

## *Wednesday 11 October*

D.S. To continue with the question from the Barrister:

He asked about helping his children to find a teacher and mentioned they were keen on their Church and reading of the Scriptures. This is very good, but it should not limit them. They can go from this to the universal way. First go to church, then see the church manifested in the whole world—not just the building, but the whole universe. And help them gradually to see that Christ is the messenger of God, but they can also see everybody as the Christ. So from the individual aspect to the universal aspect.

*R. It is the limitations that cause all the quarrelling.*

D.S. You should stick to your own religion and Scriptures, but widen them to merge into the infinite. The parents can help the children by practising themselves—example is better than precept. It's no use saying to children, "You must read the bible, you must love God"; it will be impossible for them unless you practise it.

Now the question from his wife about putting spiritual things, or looking after her family first? This is a wrong idea; these things are not separate. The art of work is that, if you once believe that God is everywhere, then your children also represent God. By serving the family, you are serving God. God does not remain isolated in the jungle, or in the atmosphere. If you have faith, regard and fidelity, and do not waver from that, then God will be present to you in all parts of your life.

An atheist used to say all the time, "God is Nowhere". He said it all the time, and he wrote it everywhere, even on the kitchen wall. When he was nearing death, his limbs would not move, and his vision was failing and blurred. He looked at the wall and saw "God is Now here". That is the idea—not that God is in church but not here. God is Now Here—in my husband, in my children, in my work, in my servant, and my duty is to serve them. Service is the best worship. Think, "I am cooking food for an emblem of God".

In many ways you are serving God better than me; I am serving by prayer and meditation, but you are serving by practical work which is better. By prayer I am not giving any material, but you are giving your work, your exertion, money and faith. In that sense you are much better than me. It is not necessary to renounce family life and the world as long as you do not say, 'my son, etc.' He is not your son; you cannot change his form or give him life; he is not yours, he is just loaned to you. He is God himself, playing the rôle of son. You are only the custodian. If you can get this attitude, both sides will benefit. Since you are placing God within him, then he will attract divine qualities; so both will benefit.

*J.R. This is what I meant when I tried to say that one's situation in life is where one has to work. There is no conflict.*

D.S. When the boy is naughty you say, "What a miraculous part in the way of God he is playing!" You have a servant, and you say, "How good of God to come to me in the form of a servant to serve me." Even a bad servant will not remain bad for long if you do not flinch from this attitude; he will eventually act in a God-like way.

*R. When you say God, do you mean Param-Atman?*

D.S. Yes. (He then went on with his line, with another example):

A rich man who was very fond of his father, after the father's death had an image made of him in gold, and also had a pair of his father's shoes copied in gold. After some time, he fell on bad times, and became very poor. His wife pointed out that they had lots of photographs of his father, and other shoes of his, and that they should sell the gold images and they could replace them when times got better. The man took the gold image and the gold shoes to sell. The merchant weighed them both, added the two weights together and calculated the price at so much per gram. The man selling the gold was furious and called

him cheat for offering the same price for the image as for the shoes, but the buyer pointed out that he was not buying the image or the shoes; he was buying gold and they were both the same. So in the worldly life we see so many forms and we distinguish between the father and the shoes, but pure Consciousness is the material throughout. Direct your attention not on the form, but the material contained in them, which is super-Consciousness.

*Q. from Mexico about how to transfer your sufferings to the Param-Atman:*

D.S. There are two ways of doing your duties in the service of Param-Atman:

1. The individual aspect, 'I am doing it';
2. I am not there. Just as others are emblems of God, so am I; therefore Param-Atman is doing Param-Atman's work. Ego is eliminated and you simply become a witness, a witness of the whole show.

*R. This young man had very great suffering, and nearly died during a big operation on his heart .....*

D.S. Interrupts and continues:

Images vanish, you become transcendent; you merge yourself in this witness of self, and only witness remains. Now who suffers? Body and mind. Become a witness of your body. Since one identifies mind with the body, the body's suffering touches one. By practice, you can feel exactly the same way about the sufferings of your own body as you do about the suffering of others. Watch the body suffering just as a dramatic rôle. Let Param-Atman suffer. Once you cross the barrier the force of Param-Atman will come to the body. Param-Atman is free from diseases, and His whole power can descend and can cure you of your disease. It is possible provided your separation is complete. In the same way, if you cannot solve a problem, make yourself absolutely empty and then it will be solved.

*Q. from Mexico about manifestation of latent abilities.*

D.S. Meditation and the remembrance of Param-Atman must go to the place where it will become entirely void; then the abilities will manifest. We gave the answer about the suffering and physical level, but mental level answers are the same. It is the ego covering which prevents manifestation.

*R. For that you need complete humility and concentration?*

D.S. Concentration to the extent that there is no concentration, so that no trace of ego remains. All things centred in one together is meaning of concentration.

Take the heat of the sun: even at 120° or 130° it may burn your skin, but it cannot set light to a bit of paper. Yet with the gentle heat of the winter sun, if it is concentrated through a small piece of glass, it can set light to and burn up the paper.

The force of Param-Atman is spread out—all pervading, but it manifests its full force only if it is concentrated on a particular point, just as you concentrate the sun's rays. It burns the ego when it is concentrated, and then only Param-Atman remains. This is the point of concentrating the mind on a particular point.

*Questions from New Zealand: Does Dharana—concentration on a particular place, take a man to Self-consciousness?*

D.S. The simple answer is Yes. Whether you go by the Way of Devotion, or by the Eight-fold Path of Yoga, or by the Way of Knowledge, Dharana is necessary in all three Ways. Dharana means to retain it in a particular place. He thinks of the feet of God, or any part of God, either in his heart or in his head. You concentrate your mind on a particular point until only this point is there. If the mind is allowed to roam everywhere, then it will not be quiet and you will not come to Samadhi.

In the Yoga way it is retained in Chakras. These Chakras are in the spinal cord (but not in the physical sense); they can be seen by the Divine eye. They are retained in plexuses—subtle plexuses by which each of the physical plexuses is energised:

1. **Muladhara.** In the perineum, in the region of the genital organs.
2. **Swadhisthana.** Behind the coccyx.
3. **Manipuraka.** Near the navel.
4. **Anahata.** Near the heart.
5. **Vishuddha.** Near the thyroid gland.
6. **Ajna.** Behind the forehead, near the pineal gland, connected with the intellect.

That is why you see people with their head shaved, but a tuft of hair left there. It is supposed to be a very important and very delicate part, not to be rubbed too hard, and so the hair is left. It is the seat of the intellect.

From all these our nerves and energy are controlled.

7. **Sahasrara**, the last, which is not included in the six, but contains all the six.

By devotion, Dharana is not a particular object or plexus, because they eliminate by knowledge everything; it becomes void, and they practise Dharana simply on I, and that I is a point. You take a particular point to the void, but void is nothing—nihilism—so who remains? The witness remains. Therefore he places his 'I' on the point of the void, and feels himself there; therefore he goes up and up. If he comes down, he feels himself in everything below.

*R. Would you describe the chakras as levels of energy or ...*

D.S. Continues: The experiences and desires which direct the physical plane; as they become more and more subtle they go away.

To fully discuss the Chakras would take a long time, but Dharana can lead to Self-consciousness in this way. It depends on which path you have chosen. Dharana is transformed into Dhyan. In practising it there are interruptions; by constant practice you fix it, and then it is called Dhyan. When that only remains, and even Chitta does not remain, then that is Samadhi; when nothing remains, that is Nirvikalpa Samadhi, the ultimate state.

*Question from New Zealand. Asks about transferring it from head to heart.*

D.S. Dharana can also be made outside; when he says 'everything is God' that becomes Dharana. Fixing the mind on one point—seeing God in everything—that is also Dharana.

*R. Mind here in the sense of attention?*

D.S. Mind attending to one particular point. At first it requires effort, but then it becomes habit and natural. This Dharana made outside can also lead to Self-consciousness. Effort always gives some sort of worry, but when it is effortless it becomes natural—like the natural feeling you have of existing; you are not all the time worrying about whether you are here or not!

*Question from New Zealand. About the difference between repeating the Mantra in the mind and remembering.*

D.S. I do not understand this question; they are the same. There are three different forms of repetition, but they are first vocal; and with this one you can be saying out loud, "Om, Om, Om," and thinking of something quite different.

The first (vocal) one is:

**Vaikhari**; which is repetition by making sound—vocal ‘Om’, ‘Ram’, etc.

The second, **Upanshu**; here repetition is with lips but there is no sound;

The third, **Manasik**; mental repetition.

The second is ten times more forceful than the first, because the mind is completely free to wander while you are making the vocal sound; and the third is a thousand times more forceful than the others, because through making the mind do it, it is not free to wander and disturb you. Make the mind do it, and remain a witness. Become the master of your mind and let it do the work; this is possible by becoming the witness. If you do it with ego you will become the slave or servant, so make the mind obey your wishes and remain the Master of the servant.

*R. H.H. has said that the mistress must not run after the maid-servants.*

D.S. You should also have aim; if you do not have in mind the inherent quality and object of the meditation, it will only remain words. Meditation should not be aimless.

Take for instance, OM; it consists of three words. Now if you recite ‘OM’, ‘A’ means you have crossed the physical world; then ‘U’ means you have crossed the mental world; and ‘M’—ignorance, the cause of all the sins.

Now you are come to the fourth state which is mySelf; therefore with each repetition the mind should be merged with Self-consciousness. You can do it in one repetition, or you can take a bunch of four repetitions and eliminate the stages one by one.

## *Thursday 12 October*

After meditation and before the Swami came in, we asked His Holiness if we could put a question to him. He said, “No, it is the Swami’s last day here, so put all your questions to him once more. To-morrow we shall have opportunity to discuss any differences in the doctrines expressed.”

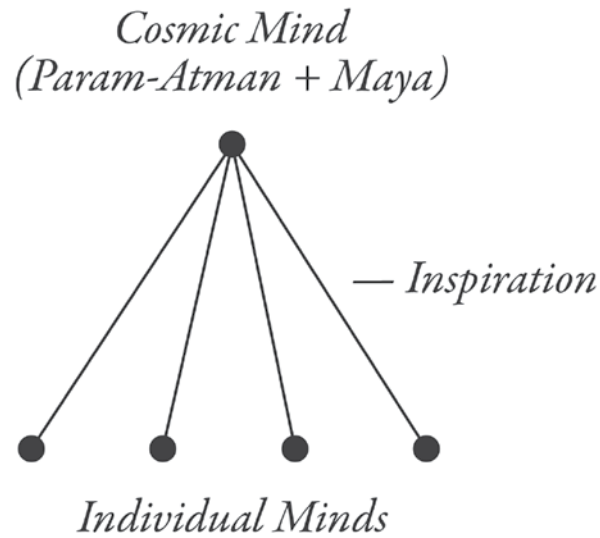
The Swami then entered with all the unanswered written questions from abroad. Having had opportunity to study the questions and being pressed for time, his replies were short and pithy.

*London. (N.B.) Is there a practical way of bringing the intellect into harmony with the emotion so that one’s energy might be preserved and one might then discover calmly what action is going to be taken without exhausting oneself?*

D.S. By surrendering our ego or individual intellect we can at the same time get full activity and power, because then it is Cosmic mind. When you are in the individual plane you cannot think and get the right action; therefore you get exhausted. Now, if you work very hard but are successful, you do not feel exhausted. It is when you are not successful that you get exhausted. Failure is exhausting.

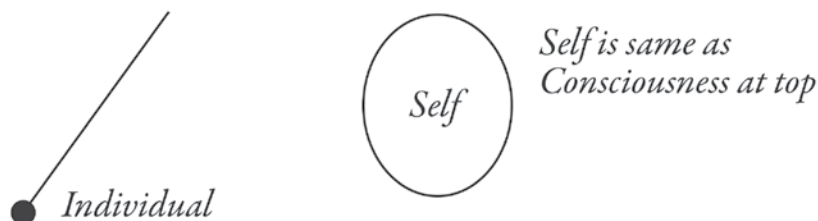
*R. By intellect, do you mean Buddhi?*

D.S. Yes—diagram:

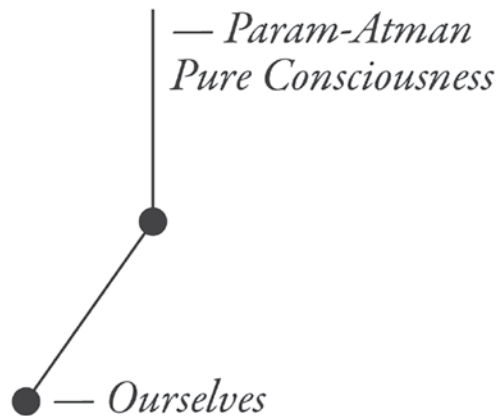


Inspiration comes from the Cosmic mind; the individual mind has no freedom of action—just as our dream figures have no freedom of action; they are being inspired by the mind of the dreamer. So also the Cosmic mind, or mind of God—or, I should say, Param-Atman plus Maya. Maya has got all the power and energy. The latent power in Param-Atman is manifested through Maya. When He is in Himself, that is a static state; active state begins when He is connected with Maya. So also the individual Self plus ignorance is the individual body.

Consciousness remains the same all the time—it is just the clothing that is different in different stages. Therefore, if you are to discover Him, take away the clothing of the various stages.



This pure Consciousness at the top is also ourselves at the bottom, but when it is combined with ignorance it becomes Jiva-Atman—individual. When it is combined with Maya it becomes Ishwara—Cosmic Mind. Since this is being directed by Maya plus Param-Atman that means the Cosmic Mind of Intellect—this mind, or Buddhi, is acting under its direction. Now it is limited, now it wants to do the same thing as that, but it cannot; that is why it gets exhausted.



Supposing you have to walk five miles to meet your child, you are exhausted, but when you actually meet your child that exhaustion goes away. In place of that you have some peace and happiness from the meeting. This is because you achieved your aim.

You cannot have pure Consciousness, bliss and happiness while remaining on the limited plane. So the answer to the question is that, until you surrender to the higher plane and become free from thought yourself, your intellect will always be exhausted because you cannot achieve that thing which you are aspiring for. The only course to conserve energy and do right action is to surrender to God, who is the sustainer, maintainer and destroyer, which is this Cosmic level—Param-Atman plus Maya. Not to Param-Atman itself, but to the qualified Param-Atman. All grace and blessings are from the qualified Param-Atman in the active state.

We think and think because we cannot hit upon the right point of action. There is no need to think if you know. It is because you have doubts that you waste energy thinking. Also the destination is not clear. You will find the right action when you surrender to the Cosmic Mind and allow yourself to be carried on its shoulder so that there will be no effort and no loss of energy. He knows what is happening; we do not know. We give up our responsibility and let Him carry it out. With individual ego we keep trying to change the reel being shown on the cosmic screen; because we are trying to change what is unchangeable we weep. We only have to hear His prompting.

*R. That is because certain effects have to follow certain causes? They are unchangeable.*

D.S. The puppet has to dance; he has no will, and cannot be inactive just because he wants to.

People in Western countries, and even in India, think that to be a recluse means to be inactive. When you appear to be totally inactive, you are in fact doing good to all creatures of the world. People say—that man sitting by himself in a cave is doing no good. But let us take the scientific reason for this. Every word that is uttered reaches every corner of the world, otherwise we could not get the messages by wireless transmitted from China to London. It means the sound is there; the receiver does not create it, nor the transmitter. However, three things are necessary:

1. The transmitter should be good.
2. The receiver must be good and both in working order.
3. Both should be on the same wavelength.

Sound travels like this .... but if I have no receiver I am not getting it. With the receiver on the necessary wavelength, I get it *at once*. Now each word needs an idea behind it; without any idea no words can be uttered. If you say, 'I', it implies an idea of 'I'. Thought is more subtle than words.



Now people are receivers of peace, tranquillity and happiness. Every mind can be a receiver. When a man has become absolutely silent, thoughtless, and he is in bliss, he is transmitting bliss to all creatures, not only human beings.

Now when you hear in London that Ugandan people holding British passports are being killed by General Amin, will not your blood rise up? The word has the power to create a change in you, and by constantly hearing it eventually you will burst out. The idea contained in the word does this. Therefore, if we can make a change by words, we can make a change more subtly by the thoughts behind words. Therefore, if there are ten such people absolutely inactive and silent seated in pure Consciousness, then they are transmitting peace and bliss to every corner of the world and will create a great transformation in the world affairs. Also this message is being transmitted constantly. If you are free from thoughts, you will receive this message and be happy and blissful.

You may think these men are not active, but they are active to the highest order. Messages transmitted by me may suit one and not suit another, but the transmission of Bliss will be respected by everyone. This is called .... By holding meetings or by holding Satsang you may help hundreds or thousands, but there are millions in the world. Who helps them? These men. Although they appear silent and inactive, in fact they are the most vociferous and the most active. The more you go to that silent state, the more good you will do, and the more your energy will be restored. Then the Swami quoted from the Gita about “those who are seated like that ...”

*Question. New York. E. W. I have been doing the Meditation for five years but do not seem able to do so, but I will never stop valuing the meditation for the effects even of the little I do are felt in so many ways. My questions are: (a) Is it possible for the meditation to work in indirect ways though it may seem to be denying itself to one; and (b) Are there other ways of stilling the mind which could lead one closer to the quiet of the meditation?*

D.S. Now the word meditation = meditari (Latin) = medere (Latin) = to heal. Anything that heals your worries and anxieties is meditation. It is not necessarily sitting quiet. In the course of action, any process which will take your mind away from worry and anxiety will be converted to meditation. It is from the root word to heal. While performing household duties—bathing a child—bathe God; speak to your servant—speak to God; be a witness—all that is meditation in one sense because your mind is concentrated in spite of exterior factors and actions. Your mind is fixed on one thing.

Like the goldsmith buying in gold ornaments, he does not see the ornaments—he only sees the gold and considers the gold in them.

You can do anything providing you are getting health of mind—it must lead to healing; then you are free from worries and thoughts. You could sit quiet for four or ten hours, but if you are not free from anxiety or worry it will not be meditation. You might have to be active for 24 hours—walk for 24 hours—but it can be meditation provided the process which I described yesterday is followed to the letter. (Seeing everything as God, and doing everything for God—God in every object and in every action. Param-Atman doing Param-Atman's work.)

Meditation like this leads to devotion. If you do this sort of meditation while working, it is converted to devotion. Devotion = De + Vovere (from the Latin) = Away + to vow. You take a vow to be away from anything that is not God and to surrender your individual self to God. You therefore take a vow not to think of anything except God.

*R. Does the word Bhakti carry the same idea?*

D.S. Yes. Do not see the image of the ornament—see only the gold; you will see God everywhere. If you see yourself, see God; give yourself away to God.

*R. Then you will be devout?*

D.S. Then you will be devoted.

Lastly, she mentions stilling of the mind. This ‘stilling’ is an obnoxious word; it does not arise. It is not a question of stilling; wipe out this word. Stilling implies suppression, and that will do you no good. It is not stilling, or suppression, but sublimation. If you suppress it, it will come up again. If you go to the deep sleep state mind is suppressed, but it does not recognize pure Consciousness, and it rises up at once again when you awake. It is to sublimate—mind should be lifted up to the Super-mind and to Super-consciousness. Don’t try to still the mind by mechanical processes. To think that meditation is stilling of mind is a very wrong idea; you have to go to the seat of all energy—not become inert. Go to the most active.

*M.A. Can a person who has been meditating for some years, and values it greatly, be helped in his practice after this time, or does he rely on his own experience to continue and meditate more deeply?*

D.S. If the meditation goes to Param-Atman—Maya, you do not require any help. Promptings will come to you. This is the state of the Guru. Pure Consciousness—Self—is the real Guru. Until Self recognizes that he is Guru, he is not Guru to you. Self is selector and selected. If you go to the super-mental state, you will get instruction from within; but if you remain on the individual plane, then you will require help and instruction from others.

*Mr. Jupp. Asks about changing teachers, and devoting oneself to one teacher.*

D.S. This question does not arise in the case of the spiritual Guru, provided you have surrendered yourself completely to him. By complete surrender you create such a force in the Guru by your faith and surrender, that he will satisfy you. So it does not depend so much on the Guru, but on the disciple himself.

*Question. (New York.) N.R. Referring to Laghu-Vakya-Vritti, 9-11, describing pure Consciousness as shining forth between two modifications of the Intellect. Is that during the inner state (on awakening) between dreaming and waking with the observer present? ...*

D.S. On the cinema screen, when the reel is exhausted, another reel may be put on, but what always remains?—the white screen. Without the screen, without the substratum, no reel can be shown. So, also, the pure Consciousness remains even after the whole drama is over. Pure Consciousness remains throughout the three levels I showed you—only the clothing may be different, the limitations may be different. At the level of Maya it is the sum total of all ignorance; at individual level it is individual ignorance. There is no difference between inner and outer, because if you try to touch the reel at any part, it will always be the screen which you touch. That is our own home—the Reality—and until we reach our own home there will be no peace.

*N.R. L.IV. 2 begins: “Ignorance makes the causal adjunct ....” —would this dissolution of time lead finally to the disappearance of causality and ignorance? Causality seems only possible in time.*

D.S. Cause-and-effect depends on time, and time is a function of ignorance. Time means past and future. Pure Consciousness or the white screen is present always; therefore what is present always has no past or future. When you forget this and think over the past and future, then there is cause-and-effect. For the effect to come out of the cause requires time. Cause—effect—time are only offshoots of ignorance. When you have made your mind free from the idea of past and future, you will be established in the present.

*N.R. When His Holiness speaks of everything merging into the Self, does he mean that when all is absorbed into the Self there is no world left, nor is there any ignorance—only the Self? Then man in his three states creates, maintains, and dissolves his illusory world like Brahman creates, maintains and absorbs the world we see around us. Is that so?*



D.S. No—it is the reverse. Individual can never be Brahman or Param-Atman. It is not by creating, maintaining or dissolving that we are going there ourselves; it is by taking out the power of creation, preservation and dissolution that we become Brahman.

Maya in Cosmic mind is an external factor. You have to become free from ignorance, free from Maya.

Now Pure Consciousness is at each point, so the 'I' becomes Brahman by taking away all external things, by eliminating. Any idea of creating, sustaining or dissolving is a limiting factor; they are garbs. You don't become Brahman by putting on garbs.

At the end the Swami said: You have to get rid of all doubts. Doubts are a hindrance to proper meditation. Doubts must be wiped out because doubts make things complicated, and very long. If you have a clear road you can drive fast and enjoy driving. If the road is not clear it is not only slow, but tiring to your nerves.

*After we had thanked Dandi Swami for all his care in answering our questions, he took his departure.*

## **Friday 13 October**

### **Last Audience**

*Present beside His Holiness were only his brother and another Realised man, both in the saffron robes and carrying the banners given to very special people.*

*R. (Jaiswal translating): First, we wish to thank you for the wonderful feast you spread before us yesterday with, I believe, 24 different dishes. We were even able to enjoy a few second helpings to make up for the absence of Mr. Allan!*

*Next, we offer to your Holiness our love and gratitude for your great patience and help once more on this visit. We assure you that we are not at all troubled by any apparent differences in the doctrine expressed. We have your previous answers to all the questions dealt with by Dandi Swami and can easily distinguish between the two voices. Much of what he said to us was very helpful and we shall continue to value it.*

*But now I ask your Holiness for what you wish to say, and to ask for your instructions.*

H.H. In the Indian tradition the Vedas are the source of all types of knowledge that are available in India, and the Vedas contain support for all aspects of approach to the Absolute. In fact, according to one's own inclinations and preferences one can find support in the Vedas to establish the validity of the Absolute, and the purity of the ways and means adopted to reach the Absolute are all available. Just as human beings have different tastes and preferences in food—some liking sweet, some savory, some salty, some bitter, and they always look for and improve upon these tastes—by this they quench their thirst and hunger and enjoy it. None of these tastes is better or worse than others—it is a question of the inclination which creates and opens up a way of realising the Absolute.

As has been told often before, there are primarily three Ways—the Way of Karma—Action, the Way of Jnana—Knowledge, and the way of Bhakti—Devotion. So there are people who can appreciate and devote their time and energy to the intellectual pursuit of the Absolute, and it is this one aspect of the Absolute which they prefer and like to work with and become One with that aspect, and for which they are equipped so that it suits them. They cannot go any other Way. Similarly, there are people who cannot appreciate the intellect and they like to work on the emotions, and through the emotional pursuit they seek to become One with that aspect; so if there are intellectual discussions, they usually shy off and prefer only those things related to emotional work. Also there are those who cannot go either through the intellect or by devotion and who prefer to

do something practical. So there are three Ways to approach the Absolute, and none of them is better or worse than the others. So one has to see for oneself which one prefers, and if there are any difficulties in that context. These difficulties or doubts which arise out of the confusion of different approaches should be cleared up. Whatever Dandi Swami has said, since he belongs to the Way of intellect, he has his own preferences and he has full support for the intellect in the Vedas, and it is entirely left to the individual to find out whether everything is clear and sort out difficulties.

*R. It is a great surprise to the Doctor to find someone more intellectual than himself!*

H.H. (laughs and says): The Vedas are supposed to be the most authoritative collection of the Scriptures. Everything has to be referred to the Vedas. Only if it is supported by the Vedas can a System be honoured in India. So everybody tries to look to the Vedas for threads of support. In the Vedas, and particularly the Upanishads, it says in one place that without Knowledge it is not possible for one to attain Liberation. All those people who are inclined to the intellectual way have always quoted this part of the Vedic text to show that nobody, whoever he may be, who has not learnt about the Absolute and learnt the Knowledge thoroughly, can liberate his soul from the duality of birth and death.

Similarly, there are quotations given by devotional people, taken from the Vedas, to show that, without devotion, no liberation is possible—and they say, “after all, knowledge is only a dry thing, and what use is knowledge to anyone! It is only through devotion one should approach the Absolute—forget all knowledge and forget all activity!”

But the adherents of activity can also quote certain things from the Vedas to show that, unless you put the teaching into practice by performing right actions nothing will happen; for Self-realisation arduous physical disciplines are required; so all your knowledge and devotion are of no use unless you express them in performing your day-to-day obligations.

**Note:** H.H. had previously explained that the Bhagavad Gita, which is the cream of all the Vedas, is based on these three; the first 6 chapters being devoted to the Yoga of Action (Karma), the next 6 to the Yoga of Devotion (Bhakti), and the last 6 to the Yoga of Knowledge (Science or Jnana).

Common man hearing quotations from all these three sources usually gets perplexed, for he is neither fully capable of all activity, nor of all knowledge, nor can he fully devote himself to the Absolute because he has to live his householder's life. There alone is the need for enquiry for anyone who, after hearing different views and being perplexed, should get everything clear for his own sake.

Here is an example:

Once in a village an elephant appeared and the news went around so everyone wanted to experience the elephant. Unfortunately most of the inhabitants were blind, and yet they had the desire to experience the elephant, so they were led to it. The mahout (or man in charge of the elephant), let them experience by touching the elephant, and of course they each touched a different part. Having experienced, they assembled together and wanted to verify that they had experienced the real thing. The one who felt the foot said an elephant was a pillar, the one who had felt the tail said it was like a stick, and so it went on with the ears, trunk, tusks, fat tummy, etc.—each describing it according to the type of previous experience to which they could relate it. Then they started refuting each other: “Yours was not the proper elephant, yours was illusion, mine is the only real one, etc.” Later on the mahout told them, “You cannot have the vision of the complete elephant. All you can do is put together all these experiences of different people of ‘elephant’, and out of these experiences a novel creature should be imagined which is known as ‘elephant’—but it is the sum of all these parts and something more, which represents the wholeness of the creature known as elephant.”

In the same way, because of the different quotations from the Scriptures, it is possible and it is usual for some sort of conflict or doubt to arise in the minds of people. They must make an effort to get it clarified because there are people like this mahout, in our spiritual life, who are available to dispel their doubts.

R. *Can we speak of one or two more subjects close to our hearts?*

*To us four and many of our friends there is no longer any difference in our Soul (Antahkarana) between Param-Atman, the present Shankaracharya, and the great men of his Tradition or our Christian tradition. They are all one and the same. If we call constantly on Param-Atman for help in any problem, something of all that you have said comes to our help. For instance, (your recent answer to Mr. Rabeneck): "A feeling of sameness possesses our heart with eyes open or shut. The mind sheds its burdens and becomes filled with joy instead."*

H.H. Your observation is very good, and since it happens like that, it is commendable. The Tradition of the Shankaracharya was started from Narayana as you know; that means the Absolute Himself, and then was followed by others like Vyasa, Shukadeva, Gandapadacharya, and then the original Shankara, and after him hundreds of Shankaracharyas right down to the one you are facing. It is quite possible that even the Shankaracharyas, according to their own being, may have had certain preferences and would have invoked these Vedic Scriptures to support their particular way, but in fact they all lead to the same ultimate end. There is no difference of ideology underlying them, in support of man's search for Liberation. There may be little preferences which can be different. There was a man called Madhusudan Saraswati. He was a Shankarite—he belonged to the Shankaracharya System and was one of the greatest intellectual giants of the later middle ages of India, but he had preference for devotion, so all his books (he wrote a number of books) have underlying support for devotion in preference to the Way of Knowledge. Although he, himself was a man of knowledge, he supported the devotional Way.

In the same way, all that has been propounded here, through His Holiness, is in fact not his, but belongs to the tradition, so all this traditional work and the Knowledge which goes through Dr. Roles or Mr. Allan or others in their own way is related to the same Tradition. It is not the individuals who speak, but the tradition speaks through these individuals.

R. *Lately, in a letter, His Holiness reminded us that the world, either as we see it in dreams, or in waking state, has three stages—creation, maintenance and destruction. In my understanding, it is this middle one which we don't know the real meaning of, or what it is about. Somehow, in my heart, the idea of Lord Vishnu is connected with this. If I read anything about Vishnu or his incarnations, it refreshes and cheers me. Such as the story of Ajamila in the Bhagavatam.*

H.H. These three steps or situations which you describe—creation, maintenance and destruction—these are the aspects of the three Gunas —(Sattva, Rajas and Tamas). Vishnu belongs to the state of Sattva, Brahma to the Rajas, and Rudra or Shiva to the Tamas. In Rajas there is no fixed position or state. Rajas is not stable—it is not a materialisation of anything—it is activity, when things are about to take shape. The state comes either in the Sattvic region or in the Tamasic region, and it is only because of this that Brahma in India has never been worshipped and is never favoured for any worship anywhere in India. Only in the Yagya (when a sacrifice has to be performed). Since Brahman is the Creator—he is the first ancestor, he is the great-great-grandfather of all human beings, so at most he is offered a seat of honour at the sacrifice and given oblations so as to appease him! Otherwise he is never given any preference or devotion. Whenever you take to activity, there are only two positions. Either you will get tired or exhausted and go to sleep (or Tamas), rest there and come out later on; or after putting yourself into active form and having achieved the end of the activity and everything materialises in success then, in return, you get the bliss or enjoyment of having done the job well and successfully. This enjoyment immediately gives light, makes you light, and you feel very fresh even after strenuous work.

Now yesterday at your feast here, all the people who were engaged in preparation of the food, were very eager to see how their labour fared. When they saw the smiling faces of those for whom the food was made, and they saw the appreciation of the food, they were delighted—a lot more than any of you who enjoyed the food. In return this created far more bliss and all their exertion was finished and they enjoyed the occasion far more than you could have done. This is how it works, so Vishnu is related to this sustaining of this Universe, and he sustains only by giving something—just as the food was prepared for you like a sacrifice in honour of the guests—and with love Vishnu maintains the whole creation. [*Jaiswal said 'maintains', but does he mean sustains?*] Vishnu is one of the deities most honoured in Indian tradition because of the protection and sustenance which he offers through love.

*R. I particularly like the story of Ajamila, because here is a man who started well but led a sinful life, and when faced with death he was very frightened, but he pronounced the name of Narayana (the name of his favourite son) so the attendants of Vishnu came and sent away the attendants of death; and I (myself) had a similar experience!*

H.H. In Indian history, as put in the Bhagavatam, the rôle of the Holy men—the Mahatmas—is very important. Mahatmas have a life of their own, but they appear in common life as well, and when they appear in common life they always come with advice—some sort of tactful advice—so that without disturbing the life of the common man or his frame of mind, they put in something which is of direct use to the individual, even though he does not realise the importance of the advice given to him.

The story of Ajamila is an example of this tactful practical advice:

He was an ordinary man engaged in his worldly life and not of any saintly disposition. Once a Mahatma happened to come by his own town and to eat at his house and wanted, in return, to give him some tactful advice. So the Mahatma asked him, “What is it that attracts you most? Is there anything to which you are, above all, attached?” Ajamila said: “I am most attached to my youngest son.” So the Mahatma asked him to call the youngest son by the name of Narayana. Whenever, therefore, he had to call this boy, he should call him by that name, and so he did.

There wasn't anything more that Ajamila was asked to do—he wasn't prescribed any discipline or satsang or other things except this advice. So at the time of his death, as usual, without knowing, he called, “Narayana”—his little son—and because of this name, the messengers of Narayana (Vishnu) appeared and liberated him.

In the course of devotional work which people do—for instance in India there are temples with carved stone statues of Gods in them before which people worship, bow down and pray. In fact, it is not the stone sculpture which is being worshipped; it is the idea of the God which has been superimposed on this stone statue and it is because of the devotion to the particular idea of God that they get attuned to that God. But as far as the names are concerned—the Mantras—they are very potent even though there is no form attached to the Mantra. In fact, the name Narayana stood for mantra which, without being initiated, he used to recite in calling his son. Just as in meditation we are given certain words, the word has no form other than the vocal sound—it is not attached to any particular deity, or any particular meaning, it is only a sound, but it is a creative sound.

All sounds are creative, so when a Mantra is given, this creative sound becomes the vehicle of transformation in the individual. Thus, because Ajamila used to pronounce the name Narayana, which is very like a Mantra, the forces involved in the sound were made use of for his self-development. Just as with a fire—if you touch it, whether knowingly or unknowingly—then it is bound to burn you, to hurt you. In exactly the same way, a Mantra like Ram, and Narayana, whether you know anything about it or not—if you utter it, it will come to the rescue and do the job of liberation or whatever it can.

*R. We wish His Holiness success in his visit to the Himalayas (of which we read in today's newspaper), and we want to thank him very much for all his patience with us this time, and may we continue to write—not expecting answers!*

H.H. Nods and offers his blessings for the development of all those souls scattered all over the world under your leadership. May they prosper.

शान्ति शान्ति शान्ति: