

8 November 1971

## READING 5

### PART 1. 'TWO LIGHTS'

We have learnt that the Light of the Param-Atman can reach us through two pathways in the human nervous system – emotional and intellectual. The former leads through 'conscience' to the Emotional apprehension of Truth by undemanding love, until in Samadhi nothing exists but the ecstasy of Higher Emotional Centre.

Just before he told us the story (included in our Summer Programme) about 'the man who wanted to buy the King', the Shankaracharya said: 'One must learn well this lesson, that one never demands anything in return for love.' And, after the story, he concluded:

Once you win over Param-Atman by Love, only then do you get all you need for a happy and good life; but people usually stop for little things and give up the pursuit of love... Love is unconditional, and there is no scope for demands or rewards.

It's like the folk-song that just now runs like this in my head before I sit to meditate:

I will give my love an apple without any core,  
I will give my love a house without any door,  
I will build my love a palace wherein she may be,  
And she may unlock it without any key.

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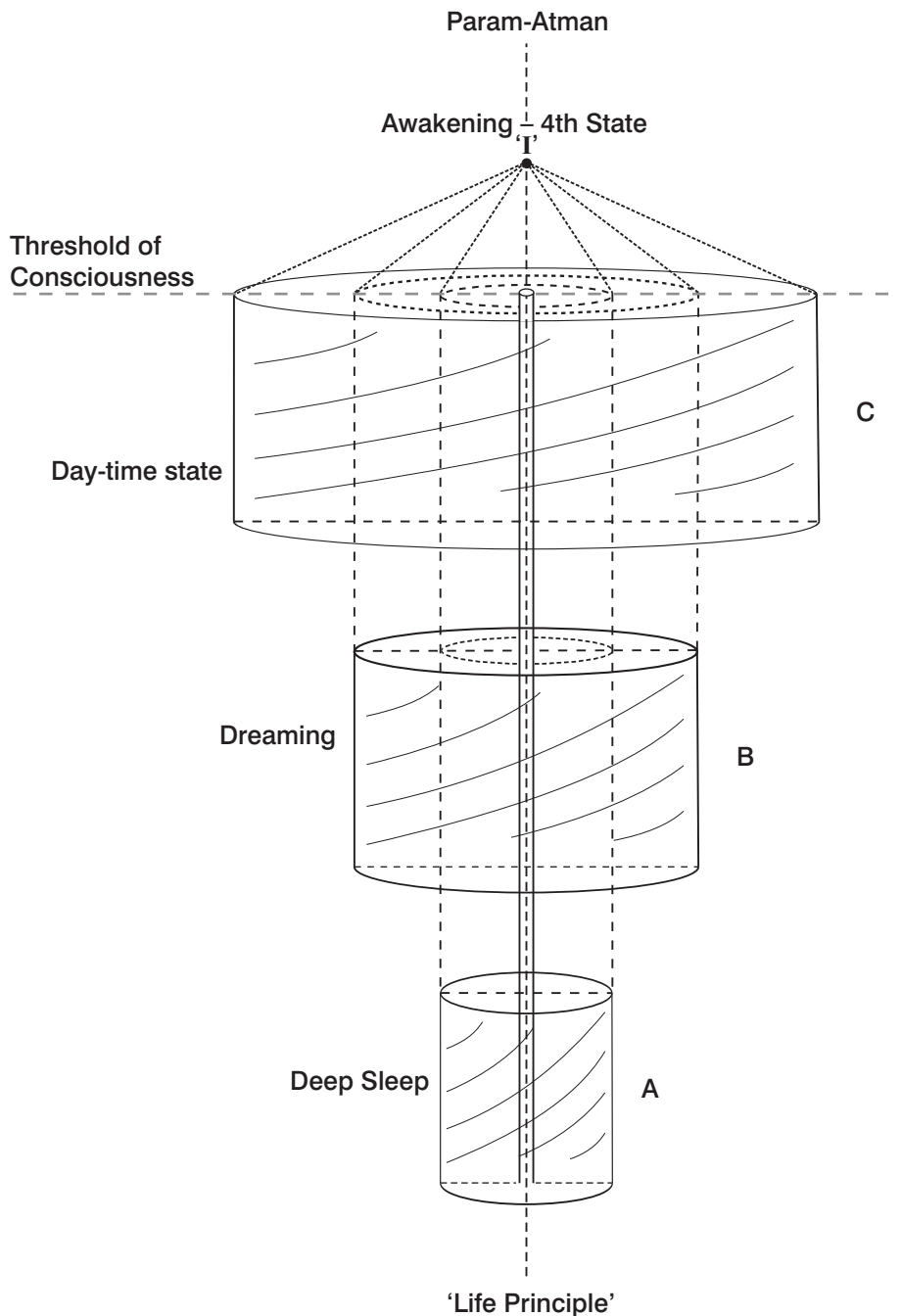
The other way the Light travels is through Consciousness, reason, True Knowledge; in the direction of the Higher Intellectual Centre (though it seems one needs to enjoy Samadhi before one can achieve full Enlightenment – Turiya). I get this most easily by learning all I can about Nature and the evolution of Organic Life on Earth, or about astronomy. There's something in the breathless interest exuded by Patrick Moore in his BBC programmes that lights me up, and there is a particularly stimulating account of current knowledge about 'The Evolution of the Stars' in *The Listener* of 4th November.

But people differ greatly, and we are told that for some time they may have to choose between the two approaches. If you want to go to Edinburgh you have to choose whether you will fly or go by train; you can't change from one to the other on the way! Too much learning interferes with the devotional attitude, and the emotions play merry hell with the logical approach through that insidious trap called 'wishful thinking'. But from about the 5th Step of the Ladder the two seem to come together and go happily hand-in-hand; or, shall we say, one might enjoy the Knowledge on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and the Emotion on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays! But we are told also that a School should provide plenty of opportunities for both kinds of people. So each has to decide and keep to his or her choice.

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## PART 2. 'KNOW YOURSELF'

But, whatever your nature, in the field of Self-Knowledge one does seem to need some of both – the neurologists and physiologists bring in so much indiscriminating detail that they can't see the wood for the trees; while the ordinary person makes mistakes by greatly over-simplifying the extreme complexity of human nature. For this reason we want to re-introduce both here and in New York the diagram given in Reading 3 (1971/15); for, once one gets the idea of it, one can approach it either intellectually or emotionally (see figure).



We take it first as representing the brain itself, as it evolves from conception through the invertebrate (segmental), vertebrate and human levels (A, B, and C) in every human embryo and these remain with us all through life. This is true for the sciences of embryology and neurology; and applies also to Self-realization, provided you insert the central dotted line, which represents the 'Consciousness of Self' from the most restricted (lower) to the most universal (at the top). 'Without knowing the Owner of this pleasure-ground of body (physical, subtle and causal) all Knowledge and all disciplines are fruitless.'

If we can find the most significant questions to ask about this picture as explaining our own experiences, it will greatly help in handing it on to all the newer people who are now joining the group in New York. For it's clear from their questions that they chiefly want 'to know themselves' and be able to communicate in Western terms. For now, it's necessary to be sure we realise that it is only above the 'Threshold of Consciousness' (a, b and c) that we actually experience the levels A, B and C. Further, that the most primitive areas of the brain which are in complete or relative darkness in deep sleep and the dream-state, reveal quite different functions when lit by the Light of Consciousness in the Forebrain.

It's hard to understand just through words, but a vivid story told to the Allans by His Holiness (1970 Record, p.167) should help:

There was a Realized Man who was also a King, called Janaka. One day while sitting on his throne he fell asleep and dreamt. He dreamt that he was attacked and lost his throne, and then wandered round penniless and persecuted by everyone. He eventually took to the forest starving. He managed to gather enough fruit and vegetables to make a meal, but just as he had prepared it two bulls appeared and trampled it all in passing. At this the King began to weep and he woke up to find real tears pouring down and wetting his shoulder. He then called all the pundits and asked them to answer the question, which was real – the dream which produced real tears – or his seat on the throne? He said he would handsomely reward anyone who could answer, but would severely punish anyone who answered if the answer proved false. Various people tried to answer, but the answer was incomplete and they were duly punished.

There was a cripple called Ashtavakra (which translated, means 'bent in eight places')... This man came to answer the question and started to climb the steps to throne. Because of his handicap he fell half-way up and the courtiers all laughed at him. He also started to laugh which greatly surprised them, so they asked, 'Why do you laugh?' He then said, 'You laughed first so tell me why you laughed.' They replied that *they* laughed because so many wise men had tried to answer the question and failed, and he couldn't even get up the steps and had the impertinence to think he could answer. He then said, '*I* laughed because you take all this for real, but the only reality is the Self.' [He meant that all that the King experienced in his dream was just as unreal (the dream, the 'real' tears and the throne) as the scene they were now enacting.] The king understood, and although himself a Realized Man, became a pupil of Ashtavakra.

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**PART 3. 'TO KNOW AND TO REALIZE THE KNOWLEDGE'**

Part of our confusion arises because of our misuse of the English words 'realize' and 'know' as His Holiness's sayings get translated for us. He pointed out to me last January that most of my knowledge is 'unrealized' or merely theoretical (as, for instance, that 'man is not only flesh and bones, he is also mind and soul and Consciousness'). To 'realize', i.e. to make this knowledge *real*, one has to experience it fully by practice (The OED points out that it's the same as to 'realize' securities or property by converting them into cash).

In summary, one can take a familiar aphorism and rewrite it as follows:

He who doesn't know, without realising that he doesn't know, is a fool – shun him.

He who doesn't know, but realises that he doesn't know, is a child – lead him.

He who knows, but doesn't realize (make real) his knowledge, is asleep – wake him.

He who knows and has made his knowledge real, is wise – follow him.

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