needed and watch the drama without being attached to anything. So he was doing only what was needed. The man was ashamed within himself to have desired to ignore so lofty a person and return home. He then bowed his head with respect and learned many things from him and after some time was called back by the Teacher to be initiated.

Thus the forces of knowledge, wisdom and inner strength can always be passed through the connected disciples. The contact of a disciple with a newcomer has two aspects. The knowledge and wisdom of the Teacher in theory and also in practice is made available through a disciple who is also a householder, which helps the people at lower level very much.

R.A. So this contact should only be made through the agency of the Teacher, and effort should not be made to try to do it directly?

H.H. If there is any desire to pass on influence directly by himself, the disciple is indulging in personality, and once this personality takes over the connection with Teacher will be lost. As long as the disciple is a disciple, the connection is also there. One shouldn't try to claim giving help by himself. This claim is a barrier, it is in the personality. A person can be photographed and his photos can also be copied again and again and yet the picture will be the same. But the original negative always gives a better and truer picture. All pictures are related to this original negative. The Teacher also never claims anything for himself because he knows that he is also one of the links in the chain of disciple–Teacher relationship in this creation which started from the first Teacher called Narayana and passed through Brahma, Vashishtha, Shankaracharya and so on up to the present time.

R. When we were first given meditation, we were told we would need periods of silence as well, week-ends, etc., otherwise the meditation might get difficult. That seems to be forgotten quite a lot. In England and America we talk all the time, perhaps in India also. Has H.H. got any instruction about this?

H.H. The people have forgotten the system to be silent. In silence one can perform one's work better, because one can see the situation better. Since they cannot avoid necessary sleep, people go to sleep to give rest to the physical body, but don't realise the need to give rest to their mind (subtle body). This is not only with the West but also here. There is of course some difference and that is that the West has practically used most of the physical glory and is now looking for silence whereas here in India people have just started indulging in the physical, scientific and artistic glory so it is not yet the time for them to be silent.

R. Our people who have these meetings every week, many meetings going on for last twenty years, they feel that they don't want so much talking. They often have silence, meditation, music and read something from Shankaracharya which gives them stability, whereas if they talk all the time results are not so good. Would he approve?

H.H. This is good. Their curiosities are satisfied and it is good that they feel the need for silence

R.A. Further to Mr. Allan's question yesterday about world becoming small due to quick and fast transportation.

H.H. Although it is very nice to believe that the people have come very close to each other due to modern supersonic transport and radios and televisions and one does appreciate the facilities afforded by them, all the same science has also brought close the miseries. The disease which was two years away is brought next door. The experience suitable for adults can be had by youngsters, and the whole nature of human society is being disrupted. In the past, when India was at its glory the elders and seers purposely stopped scientific advancement to make sure of a natural life for all. The mass production and the scientific advancement was always discouraged.

H.H. was shown a reproduction of the 'official' photo he gave us and asked whether people could be given it on request. He said:

H.H. Photos of Shankaracharya could be given only to those who desire it sincerely and intensely but not for curiosity.

शान्ति शान्ति शान्ति:

Correspondence

London

April 30, 1968

Your Holiness,

This is to send very grateful thanks from all who have been hearing parts of your latest talks with the three of us who visited you in India. I have given one or two letters to Jaiswal to translate, but he is at present very busy and attached to Mr MacLaren's work and I get no answers to my letters; so I don't know whether you have ever received them.

In one letter I said that Mr Allan and I would be very happy to visit you again at any time this year or next that would be convenient to you. It is not a question of problems, because I feel I am receiving constant help by taking your advice and being silent when a question presents itself. It is simply that there is so much of the knowledge still to be learnt, and being in your presence is always a delight.

A reply sent to: Mrs. Brigitte Michael, 15 Avenue Ledru-Rollin,

Paris 12, France, could be translated and sent to me.

F.C.R.

शान्ति

