

16 February 1970

## READING 2

All the time we were putting our questions we kept recalling the passage from *The Alchemy of Happiness*, which was given in full at our meetings here in February, 1958:

The whole process of making gold is described by the alchemists in a symbolical way. They say gold is made out of *mercury*; the nature of mercury is to be ever moving, but by a certain process the mercury is first stilled, and once stilled it becomes *silver*; the silver then has to be melted, and on to the melted silver, the juice of a herb is poured, and then the melted silver turns into gold... The real interpretation of this process is that mercury represents the nature of the ever-restless mind realised especially when a man tries to collect his attention... Such is the nature of mind, it becomes more restless when you desire to control it; like mercury it is constantly moving. When by collecting the attention one has mastered the mind, one has taken the first step... but for this stilling of the mind a special method is necessary...

When the mind is under complete control, and no longer restless, one can hold a thought at will as long as one wishes. This is the beginning of phenomena; but some abuse these results, and by dissipating the power, they destroy the silver before turning the silver into gold. The silver must be heated before it can melt, and with what? – with that warmth which is the Divine Essence in the heart of man which flows out as sympathy, humility, unselfishness in a stream of a thousand drops... The moment this happens the man really lives; he has unsealed the spring of happiness which overcomes all that is jarring and inharmonious.

After the heart is warmed by the Divine element, which is Love, the next stage is the juice of the herb which is the influence of Truth itself. The love of Truth alone is not sufficient, knowledge of the Truth is clearly necessary. Knowledge of Truth strengthens man's belief in the Truth, throws light on the individual and on life. Things become clear; every leaf on a tree becomes a page of a holy book to one whose eyes are open to the Knowledge of God. When the juice of the herb is poured on the heart and warmed by the love of one's fellow men, then that heart becomes the heart of gold, the heart that expresses what God would express. This man has not seen God, but he has seen the reflection of God in man, and when this is so, then everything that comes from this man comes from God Himself.

### PART 1. THE RESTLESS MIND (MERCURY)

Once having tasted the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge in Eden, the mind of man will always be restless, until he becomes connected with the Fountain of Knowledge within, so that he can answer his questions himself.

The answer to Mrs. Halsey's first question during her two audiences in January, shows why:

Mrs. Halsey: You have said that the worlds Lakshman saw in the story were both false due to Maya. We are confused at the duality... What is meant by True Knowledge?

S. Knowledge is 'to know', and to know the Truth. All Knowledge must be 'true', otherwise it is not Knowledge at all. Worldly knowledge is not really Knowledge. Because the more we get it, the more we feel that there is more to know, i.e. the more ignorant we feel ourselves to be. Lives and lives can be spent in this way in its search and the search would always remain incomplete. But once we know Atman, our desire for

knowledge is fully satisfied and we feel that there is nothing more left which is worth knowing. Hence this knowledge is 'Knowledge' or 'True Knowledge', or 'full Knowledge'.

This Knowledge tells us that only Atman is real, and that all else which we perceive through our senses is unreal. It also tells us that the world is like a huge drama and that we are its spectators. Even if we take ourselves as 'actors', we should do away with sense of involvement in the same way as an actor does, because it is only a drama after all. The world appears real owing to MAYA, though it is false. We think the sky to be blue because our eyes see it blue, till science tells us that it is not blue. Similarly we feel the world to be real till Atman tells us that it is not real. As by knowing iron we know all articles made from iron, similarly by knowing Atman we know the rest. [Actually, Atman cannot be 'known'. It can only be 'felt'.]

We set up huge buildings, using a lot of cement, bricks and steel. In course of time they fall down. But in neither case has there been any increase or decrease in the total mass of material on the earth, i.e., it has remained the same. Similarly a changelessness permeates all changes which we see around us due to Maya. 'True' Knowledge enables us to see this changelessness in a changing world.

The story of Lakshman and Rama was used to illustrate the point that what Lakshman saw beneath the surface of the water or above it had nothing to do with Atman in either case. Hence both the worlds were unreal. It was only one example out of the many which can be used to prove that only Atman is Real and everything else is unreal. (Atman and God are similar, just as Ganges water is the same whether it is in a bottle or in the main stream of the great river.)

Thirst for Knowledge arises, when we feel that we really don't know. It is our attempt to fill the gap. When the gap is filled, the thirst is satisfied. When the mind is made restful by meditation, then, sometimes, a question arises. 'What is this restfulness, after all?' When we know this restfulness, the restlessness disappears.

Mrs. H. In meditation there is no Time and in Life the important moment is *now, this moment*. How can one guard and keep the realization of this truth?

S. We should take recourse to two things, *viz.* Meditation and thoughtfulness. Meditation would give us calmness, firmness and strength; and thoughtfulness would show us the way. We can go ahead with our journey if our path is lit, and we have strength in our feet.

A man who had to go ten miles on a dark night had a lamp which threw light up to 10 feet only. He hesitated to go forward, doubting how he could cover a distance of ten miles with a lamp throwing light up to 10 feet only. Someone who knew better, told him to keep moving on, and then he found that he could complete the journey with the same lamp without any difficulty. Similar things happen to us as a result of ignorance.

At our first talk a fortnight later, R. continued that conversation and asked:

This story has made a deep impression on some people at home who felt that if they could really understand it, they would be clear about many important things. Are not these states being experienced simultaneously? After all, we have the Atman within us experiencing the conscious view of the world while the 'I' (Ahankara) is experiencing the illusion.

S. Agrees, but adds: There are two types of people – the knowers and those who don't know. In the case of the knowers, all their activities conform to their inner state and the

way they understand the world. For them there is no 'attachment' and for such a man life is just a drama or play, so he is free and happy. The ones who don't know, they keep looking to the result of their activities or actions and because of this, they get bound by chains of desire, activity, result.

So many diseases can overtake someone in such a state and this results in a poor growth and poor state of health of the physical body which causes, of necessity, both a closing of the mind as well as cramp and tension of body and muscles. In due course this leads to illness of mind as well as body.

(20 January 1970)

## PART 2. THE MELTING OF THE SILVER

At the end of our third session we decided above everything else to put the instruction into practice; the result was a melting of our hearts which made subsequent talks more intimate and emotional.

It was our Tenth meeting that, in putting a question for Mr. Allan, brought up the subject of the 'melting of the heart':

S. This melting of the heart is very much like what we do when we wish to seal a letter with sealing wax and stamp it with a seal. The sealing wax, which is very hard, has first to be melted with the heat of a flame. Only when the wax is liquid will it take the impress of the seal; within moments the wax cools in the air and the impression of the seal becomes permanent. The same thing happens during the Meditation with or without prayer. When the heart has been melted, only then will the effort in the direction of Sattva materialise; some Sattva is passed to the individual and makes a permanent and good impression in the Essence of such people.

After further questions we returned to the subject:

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

C. This feeling of 'surrendering', causing melting of the wax, has proved very helpful to me on many occasions in the past. It was encouraging hearing you refer to it.

S. 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 practically all the Rajas and Tamas are removed from the situation. Once the heart is clear and fluid, then one doesn't have to invite the Grace of the Guru to come into play. The Grace comes by itself, so that after the cleansing of one's Essence (which takes place because of the melting of the heart) something new and different follows which is the Grace. This Grace is held firmly because of the abundance of Sattva and the cleansed and melted 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 a glass which is thick and plastered with mud...

R. For me, the question is always arising as to how to light this flame which will melt my own heart and also the hearts of people who come with their problems. I find it difficult for a man at my level to do this. But if somebody comes to one with their heart just melted owing to some severe shock or suffering, then it is possible to make an imprint on it which will be lasting.

S. This problem of the hardened heart arises because those 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 it.

But a Leader needs to see that it is just those people who deserve that faith and Love should be showered on them. Slowly by sympathy and reasonable discourse their hearts can be made to melt. Everybody is capable of having their hearts melted, but because of certain situations the hardening has taken place.

(30 January 1970)

In summary it can be said that some people go for Knowledge, but though their minds may be well-trained their hearts are hard, so their knowledge is external and superficial, and they cannot reach their own Fountain of Knowledge within. Others, however, have warm and sympathetic hearts but are impatient at being given knowledge and, though highly impressionable, often have scatty minds and don't keep their impressions clear and firm. Socrates in that passage in Plato's *Theaetetus* which begins: 'There is in our souls a block of wax', describes these differences in great detail.

But, in fact, the *Alchemy of Happiness* is the same for all. The mercury must first be stilled so that it becomes silver; then the silver has to be melted, and upon the molten silver the juice of the herb is poured, which will transmute the silver to Gold.

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