

26 June 1972

READING 13

PART 1

It might be good to recall the end of the big meeting last Monday, to which most of you came, because a change seemed to come over the meeting and the man who was taking it along with the impulse to meditate together:

Just to sum up this present part of this discussion: we don't pay attention enough to some of the guidance we get from the Shankaracharya; perhaps we have not heard it enough. We should try and remember that we have in us an All-Knowing Self which is also an immense Source of power quite sufficient for anything we might want to do. Instead of letting our thoughts just turn about our insufficiencies and inability to do things – instead of these negative trains of thought – we could create a habit of turning to this 'immense Source of power' instinctively. Then we would have that power, and have excess of that *energy* so that any problem could be solved. Our meetings could at least give us the benefit of keeping us reminded of these assets which we don't use.

I have talked too much, so let us turn to this Source of power at this moment with a feeling of joy in our hearts that this is true, and that the miraculous is always present in us.

Meditation

We have been told by both our Teachers that True Knowledge and its application in action will bring a better world under our command; that happiness and love will give us entry into that better world; and that the two together – the Knowledge and Devotion to the Param-Atman and to our neighbours – are irresistible, the combination of the two can never be defeated.

Mr. Grazebrook. In the book you quoted from the Shankaracharya saying – 'At this stage in the meditation one needs to feel an expansion of one's Being.' Can one bring that about by one's own volition, or must one simply hope it can come?

Ans. It comes, Grazebrook, from *giving up*. We give up a little, but we have to give up *everything* for a few minutes twice a day and whenever we have a leisure moment. When you have given up everything that is Grazebrook, then your Spirit (the Atman) rises and you have this feeling of expansion, because your Spirit is no longer weighted down by all the characteristics associated with Grazebrook. So if you could give up everything – what you call 'I' ordinarily – then this expansion would be felt. It will be helped as in the story of the Prodigal Son – when he has lost everything, then he comes to himself and says:

How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

'I will arise and go to my Father...'

(Luke 15:17)

It is this 'arising' that tends to come when we are at the end of our tether and find that nothing that is Grazebrook or Roles has any real existence at all. Try this, and let us compare notes after a week.

PART 2

I would like you to return now to the beginning of Reading 11 – the quotation from the Shankaracharya's talk about 'the body being like a big town', together with the first comment (1).

There is a big future for us from the study of ourselves in this light. After some search I found the following passage from an answer to one of Dr. David Connell's questions:

S. The purpose of meditation is to bring the individual to the great stability.[†] Stability (equilibrium) is the quality of the Sattva. Once the individual has achieved this complete equilibrium, and has done away with all ideas, even of meditation, meditator, and Mantra, so that he has achieved equality or unity; *only then*, if one does take to this feeling and meditates on that, could it be useful. He says the meditation is only to achieve stability, but if someone feels like meditating upon God, he is free to do so, but it will always be within the limitation of whatever idea of the God one holds.

The meditation is a discipline designed to produce the Sattva and the stability which comes with Sattva. Once you have got some Sattva out of meditation you have to use it. You have to choose the way you wish to use it either by loving people, or by helping people or doing some other activity pleasing to God. You will see that whatever you do, you will do it with more efficiency and goodness within it. And so the activity of meditation is not for the sake of meditation itself, otherwise it will become void. It produces Sattva, and the Sattva has to be used for the type of activity which one chooses to take on in the worship of God or any other activity for the spiritual advancement of the individual.

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It is clear from this that meditation, and what is called contemplation, are essentially different. In the half-hours we never meditate *on* anything, but if we get any other time to ourselves then we might contemplate some idea from the True Knowledge, like the eternal presence of God or the Param-Atman within ourselves. But above all, to advance towards Self-realization we have to use the meditation 'either by loving people, or helping them, or doing some other activity pleasing to the Param-Atman.'

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[†] 'Stability' in the sense of a firm foundation for any type of building one wishes to construct. A seesaw or chemical balance is also an analogy – the fulcrum is stable – up and down go the arms, Rajas and Tamas.