

14 October 1968

READING 1a

However you choose to speak about and illustrate the subject – Reading 1, it would be good to make sure that the following seven points are clearly established before we go on:

1. ‘Understanding’ is a compound of Knowledge and Being and our work must look after both these two sides of man’s nature.
2. Of all the many kinds of Knowledge, Knowledge of oneself through impartial observation is our concern.
3. House of 3 storeys.
4. ‘Man in the street’ is ignorant of the existence of the unknown Fourth Room, the Treasure house of Knowledge of Truth.
5. Consciousness is distinct from the material world and not susceptible to current technology for it can be studied only in one’s own experience.
6. Our work is to distinguish between natural knowledge (changeable) and supernatural knowledge (eternal – of Fourth Room) and use each in its right place.
7. Progress in this work is measured not by spectacular experiences but by increased consistency between our thoughts, words and actions.

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There were several very good questions at last Monday’s meeting, and I have carefully considered the answers:

Miss Wright. Is the whole picture one of the automaton even if all three storeys are operating? I don’t understand why the lower storey is just called the Automaton?

A. That’s a good question about something fundamental to our new point of view.

Though the emotions and the intellect are, in ignorant people, controlled by the machine, yet a little self-observation will enable us to distinguish them from it and set them free from their prison of mechanicalness. This is done through coming regularly to the silence and freeing mind and heart from all repetitive movement. His Holiness keeps stressing that this gives a big step forward on the way to Self-realization.

At the same time the electronic engineers have taught us very much about the extreme complexity and rapid working of the brain’s computer systems (lowest storey). Though a well-trained machine is one of our greatest assets (without which we couldn’t exist, have this physical existence), yet it is quite impossible to alter directly anything in this vast organisation without altering something else or impairing its efficiency.

This concept of the ‘machine governed by external influences’ applies even more to the great and successful; an influential figure like the President of the Royal Society cannot think or say or do anything outside the machinery; but no one is in a position to judge of his inner relations with his Maker. We must therefore refuse to sit in judgment on any individual, and it is only on the scale of public affairs that we can see how mechanical life today really is in spite of the airs we give ourselves!

Though one drives a car and gets the most out of it by knowing roughly how it works, yet the driver is quite separate from the car and should remain in control.

Mrs. B. Fleming. Could you say that the wall between the third room and the second room is really transparent; it is not a solid wall?

A. You are asking 'What is the nature of the partition between Room (3) 'Thoughts and ideas' and Room (2) 'Feelings and desires'?' The answer must be that it varies in different 'men in the street', and that it changes also with the stages of Self-realization. Some people's thinking is all 'wishful thinking', and some even think with their bellies! So though the partition is fogged up, there is a door through which their fancies are free to pass unconsciously! Others are so logical that all feelings are suppressed and they've build a concrete wall there! The various possibilities depend on the three Gunas.

But in general and in relation to Self-realization, His Holiness has said that the partitions are really of glass, which has become opaque because of impurity. But he says 'the fully Realized Man can sit in one room and see into all the other rooms because he is the Master.'

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