

Thursday 26 September

Fourth Audience

N.G.H. What is the state of the mantra just before it enters the heart?

H.H. The more subtle the mantra grows the more it spreads into the body. As you go on pronouncing the mantra more and more slowly it moves towards its root, the Atman. When the mantra dissolves into the Atman, the Atman and the mantra no longer retain their separate entities.

When the heat of the sun falls on the ocean, water vapour rises. It comes down again to earth in the shape of rain. By means of rivers it flows back again into the ocean.

Similarly, through desire (Sankalpa) or intention, start reciting the mantra. This is like the vaporisation of water and vapours rising into the atmosphere. The subsequent falling of water in shape of rain and its going back to the ocean through rivers is like merging of the mantra into the Atman.

N.G.H. Now that it has been clearly understood and established that Dr. Roles is my teacher or guru, could His Holiness explain the best and most valuable relationship between Dr Roles and myself, that is the rôle between a teacher and disciple or follower?

H.H. Accepting his word without argument; there should be no questioning in the heart about what he says. Whatever he says you take as the absolute truth, this would be the feeling.

N.G.H. What part does His Holiness, the Realised Man, play in this relationship between Dr Roles and myself?

H.H. I am not the Guru of Dr Roles, only a helper. Dr Roles' Guru was a Russian, Ouspensky; when he left the earthly body he told Dr. Roles that he would eventually find an Indian Guru. Then Dr Roles made a search for such a person. Ultimately he came into contact with myself. One visit, along with a number of other people he was given a lot of questions and as result of those questions and answers I failed him. I put him in the third class as a safeguard against becoming over-conscious of his own wisdom. He was developing a sort of pride for his own wisdom, and 'I know everything' and this is the way to forgetfulness. But after his contact with me had continued and strengthened, he was given a first class pass.

Because he who says that he knows, does not really know anything, and also he who says that he knows nothing is equally ignorant. The criterion of knowing really is that 1) one should not be proud of one's knowledge and, 2) one should not have any doubt in one's mind.

I quote the example of Gargi and Yadnya-valki:

Both of them are very learned people. Gargi asked Yadnya-valki, "Are you the most learned man in the world?" Yadnya-valki replied, "No, I'm not, but I bow to those people who are learned. But even so, if you should have any questions to ask I will try to answer them and I will try to satisfy you."

Again:

There was the story of the devotee who each day would bring a poem to his Master. Each day after reading it, his Master would say it was terrible, no good at all. So, one day, the devotee came to him and said, "Here, for a change, is a poem by another poet—a well known one." After reading this one, his Master said, "This poem is beautiful, most wondrous."

Then the devotee said, "It is my own poem; I only said another had written it. Why did you say today it was beautiful when I said it was written by another, while every other day you found my poems so bad?"

His master said, “Now you have done this thing I cannot help you any longer; there is nothing I can teach you now; please leave the Ashram.”

The story of Yadnyavalki is to illustrate that this would be the attitude of a person who knows.

To bring out this very fact Dr. Roles was given a low place to begin with, so that his path would not be hampered by the feeling that he knew everything already. Ultimately, when contact between Dr. Roles and myself developed, I played this part only—I used to help him by giving answers, not in the capacity of Guru.

Otherwise there is no difference between Dr. Roles and myself. From the point of view of body, Dr. Roles and I are separate, yet from the subtle point of view we are not so.

N.G.H. What should be the relationship between myself and the numbers of people in the group in New Zealand who are seeking realisation of the Self?

H.H. As a father has several sons and one of them is more intelligent, more capable than the others, and although he is more pleased with that son, in his heart of hearts he has the same regard for all his sons.

The same should be your attitude. You should be careful in handling them. Amongst your followers some will be more sincere and more intelligent. They are grasping more readily—others not. Although your behaviour to both kinds of followers would differ externally, internally you should have the same feeling for both. This is very important, not treating them differently from the heart. Of course, externally you have to modify your behaviour towards each according to individual requirements of both the sets of people. But your internal feelings should be such that you treat them all alike. The more intelligent and capable should meet separately. For the sake of progress, groups should be kept separate.

N.G.H. Your Holiness stated that Dr. Roles is on the Way of Love. What are the basic rules and regulations traditionally followed on the Way of Love by the householder?

H.H. Love (Prema) and Knowledge (Tattva Jnana) are the same thing, but the function of Love is to join together and that of Knowledge is to tell, to illuminate. Love joins the two things, Love joins to the Param-Atman, Love of Guru joins to Guru.

Ordinary knowledge, all that is within our knowledge, that is Jnana. Love (Prema) and Knowledge (Tattva Jnana) are the same thing but the function of Love is to join them and that of Knowledge is to tell. The special knowledge about Atman is called Tattva Jnana, Elemental Knowledge. Most Mahatmas consider only Tattva Jnana to be the True, Essential Knowledge.

In Love, Knowledge is helpful. For strengthening Knowledge, Love is essential. In the absence of Love, Knowledge would not be powerful enough to influence people. Knowledge only helps us to decide what is right and wrong, but it cannot alter things; Love can alter things.

If we know somebody to be good then we develop respect and regard for him, then we approach each other very closely until the two Atmans become one. Love and Knowledge, both are powers of Chitta. Without Love, Knowledge is incomplete and without Knowledge Love is incomplete, because in the absence of Knowledge Love would go away. If there is Knowledge, then Love would be maintained. As Love increases, Knowledge also goes on increasing. Without Knowledge Love is not expansive; and without Love Knowledge is not allowed to play its full part.

Both are essential; Knowledge creates Love and then Love has Knowledge to establish its roots.

N.G.H. What form of rules and regulations does His Holiness think would be best to suit New Zealand?

H.H. I do not want to lay down too many rules. Whatever rules I have already given should be followed. In following them, if any doubts arise, then they can be resolved.

N.G.H. Could His Holiness give some general hints on the care of people who are meditating? I have noted carefully what His Holiness has said of the straight back and the mantra coming to rest in the heart. After people are initiated what guidance do they require to gain fullest benefit from meditation?

H.H. All necessary instructions have been given and subsequently you have to watch whether they are being followed correctly. You have to be very watchful. Actually no course of instruction can lay everything down, for you have to deal with individual problems as they arise, and in order to do that effectively you have to keep a constant watch over people you are initiating into meditation.

It is natural that some deficiencies should be found and their removal could not be codified completely. They have to be removed by applying tact, and a method of applying tact cannot be included in a set of instructions.

If the person is not sitting correctly, he should be told to sit correctly; if his mind is agitated, he should be told some sweet words which would calm the mind. There are ways and ways of improving the performance of the trainees. It is up to the trainer to choose the best from amongst them. They mustn't be left, or then a wrong habit will be formed.

Here is an illustration of this:

The instructor of the Pandavas, Dronacharya, who instructed young boys in the art of warfare, and told them everything, wanted to test them. He hung a dog upside-down and wanted his pupils to shoot an arrow in such a way that the arrow goes through his mouth and comes out from the hind part. He asked each of them to do it and each said it was impossible. "First of all put the dog straight; otherwise we can't do it, while he is upside down". So everyone expressed his inability to do it.

Then Arjuna, the cleverest of the boys, was asked if he could do it. He said, "Yes, I can do it". He went there and made a sound—"Hissss". When Arjuna did this the dog at once turned in front of him, so his mouth was in front of him. Immediately Arjuna shot the arrow right through the mouth and out of the hind part. During the course of instruction he wasn't told to hiss.

So problems like that might arise and you have to tackle them in the best way you can. It all depends to what extent you can use your own intellect.

N.G.H. I find we have two main kinds of problem; people who have excessive thoughts in meditation, and the other people who have very dreamy and sleepy meditation.

H.H. For those who are over-thoughtful, they should be asked to shut down their file of thoughts and difficulties and do away with them completely. By doing so, the process of accepting this and rejecting that will stop. They should just think it is time for me to go and meet my own most blessed Atman. External things, that file of accounts of the external world should be closed for the moment. Now, this is the thing that you are going to do. Just as when you are very busy or overworked, you feel sleepy; then the sleep compels you to give up dealing with these things, to go and take rest and go to sleep. In the same way an over thoughtful person when he tries to go into meditation should just stop—give up his thoughts and think that now it is time to meet the Atman.

People who are dreamy, for them you should use the method of Bhawana (Emotion). The method of Bhawana is to be emotional, to have a good kind of emotion. Emotion, minus its temporary nature; it should be lasting. They need feelings of a lasting nature.

Those who are dull-minded, for them the method of Bhawana is to be used. Dullness, sleepiness, etc., are the results of inertia and to remove it some sweet words may be used to arouse them to activity.

B.R.H. I would like to ask what seems to me to be, at present, the most important question. I feel myself to be so much at the mercy of bad tendencies, seeing no good ones in my mechanical behaviour. Sometimes I feel very frustrated indeed. How can I get glimpses of that great dignity and power of the Atman within which will enable these petty, selfish concerns to fade, and enable me to follow reason and set the intellect free to make right decisions?

H.H. What do you think yourself to be?

B.R.H. I find I'm confused in that. My intellect tells me I'm not the body, I'm not the mind, but I find it hard to act as though that is true. My behaviour doesn't follow my intellect.

H.H. Your actions are not following your intellect (Buddhi). This should be the worry of your own intellect—your intellect should take care of it, not your Manas. Your intellect will take care of it.

Buddhi acts like the manager, Atman the proprietor. The burden of running the whole show rests with the manager. The proprietor undertaking the duties of the manager, that is not right. They should perform their own functions. If the proprietor begins to fulfil the duties of the manager, then it will get into worry; it will get the worries of the manager.

H.H. My best wishes for your progress and the progress of your group are always there. It will be the happiest moment for me to know that you are progressing and that you are continuing to progress. I want you to inform Dr. Roles about these audiences.

Thursday 26 September

First Ashram Talk

Mr. & Mrs. Howitt present. Translated by Mr. Dixit.

H.H. Work (Karma) can be done with worldly desires or with no desires at all. The same with prayers (Upasara), you pray to God in order to get some worldly gain or get rid of worldly troubles.

But prayers are of four kinds [*Mr. Dixit couldn't remember them all*]. One of them is Ardu; this is used when one is in very serious trouble, like a cry for help to God. The final kind is without any desire or request for personal gains—doing it merely as a thanksgiving offering or repayment of a debt.

He then told a story of a king and a woodcutter:

Once a king came across a woodcutter in the forest and found his job brought him in enough only to provide the barest essentials. Asking him why he lived in such circumstances, he said he could not obtain a better job. The king then said: “The next time you are in my capital, come to the palace and see me. I will see you get a better job.”

After a while the woodcutter arrived in the capital and went to see the king. He was ushered into an ante-chamber and told to wait as the King was saying his prayers. The woodcutter waited for an hour and then he said: “May I see the king at his prayers?” The servants said, “Of course”, and showed him a small window through which he could see the king at prayer. He saw him bowing and praying most earnestly. Eventually he finished and came out to the woodcutter, who was pleased to see him.

With an astonished look on his face the woodcutter asked, “Why do you pray, you have everything in the world that you could desire—a beautiful palace, a great number of servants, a beautiful wife and children, food served on dishes of gold. Why, then, do you pray? What else could you wish for?”

The king replied that, great though his wealth was, he prayed for even more.

Then you are nothing but a beggar,” replied the woodcutter, “I am better off as I am.” So he turned and left the palace.

His Holiness was conveying the fact that anybody who lays claim to bodily goods is no better than a beggar.

Mr. Dixit said his own Master—Guru Deva—told them in a discourse that even the biggest worldly thing is too small for us to ask Param-Atman to give it. To Param-Atman the greatest worldly things are insignificant. He is too big a personage to whom we could go with such a petty request.

His Holiness continued:

Param-Atman looks after all our interests, even without our asking. You need not make a request for anything. We see people having all sorts of troubles; we feel that Param-Atman is unjust because he has given all sorts of comfort to one man, and another man—who appears to have done nothing very wrong—is leading a miserable life. Because of this, people lose all faith in the Param-Atman; but Param-Atman gives everybody what each individual deserves, what is good for him. Everything cannot be good for everybody.

Once a holy man—who had a reputation that whatever blessings he gave to people were always fulfilled—came to a village, so people flocked around him with their worries and troubles. A very poor man came and said: “Your Holiness, I live under very hard conditions. I find it very difficult to find money for even my simple wants. Could you give me this blessing, that I have enough money?” He said, “I could do that, but you will repent of it.” The man said, “How can I repent if I get money; I will be only too happy to”, he insisted. “All right,” the holy man said, “you will have a lot of money.”

Another man came with urgency; this man wanted to have children. Again, he was told, “You will repent of it,” but he insisted, and again the holy man said, “All right, you shall have your wish.”

Then a woman came, whose husband was very cruel; he had turned her out. She wanted him to take her back. He told her also she would repent of it, but granted her wish.

Then the holy man departed.

The first man now had a lot of money and everyone wanted to know him. One night robbers tried to rob and kill him. His parents and relatives wanted money out of him and no matter how much he gave them, they were not satisfied. People who were his friends before now became hostile. One night his servant mixed some poison in his food and gave it to him; but by sheer luck he gave some to his dog first and it died. Then he got fed up and said “Oh, what is the use of all this money—let me find this holy man again. He must take back the money and I will be quite all right as I used to be.”

The second man who wanted children got the children alright, but they were born with very bad minds and were a lot of trouble, and this man and his family became notorious all over the village. People avoided him because he had got such spoilt children. He also got fed up with all of this and also sought to find the holy man.

Finally, the lady who wanted her husband to take her back, was taken back. But her husband would get drunk and give her a good beating every night. She also said, “I don’t want to live with my husband any more.”

So all three started in search of that holy man to find him and request him to take back his blessings, which they found they didn’t want after all.

The story illustrates how Param-Atman gives every individual just what he deserves.

His Holiness also said:

The word ‘Swami’ has several meanings—the owner, the Lord; the ‘owner’ as in the sense ‘I am the owner of this’. But ‘Swami’ can also mean someone who merits greatly. Mahatma is a Swami, Param Atman is a Swami. All of us are ‘swamis’ of something or other.

Saturday 28 September

Second Ashram Talk

Here is a talk given at the Shankaracharya’s weekly gatherings at the Ashram, saying at the outset that he was speaking in continuation of our questions:

H.H. Param-Atman is the only reality and the only Truth. The Atman has an unvariable connection with Him. But though everybody knows this, it is surprising that they find no charm in it. This is due to the gulf of ignorance that lies before us. The question is how to bridge this gulf.

The whole of mankind has desire for the good; no-one wants the bad. This is so obvious that it needs no proof. But in spite of the desire for good, our efforts are directed towards the bad. Thus, while sowing the seed for evil, we want the fruit to be good. In other words, the means to happiness is disliked, and the means to unhappiness is liked. We knowingly fall into a ditch and then cry for help. We go on piling up troubles, and a stage comes when we are unable to bear them any more. Then we pray for death, thinking that death would take them away. Sleep also ends our troubles for the time being, but we get them again when we wake up. Same is the case with death.

We do not see any thorns in the seeds of a thorny tree. But if we sow those seeds we shall get the thorns all right! If we do not want the thorns, then let us not sow their seed. Similarly, the seed of trouble is harmless to look at. But we should know that it would produce trouble and therefore we should not sow it.

We really should transform our nature. But we cannot do so solely by our own efforts. Our efforts and the grace of Param Atman must both be there in order to be successful. Coriander (Haldi) powder is yellow and lime powder is white. But mixed up together, a paste with the lovely red colour of safranin is produced. Similarly, our efforts plus Param-Atman’s grace when joined together work for our uplift.

A poor old woman used to earn her living by cutting wood in a jungle all day and selling it in the village market in the evening. But she was spending all her earnings the same day. One day she decided to cut more wood in order to save some money for a rainy day. But the bundle became so heavy that she could not lift it and night fell. In her sheer exasperation she cried out, “Oh Death, better take me away!”

Death appeared and said that it had come to take her away as she wanted. “Not that,” she said, “I had only called you to help me carry my burden.”

So we sometimes wish for death when in trouble, but we fear it when it really comes. This is not so with those who give up attachment to the body beforehand.

A Mahatma was in the habit of tying up his little belongings into a bundle and putting it away every morning. Someone remarked that it was very foolish for him to waste that much time day after day as if he was going for a journey. He replied that it reminded him to be always ready for his final journey and thus giving up love for the physical body. This attachment for the physical body is the root cause of all the evils in the world.

Even better than the actual act of praying is holding the thought of Param-Atman in the mind. We can only pray for a short time, but we can keep this thought in the mind *all* the time. Param-Atman is very generous. A little thought of Him melts His heart.

If our Manas becomes stronger, then our Buddhi becomes correspondingly weaker. But if Buddhi becomes stronger, the pull of Manas gets weaker. As Buddhi must come to rule the Manas, it should be stronger. Even a little attachment with the world can push us into darkness. What is darkness for everybody, is light for the Realised Man.

We wash our body day after day with soap to make it clean, but it goes on becoming dirty all the time. There is no end to this kind of dirt. The same is the case with the mind. Surrender to Param-Atman removes the dirt of the mind.

Just as a son has some elements of his father, [*we call them 'genes'*] similarly all of us carry some element of Param-Atman. But merely knowing this is not sufficient.

For example, we all know that wood is inflammable. This knowledge by itself would not create a flame. When we rub two pieces of wood vigorously together a flame appears from the wood itself without application of any external fire. Similarly the flame of Knowledge springs up from the rubbing together of our thoughts, and it burns away all that is undesirable.

To know is merely knowledge, but to acknowledge is to love. Yet even to know and to acknowledge is not enough; we should also think.

Constant holding in the mind the thought of the guru-disciple relationship is enough. Till when? Till there is Eternal Life in the body. Devoting the mind to Param-Atman and forming mental images of Param-Atman should be a constant practice. Then life would flow naturally and doubts would dissolve by themselves.

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