

Monday 8 February

Ninth Talk

R. Trying to practise what H.H. explained about bringing the thoughts into a nutshell, reducing them to a symbol or point at certain times, makes me feel I want to know more about how to use the techniques of Pratyahara. It sent me to sleep and gave bliss when I awoke.

Is there any similar practice one could do during the day (in addition to two good half-hours of meditation) to remind one of Atman?

H.H. (Referring still to technique for sleep at night): This practice can be reinforced by numbers. The moment one starts the Mantra, one should think No. 1, and then at next repetition of Mantra think of No. 2, and so on (as much as one finds time for) from 1 to 2, 3, 4, 5, etc. The numbers need not be pronounced but only brought to mind. This will bring in attention and concentration from useless worrying which dispels sleep.

There is another way as well. A sleepless night is due to the engagement of the mind with many useless types of worries. This drains one's energies for no gain. Deep continuous sleep is kept away, and even if sleep comes it comes for only a short spell, and it would never be deep enough to recharge one's energies from the causal level. One should reverse the process by taking up Spiritual ideas and engage the mind in better and useful activity.

One may think about and find out the greatness and goodness of the Absolute or limitedness of one's own individuality. Scriptures provide a lot of such material. This new activity will dislodge the useless worrying activity at once.

This Spiritual thinking is possible only through a System of reason and authority (scriptural or from wise Men). So this activity will have to demand keen attention and concentration. Activity of this type being Sattvic will produce Sattvic result; reason will clarify ideas and complications, uproot uncontrolled worrying, bring in proper attention and concentration; all of which, in return, need sleep and rest as a matter of course. So one would get sleep on the physical level, clarity of ideas on the subtle level and Sattva at the causal level.

R. As I was just going off to sleep, after pronouncing the Mantra, I suddenly had a wonderful feeling and saw the meeting of the chariot of Arjuna as the Jiv-Atman and the chariot of Lord Krishna as Param-Atman between the two armies, good and bad. This came as a result of the Krishna play. It gives a feeling of Sattva whenever I think of it since.

H.H. It is from good Samskara (Essence) that such a vision or experience arises. The Absolute or the Atman is free, All-knowing and ever blissful. This creation is His 'Leela' (play) which is also blissful. His play is eternal, and whosoever participates in that 'Leela' will also partake of the goodness, freedom and bliss. When, during sleep or waking, one thinks or gets glimpses of His play and His goodness, one is supported by Sattva which is due to his good Samskar or essence. When the mind is made to rest, then the essence or Samskara takes over to project subjects or visions from within. Good projection comes from good Samskara and bad projections from bad Samskara. The meditation is also made to do just that, so the individual has more Sattva and may get more energy for advancement.

In the 4th chapter of the Gita, Krishna says that although the fourfold caste system was created by Me through the differentiation of Gunas and Karma, I am the changeless non-doer. Actions don't taint Me nor do I have thirst for results. Whoever knows Me thus is also not fettered by action.

This means that to indulge in such good thoughts or visions would not in any way be a bond-producing activity, for all this purifies the individual and leads him to freedom. The Creation comes forth and is sustained

and ultimately withdrawn back into the Absolute; and men who see all this as ‘Leela’ (a play), participate in this creation, sustaining and merging in Sat, Chit and Ananda.

R. There is a question on this from a lady from London who gives initiations with me:

Miss P. Scrutton. “Remembering the existence of the Atman in myself.” During the day I can recollect the taste of higher experiences in myself. When I ‘wake up’ for short moments, I try and bear the Divine in mind to lift myself up from the level of ordinary life. To remember that I myself am divine, I have to think of a great tree, of myself as a leaf attached by a great life force to this wonderful being which itself spreads its great roots into the earth.

How can I feel this more simply, that this Divine person is in me? Not just that without Him I could not be, but that He exists in me? Ordinarily it is all too easy to believe in oneself, that one can do, that one is somebody. It is more difficult to believe and remember oneself in a real practical way—to live this belief.

H.H. In the 15th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita the same idea has been fully described where Krishna says;

I am the root of this great tree of the universe which has its beginning above in Me. The trees on earth get their nourishment from below and their form grows up, while this universal tree has roots above, which is in the Absolute; gets its life-force from Him, and manifests as branches, leaves, fruits, and flowers.

The leaves are said to be Vedas (Chandas) the word or the sound. The individuals in the universe in multiple forms are nothing but sounds, manifesting as they do according to their meaning and function. In nature a seed is the embodiment of some taste or smell which its fruit produced, while it holds the seed for further propagation. In the case of the great universal tree, the real seed is the Absolute which in time spreads up to manifest millions of forms like all of us. In fact individuals also hold the same possibility of the taste of bliss which the original seed has.

This is all we need to understand and live up to. The sap or the life-force of all forms is from the Absolute; Sat, Chit and Ananda. If one remembers this all the time, then one can act accordingly. People, when they see some forms or names around them, do not look beyond for the cause of all these forms. Reason, meditation and Knowledge show that they all have their origin in the same single Absolute. Because people forget this fact, the Teacher prescribes them ‘discipline’, meditation, true Knowledge; and with attention on these one would soon learn to live this Divine within and without. One who remembers Absolute remembers Self, and who is in the Self all the time is in the Divine.

R. In trying to bring this memory of the Absolute during the day, I gave one or two people of the senior group the description of Dakshina-Murti, and here is the result in one person whose question follows:

Mrs. N. Douglas-Henry. In pursuit of meditation I find myself turning more and more towards simplicity. The hand symbol you showed us (index finger folded against thumb) helps me very much. It reminds me without words of what I am trying to do, and seems—for me—the best way of cutting out inner talk. Are there perhaps other signs and symbols which you could bring back to us from His Holiness?

H.H. The sign you mention is symbolised as Jnana Mudra (Knowledge symbol). In this state, the index finger bows down to meet the thumb. Here the index finger represents the Ahankara (ego) of the Jiva (person) bowing down to meet the Param-Atman and the other three fingers symbolise Prakriti (his nature) bound by the Law of Three which repeats everywhere. The individual must get above the Law of the Three Gunas by continuously being in union with the Absolute to enjoy the full Knowledge of the Absolute. When this experience opens up, there will, in due course, come into his sight many layers of finer and finer Knowledge in the development of that individual.

R. In following what I understood from the original Shankaracharya's own poem (Dakshina-Murti), if one performs this Mudra when one is alone and meditating, I found that at other times one could get this state simply with the mental picture without making it with the hand. Is this permitted?

H.H. The first Shankaracharya associated this Mudra (position or symbol) with his famous principle that Brahman alone is the Truth and the universe is illusion, and that there is complete unity of Jiv-atman (Individual Self) and the Brahman. Brahman is the thumb. Index is the Jiva, and the other three fingers are the play of the Gunas in the universe (which is illusion or imaginary). The leaders of all branches of the Vedanta System have used this; and it is said that Rama himself used this symbol when he ruled his people in Ayodhya to signify the Oneness of man with the Absolute.

The index finger stands for Ahankara (Personal ego). In this finger is plenty of Rajas. If one pointed this finger at a tender shoot of pumpkin, then it will dry out and die. This finger is always used for disciplines, orders, dictations, reprimands and threats. This is a hard and most rajasic finger. It needs to be united to the Truth or the Absolute.

The middle finger is used for all measures related to man and the world at large. The ring finger is used for all ceremonial and ritualistic works alone. Most of anointing is done with this finger. In engagement and marriage ceremonies of most countries the ring is put on this finger. The little finger has a curative effect. One can rub this finger against the thumb or the palm, and then move it over the ailing place and it will cure.

When one uses a rosary, only the middle, ring finger and thumb should be used; for it is laid down that the index finger should not touch the beads, since this would make it impure.

The hand represents the Forces in action; these fingers have such different functions and use of these fingers passes on these Forces. If the young shoot of the pumpkin (without having any eyes) can get the message of reprimand from one of the five fingers, then other beings would also get the message and act accordingly. If you point your index finger at a gentleman, he would take offence!

R. Was H.H. going to say something about posture (how we sit) or use the Mudra during meditation?

H.H. The meditation posture used in the West has certain limitations. The tradition in India is to sit cross-legged and put the left-hand palm under the right-hand palm at the place where the feet cross each other. The left hand is symbolic of Prakriti (Nature) and the right hand represents the Absolute (its Creator); so the Prakriti is put under the absolute. Or as the Jnana Mudra has been described to you, put both hands in the form of this Mudra and place them on both knees in the cross-legged position so that the three fingers of each hand slope downward, palms facing upwards. If you sit on a chair, the arms of the chair make it uncomfortable. Even putting your own arms together is not comfortable and so at most one can put the hands on each thigh. It is better to use a chair without arms.

Tuesday 9 February

Tenth Talk

Holland. Mrs D. Van Oyen. What is to be the next step, when one has really seen that only the Atman is Truth, the rest but Maya? Does it take a long time to let this penetrate in the whole being? It is never out of the mind now, but it is looking for a way to manifest itself—I have noticed that wishes of the 'ego' become less and less important—yet it has nothing to do with indifference. It is just that there are fewer wishes or desires in this region.

H.H. When this idea (that Atman alone is Truth and the rest is Maya or illusion) has been fully appreciated, then one will experience expansion of Light, power, Knowledge and service, and accordingly the limited ideas of individuality and relationships will break their barriers and go on extending in proportion to the depth at which this idea is rooted in the being. The being will be full of enthusiasm and one will be naturally able to know more, teach more, serve many more than one used to do. The world would become a family. The limited would become unlimited, small will be large, and darkness be transformed into Light. Love would prevail everywhere. The individual will love all, and all others will love the individual. In the 12th chapter of Bhagavad Gita Krishna says that, whosoever loves Me, would love everyone in the world and also be loved by them; for when love prevails the response is from both sides. To manifest this Knowledge is to expand the family, the service be offered to many more, love be poured out to all.

If love, Knowledge and service is on the increase I should assume that the idea that Atman alone is Truth is manifesting. At this stage the Ahankara is fully purified and the Light, power and Knowledge of the Atman is made to reflect in one's inner Being and the outer world, just as a clear glass allows light to shine inside and outside equally; if, instead, an opaque earthen wall of separate ego is created, then the light will shine inside and would, of course, produce some heat; but light and heat would not be made available outside. This idea, fully appreciated, will clean the Being and allow full reflection of power, Knowledge, bliss and service.

R. Here we have been seeing this happening in a marvellous way, in the spreading from and towards the Shankaracharya and his Tradition, and all these fine people here trying to convey love.

U.S.A. Mr. Grigg. (Boston). In trying to keep intentions (i.e., thoughts) and deeds consistent, one often seems to run up against a state of inertia in the body. For example, one knows one should practise some useful exercise, such as calligraphy or music, and something in one even seems to desire that, but one finds oneself watching television instead—seldom an enlightening occupation! The key seems to lie in feeding and strengthening the heart, i.e., the emotional centre. What help can the Shankaracharya give on this problem, please?

H.H. This is because of untrained Manas, which is always ready to fall for coarser subjects which are mostly related to physical and sensual enjoyments. Manas considers them more important, and so likes to dwell in such activities. The worldly physical things have a certain importance in life which need to be attended to but work on Self-realisation also has certain important factors which need one's attention. This way the pull of the world and the pull of the School create conflicts. One wonders about what one must do first.

This is the domain of reason (Buddhi). Reason is there to decide what is more useful to the Atman, and this can only come about through personal experience. If one observes one's activities one will soon find which will give more and lasting goodness. Having found the importance of good work, one should stand by it. When one has to see an important person, then one gives more time and care to meeting him. The School work is for meeting the most important of all so one must logically do just that. If one fails to do that, one hasn't known the importance; for with that Knowledge, no one really can afford to indulge in inferior things.

Manas (desiring mind) goes for pleasure; Buddhi stands for good; and good is important in comparison with pleasure. Follow the Buddhi and just practise good work again and again. Make sure what is important; having done that you would not need anyone to tell you what you must do.

A mother helps a child to learn to walk and then she lets go of his hand. The child may fall and, if he does, the mother gives support again and tries again until the child walks by himself. The child trusts the mother.

The School is the Spiritual mother; follow her, she asks you to do work for your own help. The more you spend your time in good activity, the more good will be available, and in due course you will develop a taste for

good activity which, one day, will become natural; the Manas will have been trained to do more important work rather than less important.

Children have to give more attention to learn. The new teacher also has to study to teach, but not like the children. An experienced teacher simply walks in, and without any exertion he conducts his teaching; and all this only because one practises one's work again and again until it becomes natural and easy.

London. Mr. Allan. All knowledge is always there and always available, but it does not belong to us. A flash of understanding! Yet to make it mine will limit, if not destroy, it. Truth given in a simple phrase so divinely illuminated that it contains the wisdom of many books. How, then, are we to communicate with each other on the physical level?

H.H. Knowledge is the material of Consciousness and it is available all the time and at every place. This is experienced in two ways as Aham (I am) or Idam (this is or that is). All Knowledge which is composed of these two types of experiences can be had only through machinery supplied to all beings. The machinery consists of the senses, Manas, Buddhi, Chitta and Ahankara. These are all one has for there is no other instrument of knowledge. So one can get all Knowledge through this machinery. This machinery is also created by the Self who uses it, and so it has all possible functions to perform for Knowledge. Only with these can you experience, know, record the Knowledge, and make use of it in communication. It may seem that by claiming it or making it 'mine', the Knowledge is limited; but if one knew that it was everywhere and available to all who care to use their machinery, then it would be an unnecessary burden to claim it or make it 'mine'. But whatever you do, claim it or not, you must experience to get it.

Eyes see everything; but the eye does not see itself, and yet we all know that seeing is done only by the eye. One can see all 'Idam', the world around; but one can't see one's Manas or Buddhi, Chitta or Ahankara. By inference from their work, we all know them to be there—but only by our own experience—and know them as 'my' Manas or 'my' Buddhi. If this machinery is used properly then all knowledge and inferences would be right.

The question of communication pre-supposes experience. If one has experience, then one only needs to learn the language and communicate fully to those who have, or could have, similar experience and know your language. Since all men have the same machinery, there is no obstacle in Knowledge and communication.

Aham (I am) experiences everything through the subtle body and senses, but Aham can't be experienced by subtle body and senses. Idam alone is experienced through subtle body of Manas, Buddhi, Chitta and senses. Idam is composed of Pratyaksha (immanent or present to the senses) and Paroksha (beyond or away from senses but comprehended by mind). Aham is neither Pratyaksha nor Paroksha so it is called Aparoksha, that is, 'not beyond'. One cannot know the knower by any means, for the Knower alone is the cause and experiencer of knowables. The Aham or the Self is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss. No one can ever show Truth, Consciousness or Bliss for they are always experienced through something and things are always physical. At most one can define Truth as that which remains the same in all three times, i.e. remains the same in past, present and future. In physical world there is nothing which could remain the same in past, present and future; only Consciousness or Bliss or Truth remain the same, and that is the Self who experiences all things and can communicate through the common medium of language. Those who have experience, they alone can communicate.

For example, take grains of salt in a salt bed which have been extracted from sea water. If they wish to fathom and measure the depth of the sea or ocean, they might get back into it again. The only thing that could happen to them and their curiosity is that very soon they will be dissolved into the sea, and that curiosity will also be dissolved, for they themselves have turned it into sea and they are sea. How could they know it by being themselves? As long as one is divorced from the experience, there will always be curiosity.

Absolute is like an ocean and individuals are like grains of salt. Curiosity makes them jump into the ocean. Some use mechanical devices, some use logic, Manas Buddhi and Chitta, etc. The best way is through the reason; when reason is awakened and its gate open, then all divisions vanish and there is only one ocean. Those in search of Knowledge have experience; become One with the Absolute, and then curiosity vanishes. Aham and Idam become One, and then there is never any problem of communication. Curiosity is a sincere act from the side of non-realisation, but only a comic act from the side of Realisation! Realise and communicate.

Mr. Healey. A few days ago I watched a man repairing a television set. He had opened it up and was working on it without disconnecting it. I said to him, 'Isn't that dangerous?' He said, 'It could be.'

This suggested to me that we live in an environment where extraordinary vibrations go through matter in all directions. Is it possible that vibrations like that could harm humanity? I wondered if you could ask the Shankaracharya about it.

H.H. The whole of Creation is full of vibrations and those responsible for them know it, but those who do not know them get frightened from a distance! The man who knows his work fully knows quite well about all dangers, and due to his knowledge manages to work without being overpowered by them. Each profession works on the same principle. Teachers know their subject; surgeons know how to operate; but even a good engineer would be terrified to do a medical operation! A lawyer deals in many cases, works with full confidence, and wins. If he knows that his client's case is not true, then he might pretend to win and put up the case only to get his fees; but his lack of confidence itself would become the cause of his defeat. Electricians know how to work with power currents; with strong currents they use rubber gloves and boots. They never get killed unless they go to sleep at their work. As long as they are attentive all will go smoothly. Those who don't know that job face the danger.

The Creation also has such danger-points, but responsible Men know that and don't get into any panic. There is never a dangerous moment for them. The only needful work is to know one's job fully and efficiently. A realised Man would have learned all about the connections of the world. The world is connected through the vibrations of the subtle world, which are finer than the physical world vibrations. He knows how to handle them and would never be in danger. Those who do concern themselves with these impending dangers, only need to learn the art of Self-realisation (which deals with these connections) and they will see how easy the job is! All dangers lie in ignorance or half-knowledge.

There are certain other people who are 'jack of all trades but master of none'. They collect a little information from all those trades and do those little jobs whenever the occasion arises. They are neither confident of themselves nor can they do other jobs with confidence. Their use is very limited. For real men it is open for them to learn, know and do their work thoroughly well. On the Spiritual level also the field is wide open for people to learn, know and be able to do their work thoroughly well.

Mr. Bill Anderson. The arts in the West are frequently in a bad state either because they are hampered by old and worn out rules, or because no rules are followed at all. The first condition leads to dull art, and the second to very private art so communication fails. How can we overcome these problems?

H.H. The fall of standards in the way art is being executed, communicated and appreciated is just now a universal phenomenon! The West and East both suffer from it. There is nothing wrong in the arts and their rules. The wrong is in those concerned with art for they have lost touch with real experience. Their experiences are shallow, their Beings are shallow, they get hold of something old and re-fabricate it in their own way and seek cheap popularity or money. They produce too much from too little experience, and these products are admired today, but will be thrown away tomorrow. There is no depth which could stand the test of time and fare well.

Human society, influenced by such hollow works and workers, has also lost touch with appreciation, and thus you have the present situation. When a man of good Being takes to experience and expression, then Art manifests, and it also goes direct to the heart of people. Rules are not what matters most, it is Being and experience that matters. Make Men and they will create Art.

Mr. Bill Anderson. We are told that asking questions helps our progress towards Self-realisation. Where does a good question come from?

H.H. Chitta is the store. Here many products can be stored. Some store good Knowledge, and some people store rubbish which is not appreciated by Atman or Buddhi and there is no ready refusal to accept what is not true or good. Then one has to dispose of it, and a question arises from the Atman as to the disposal of whatever rubbish is collected. Just as a trader when by mistake he gets hold of a faulty product, then he goes on to sell it quickly. So when the Atman or Buddhi gives a call that there is something untrue or impure about certain ideas or habits one has stored, then it produces a good question. Those who question alone purify.

There are two types of trader. A good trader, if by chance he has somehow got a faulty product, then he would not put it in the market for he does not like to trade bad products and deceive his clients. He will destroy it and replace by good product even if he has to do so at his own loss. The other and wicked traders would get cheap and useless products and sell them under any pretext and deceive their clients. Even in Spiritual level these are seen. People take to rubbishy ideas and keep on trading in them, while very few stay firm to get only true Knowledge and then give that to others.

R. Finally, I thank His Holiness for all the care and trouble he has taken. He has recommended so much for this ill patient who has got a period of convalescence ahead of him; may this man be excused from teaching other people until he has cleared the bad out himself?

H.H. Offered his pure blessing to Dr. Roles and his people. He also said that Dr. Roles is not ill, but he superimposes the ills of others on himself and seeks cure through his own experience. This Tradition offers true Knowledge which will cure not only the superimposition but also the real ills.

Blessings again offered by His Holiness to Dr. Roles and his people.

Questioned afterwards about the meaning of those last remarks, Jaiswal explained that they referred to one of the traditional methods doctors use in India: the doctor takes all the symptoms and worries and pains of his patients into his own being and thus cures the patient. But he himself then has to find his own cure. So in this doctor's case. Having taken into himself all his people's worries and pains, he then has to seek his own cure from the Holy Tradition.

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