

Thursday 29 January

Ninth Talk

R. Is this a correct picture I had this morning?

On the causal level in the Antahkaranan are many seeds. So called 'Self-realisation' means that into this garden we want (through Sattva) to let in the light of the Sun (Atman) by removing the limiting sheaths of ignorance; and we need to water the seeds with True Knowledge. Then some of them in each Jiva (Being) will grow and then flower and manifest on the subtle and physical levels.

H.H. Says the picture is correct.

R. Would you tell us something about the principle underlying a Satsang (which you have been speaking about at the Mela)? Here in this audience-chamber each day, nearly 20 people meet in this Sattvic atmosphere to listen to the truths spoken by him. This is surely a true Satsang?

In the West we have mostly groups of 12–20 people (each group at about the same stage) who meet once a week to hear knowledge and improve their Being. They often meditate together and they are given a sequence of ideas of the true knowledge. Is this the best way to create a number of Satsangs leading in a definite direction?

H.H. The underlying principle of the Satsang is unity. The word 'Sanga' in Sanskrit means 'Yoga or Unity'. The word 'Sat' means 'whatever is'; and he says there are three levels of Satsanghi. The first and highest level of Satsang is the unity with the Absolute—unity with 'Sat'—where there isn't anyone else except the presence of the Absolute to be felt. That is the best level of Satsang on which the greatest efforts are being made.

And then on the second level you have the teacher and the pupils discussing their questions in relation to the existence of the Absolute, the practical ways of achieving realisation by disciplines of any sort, and the practical application of knowledge. For where the true knowledge is being discussed, there is direct questioning by the pupils and direct answers given by the teacher. This is the second level of Satsang. This is also leading to unity.

And the third level of Satsang is an assembly at which there is no particular question in sight but any number of people gather and a Realised Man or anyone who has progressed on the Way could express his ideas to give them a lead and help for their improvement. In such a place books related to the Scriptures, or the scriptures themselves and the commentaries on them may also be helpful, and people in company with them could also be partaking in the Satsang. So this is the underlying idea.

R. Why I ask this question is that when we get back, all the people will want to know what we have heard. We want to try to keep the ideas pure and give what we have genuinely understood in the best way.

H.H. The practice and flow of truth and spiritual knowledge is very much the same as what we see when we plant a tree.

A young sapling tree when planted needs food and water and besides this it needs protection from other things which may bring harm—even excess water and excess food may cause harm so that the one who is put in charge must take care that just enough is supplied in proper time, and that care is taken to protect it from hostile influences from men, from children or from creatures around that can eat it up. This doesn't have to be during all the life of the plant, it simply needs, say three years. By that time the branches and leaves will be out of reach of beasts or men, and secondly the tree will then be strong enough and the roots have gone deep enough to collect its own food and water from the earth itself and from the influences of sun and air. So after some time this gathering of people would not need to be given any particular care for they can do everything just by themselves and flourish.

The same applies to all these groups that you mention. It would seem that three years of good positive training is just enough to make people stand on their own feet and develop the ability of questioning and evolving answers by their own reason, and support themselves on the three levels which have been discussed—the level of action, the level of ideas and the level of feeling. Within these three, proper care and measure of material and a system of questioning and answering should be developed and taught to these people, and after that not much care would be necessary, they would be able to stand themselves.

H.H. (continues after translation):

Even on the ordinary practical level, a man takes about 25 years from birth to grow up and get fully educated before he gets a house, and takes on the full responsibility of a man. Within this 25 years, he has to go to school, learn everything from A B C right up to his speciality and become fully trained. Everybody involved in training this man should take trouble and give the proper training. After 25 years of education he becomes independent and responsible to discharge his own duties without any help. Also he becomes capable of imparting the same knowledge which he has learnt during the 25 years. This is how the cycle of education continues.

If one needs 25 years to stand on one's own feet in this physical world, how long is needed to be firmly established in the spiritual world, considering the time factor will be on a different scale? The spiritual world is concerned with only one subject. The subject is freedom and appreciation of unchanging Truth. This subject has been dealt with firmly through the ages, and most of the answers are available. It only needs three years for any person to learn the technique of enquiry and become fully satisfied with the answer to these questions. It is only if the training is correct and precise that the person will need three years and no more.

At the end of three years, individuals will be able to take complete responsibility for doing their activities, handling their ideas and exercising their feelings in and around themselves. But (he adds) poor training causes confusion, the training must be good and precise for this three year period to be sufficient.

R. I was thinking also of preserving ideas from the Holy Tradition which have been kept clean for so long and kept alive; and thinking of the best way of preserving those. They must not get muddled, for I know how easy it is to misunderstand an idea when it is clothed in Indian dress!

H.H. He gives an example of the way the Indian dress can be twisted. This study of the Self or the Truth needs three years. But anyone who thinks he knows everything after three years, in fact knows nothing. On the contrary: the man who feels that from this point, after three years, starts the true Knowledge, so his thirst for knowledge continues unabated, then he would be the man who has understood something about the practical continuation of this work.

He tells a story about you and the other Europeans who were in the Ram Nagar expedition. When these 60–70 people were set an examination of 20 questions by him, 12–16 correctly answered questions was the pass mark. To your misfortune you failed the examination! But as the twist of this Indian nature plays its act on most of its aspirants—those who passed didn't develop this thirst at all and have been lost for good and all. But the one who failed is somehow kept alive and is still striving in this line of search.

He says that if anyone thinks he has learned enough spiritual knowledge and knows all the answers by himself, then he has done nothing in this line of study and will meet with failure in his life, particularly along this line of spiritual endeavour.

Tulsi Das (the great poet) once said, "If anyone has had enough of the prayers and recitations about Rama, he has learned nothing about Rama." (Rama was his deity). The same idea has been explained in the Upanishads—that one who claims to have known Brahma, has not known Brahma. The one who says he doesn't know Brahma will also not know Brahma. But who then does know the Brahman?

In the course of his life, a certain king set aside 100 cows laden with gold to be the prize for the man who could claim to be wisest in the assembly. The great Rishis had assembled—one was Yajnavalkya, one of these Rishis. Without claiming to be the wisest man, he asked his disciples to drive these cows to his Ashram. A wise woman called Gargi (his wife) rose up and asked Yajnavalkya, “Do you claim to be the wisest of all?” Yajnavalkya replied “I always pay my respects to the wise men, but if you have any questions, you can ask me. But do not ask me an impertinent question.” So she asks the question: “Where is the phenomenal or earth-world world?” He replies, “This Earth-world is in the water.” “Where is this world of water?” she asks, and so the questions go on through fire, air and ether (space). The question comes back to the answer that everything stems from the Brahman. He continues, “There is no cause of the cause so don’t ask further questions. If you do ask, you will be impertinent and your head will fall from your body?” This is how the Rishi Yajnavalkya took away the cows without claiming to be the wisest of all the contesting teachers.

H.H. continues: If there is any query arising out of the discussions here or in London suggesting that the words of the Indian system cannot be fully understood in the English language, he rules out this problem. This isn’t the problem. Because the main principle of this discipline is the Meditation. Meditation is designed to improve the level of Sattva. Once the Sattva has become more abundant in the individual, then a light will appear within himself. If he has not been given full treatment on the intellectual level, if he is not satisfied about certain ideas, then he himself will be able to look at his problems and find the answers because of the Sattva within. In fact it is a human problem and not a linguistic problem, and the main attention is to be given to the human problem and discussions aimed at the particular individual difficulties. If one vital question in an individual life is solved somehow, then the man will be able to guide himself and learn whatever he needs. The best thing is to meditate properly!

R. His Holiness wished us to stop about 12—we could go on all day!

Note: While lunch was being prepared behind shut doors, we sat in the sun. When ready, it was served to the four of us (as we sat cross-legged on the floor) by the Ashram servants, and (there being many separate delicacies) it lasted till 2 p.m. The car to take us to the confluence of the rivers was due back at 2.15; and meanwhile we took photographs of the scene around.

Friday 30 January

Tenth Talk

The morning started with thanks and conversation about yesterday’s feast. After meditation, questions were put:

R. All that you said yesterday made me do extra-careful meditation. So that now the Sattva is again released from the store and happiness returns. But Rajas comes in so quickly!

Can one discern here a cycle which happens again and again in anyone struggling to go up the Ladder? The light shines for a day, Ahankar takes it for pride, and out goes the light. Then, realising that the light has gone, one in desperation begins to meditate properly again and the light comes slowly (or even quickly) back. (2) Should one not welcome, therefore, any blow to the self-pride of Ahankar as the best gift one can receive from above or from life itself?

H.H. When one feels the Ahankar one always feels a limitation, a circle created by the feeling of Ahankar. Whatever happens, whether Sattvic, Rajasic, or Tamasic, there will have to be some limitation, but these limi-

tations differ by their nature. If Ahankar is Rajasic or Tamasic, it will be related to whatever one thinks of one's body or one's position, one's knowledge or material aspects. So one can come to limit one's Ahankar to one's own body or one's own knowledge or good character, or brilliance, or intellect or whatever one seems to have.

These are small circles created by the Ahankar and therefore are extremely limited. The other Ahankar which is Sattvic is related to the Samashti.

Note: Jaiswal explains: Vyashti = Jaiswal, Samashti = Universal 'I'. Samashti is the Universal Being, the Absolute.

If one accepts the limitations as imposed upon the Absolute, then one is not possessed by Rajas or Tamas, is not attached to the action or the outcome that one has grown to associate with performing certain actions. So when the feeling of 'me and mine' arises related to anything in the Universe, this Ahankar will be governed by Rajas and Tamas. On the contrary if the feeling is derived from 'Thee and Thine', then all activities or all vantage grounds to which Ahankar rises in any individual, will be of service to him and humanity.

He quotes a story about Hanuman as an example:

When Hanuman (the Monkey God) went to Ceylon (Lanka), he burned all that was golden and marvellous belonging to Ravana and killed some of Ravana's warriors and the Rakshas (demons) just single-handed, and then came back to report that he had traced the whereabouts of Sita. He described how he jumped in one leap from India to Ceylon and killed the Rakshas and uprooted many trees. Whilst he was describing his achievements to Rama his Master, Rama thought, "Is Hanuman's Ahankar (ego) just claiming all this in the pride of his own strength?" But after Hanuman had described all these achievements, he said, "This was done only by means of your strength which worked through me."

So if one forms the mental attitude that everything available to the individual belongs to the Absolute, the individual being only an instrument in performing glorious activities, then it will be a Sattvic Ahankar. If one thinks that all the situations belong to the Father of All, then the germ of Rajasic and Tamasic Ahankar will not penetrate the individual, and he will consider himself to be only smaller compared with what has gone before. In the same way, one should always think about all the glory which becomes available to individuals that it will all belong to the Absolute and we in our activities will just be instrumental in putting this glory into the world. This is the right attitude and by this feeling, the self-pride (false Ahankar) will not pervade the individual. Thus one can keep on working on the Ladder of Self-realisation.

R. There is a hint of these cycles also in Mr. Allan's questions:

R.A. (1) The fullest bliss seems to come as a Grace rather than as the result of special or prolonged efforts. Is there anything one can think of, or pray for, or do which will attract this Grace?

H.H. Grace or effort, they do not work just single-handed. There is nothing like Grace without effort; there can't be fulfilment of the effort without Grace coming into play. When sincere efforts are being made and there is no self-pride involved in the effort or achievements resulting from the effort; then automatically the Grace starts flowing. With this flow of Grace there is the establishment of the effort and its workings—which immediately uplifts the effort of the individual. If, just by making one's own effort and not creating the situation where Grace could come, then the Rajas or Tamas usually take over and then many other happenings come into play (which has previously been explained), and the individual has lost the line.

Another situation is: If one sat without making any effort and did not bring oneself under discipline or the activities concerned with the disciplines, and simply waited for the grace to flow in one, this would mean that the Tamas has completely taken over. You can be sure that, in such circumstances, Grace never appears to anyone.

So to acquire or qualify oneself, one must make sincere effort and create only a situation where one feels one is the instrument performing the activities. If by any chance, one believes that before starting to meditate, some Rajasic influences are troubling one, and one cannot enter into peaceful meditation; then, under these circumstances, prayers are very useful. Prayers are not simply a repetition of certain words in a certain rhythm, but a complete surrender, surrender of oneself; and this feeling of surrender immediately starts to melt the heart. Unless the melting of the heart has taken place, the heart within does not really echo the prayers. So one must see that a prayer is coming directly from the melted heart in the praise of the Lord. This will restore the situation and create a condition where the aspirant may proceed with the meditation fairly well without the effect of Rajas and Tamas.

This melting of the heart is very much what we do when we wish to seal a letter with sealing wax and a seal. The sealing wax which is very hard has to be melted with the heat of a flame. When the wax is liquid only then will it take the impress of the seal; within moments the soft wax is hardened and the seal is also made firm as the wax cools in the air.

The same thing happens with prayer. When the heart has been melted, only then the effort in the direction of Sattva materialises and some Sattva is passed to the individual and also creates good essence (Samskar) in the hearts of these people.

R.A. (2) Recently I have quite often when sitting calmly at my desk, felt a tremendous sense of expansion and power which has led me to believe that I could, then and there, sort out different problems in the countries to which I travel in the course of business—indeed on occasion it seems to have actually happened. Is this imagination or could it be a manifestation of some activity on the subtle level? And if so, how can it be encouraged?

H.H. Says it is not always imagination, what Mr. Allan has described. There are both these possibilities; and the possibilities would only be known by the after-effect. If one thinks that the achievements that come to one easily and freely under certain circumstances are done by one single man's cleverness or efficiency, then it must emanate from the Rajasic point of view. If, in performing these activities of solving the problems which arise in time and place, one feels that one has only been the instrument in bringing in the forces at the proper place, then it must be Sattvic and could never be imagining as he puts in his question.

When one has the feeling of being the instrument one is related to the Samashti. Samashti here is the Universal Being. Through this Universal Being one is always deriving forces and also being recharged instantly. Again illustrated in the physical world:

Just as a battery gets its forces from itself; if a dynamo is attached to it, then the forces are continuously available and being recharged, so the supply of energy is always continuous. In the same way if one is not full of self-pride in doing any official action and is somehow tuned to the Universal Being, then one will keep on getting the forces (energy) and doing the job efficiently all the time. But if one takes it to oneself, then the supply will be stopped and one can only use as much energy as is available to him, without any extra supply for further uses.

R. Mr. Allan cabled yesterday: "Could probably be in Allahabad 25th February until 2nd or 4th March. Would interviews be possible then?"

H.H. Says no, he is supposed to be on his travels away from Allahabad at that time but (after thought) he will be back for a fortnight between 7–26 March.

R. To get back to the melting of the wax; both Dr. Connell and I have something we wish to ask further.

D.C. This feeling of surrendering causing melting of the wax has proved very helpful to me on many occasions in the past. It was very encouraging hearing H.H. refer to this.

H.H. Melting of the heart usually achieves two things; First of all, because of certain forces coming into play to melt the heart, a cleansing process takes place, and all the Rajas and Tamas is practically removed from that situation. Once the heart is clear and fluid, then one doesn't have to invite the Grace to come into play. The Grace comes into play by itself so that the cleansing of one's Samskar which takes place because of the melting of the heart and something new and different follows which is the Grace. This Grace is held firmly because of the abundance of Sattva and the clean heart.

If a glass is clean, then the sunlight can come through that glass without any invitation being offered to it, but the sunlight cannot penetrate if its sides are opaque and coated with mud. So the Antahkaran has somehow to be cleaned, and this cleansing is possible only through a prayerful attitude and complete submission so that the forces of the Absolute may come into play within the individual and he should then be able to perform his activities under the influence of Sattva.

D.C. Thank you—this adds understanding about the melting of the heart.

R. For me, the question is always arising as to how to make this fire which will melt the heart of the people who come to me with their problems. I find that it is impossible for a man at my level to do this. But if somebody comes to one with their heart melted due to some severe shock or something, then it is possible to make an imprint on it which will be lasting.

H.H. This question of the hardened heart is because these people whose hearts have become hard have been deceived by others, which means they have been misled or have never been led truthfully. Because of this, the hearts of people get hardened. So they cannot be blamed for this.

But a Leader needs to see that such people deserve that faith and love should be showered on them. Slowly by reasonable discourse their heart can be brought to melt. Everybody is capable of having their hearts melted but because of certain situations the hardening has taken place.

R. To Jaiswal: What Hindi word do you translate as 'heart' in the phrase "melting of the heart?"

How does it relate to Bhawana? The melted heart is soaked in Bhawana. Also the word for 'wonder': Wonder=Vixmaya or Adbhuta (not maya). Head=Viveka. Heart=Hridaya. Melting of the heart=Hridaya pighalana.

H.H. He gives the example of Swami Vivekananda:

Vivekananda (whose earlier name was Narendra) went to Paramahansa Ramakrishna, who was the leading Swami in those days. Narendra's heart was so hard that he did not even pay his respects to the saint and very arrogantly put to Ramakrishna the question: "Have you seen the God?" to which Ramakrishna replied: "Yes, I have seen him." Narendra replied, "How did you see him?" He said, "As I see you." Narendra said, "Can you show me the God?" Ramakrishna said, "Yes, I will show you in due course."

After that he stayed with Ramakrishna. One day they went to have a bathe in the river. The saint asked Narendra to come close to him and told him to dive under the water. The moment he dived, Ramakrishna pounced on him and forcefully kept Narendra under the water. Now this lean and thin boy (as he was in those days) was struggling hard to get out of the water to save his breath and life. The more he struggled, the more the saint forcibly kept Narendra under water; until with all his might he threw his Master off his shoulders and came out of the water. When in a very angry mood he accused him of trying to drown

him, to which the saint smiled and replied: “Well, Narendra, if you could develop the same strength of desire to see the God as you had to come out of the water, certainly you would be able to see the God!”

Thus all the mercy, care and love of his Master melted the heart of the young rebel. Later on he became one of the best exponents of the Vedanta philosophy both in India and in the West.

So it is quite possible to melt the hearts of all those people who because of circumstances have hearts which have become hard. They simply need care and love and reasonable discourse with which they should be helped to melt their heart. Once this is achieved, then their progress should be quick.

D.C. Mrs. de Lotbiniere (a friend of ours in London) asks: Where does the feeling of wonder at Creation come from? It seems so strange that one does not feel this more. One would have expected it to be the main feeling of people on earth—amazement at being here at all! Is it connected with memory of something different?

H.H. The feeling of wonder is a pure feeling; because with this, immediately the question arises in the beholder: “What is the cause of the creation of such beautiful scenes?” He immediately enters into the realm of the causal world, thus reaching to the ultimate source not only of what has been created, but with the source of creation itself.

With this feeling, the beauty that is let loose in the creation is allowed to grow and become all the more enhanced. But if one does not have this sense of wonder at the beauty of creation, then immediately some attachment prevails. One would see that a desire for greater intimacy arises. With greater intimacy, one likes to possess those examples of beauty. Once you have possessed them, you would like to use them. The more you use them, the more associated forms of this beauty you will create. This it seems is one way in which one becomes attached to the outer form of beauty. Then in fact all one succeeds in doing is to pollute the beauty.

If, on the contrary, one has seen something which is repulsive, then one wants to destroy it. So in both cases whether you like or dislike, if you are without the sense of wonder, you are going to be the means of corruption as far as the beauty of the whole is concerned. [*Compare the story of Mevlana and the dead dog*]. But if you hold the sense of wonder in viewing creation whether it is likeable or hateful, beautiful or ugly, then in neither case does the sense of wonder add any corruption to the situation. In the first case, you will enhance, you will work for its enhancement; in the second case, you would not do anything harmful to add to the misery.

He gave again the example of a Sanyasin who happened to see a very beautiful woman in the street. He continued to gaze at the beautiful woman, so some of the householders who came along asked him: “You are a Sanyasin and you have given up the world. Is it good for you to look at the beauty of a woman? For the attraction of a woman would certainly lead you towards the sensual world!” The Sanyasin replied, “My dear friends, I am looking at that Creator who is just making play in His creation through this beautiful form. I am not merely looking at the physical body; but I am enjoying all that which is the cause of the manifest form.”

So one should cultivate this feeling of wonder at creation, in whatever form it may present itself. Enjoy the beauty, and by doing that one will enhance it.

Ramakrishna once said ‘There is holy Man in Rishikesh who gets up early in the morning and stands near a great waterfall. He looks at it the whole day and says to God: “Ah. Well done! How amazing!” He doesn’t practise any other offering or discipline. At night he returns to his hut.’ (*Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* p.586)

H.H. concludes his talk with an example from the Mahabharata:-

When the Pandi war had kept on for ten days and none of the Pandavas had fallen on the battlefield,

Duryodhana, the commander-in-chief said to Bhishma Pitamah who was leading the battle for the Kauravas, "It looks as if all of you somehow are collaborating with the enemy! That is why none of the enemy leaders have fallen so far. What is the cause of such inaction?" Bhishma Pitamah replied, "In the early morning when I settle down for meditation, then you should send your wife to collect 5 arrows from me, which will be 'boon-bound' (fated) to kill the 5 Pandavas the next day!" So his chief became very happy and confident that, after all, the 5 Pandavas would be killed.

Somehow Lord Krishna managed to know this from within himself, and organised a counter plot. He sent for the wife of one of the Pandavas (Draupadi) and said: "Since a boon has been given by Bhishma, your husband will be slaughtered tomorrow, and so we must try to do something about it." Asking her to follow him, Krishna disguised himself in female form, and took Draupadi in the early morning at 4 o'clock to Bhishma Pitamah who was due to start his meditation. The moment he sat for meditation, Draupadi went to him and paid her respects. When she put her head on his feet, he blessed her with the words, "Your husband should live long." At once, quoting this blessing, Draupadi said, "Having given me this boon, you must remember that you also promised the enemy that my husband will be killed on the battlefield this very day, so which of the two is correct? State your position, please!"

Thus he came to know that she was not the wife of Duryodhana, but a wife from the enemy camp. He was very excited and surprised at this situation, saying, "It could not be your wisdom, there must be another cause which has been leading you to this place. Where is the cause?" So she led him to Sri Krishna. There he paid his respects to Lord Krishna and said, "Well, my Lord, the side to which you are going to give your strength, will inevitably win. All our efforts, however big they seem to be, are going to fail!"

The moral of this story is that although Bhishma was on the opposite side, he still cultivated the sense of wonder. Through the sense of wonder he came to know the cause. Since the cause was the Absolute on the side of the Pandavas, he could concede the victory with a smile on his face and without feeling the loss of face or self-respect at all.