

4 February 1974

READING 2

PART 1

Before we begin to relay to you in sequence the questions and answers of our recent audiences with the Shankaracharya, I would like to respond to several requests that you should hear again, and discuss, the part of last Monday's big meeting which goes from Mrs. Farley's question to our meditation together:

Mrs. Farley. You are both emanating a tremendous amount of happiness. Was there anything – particularly from your visit – that has made this especially so?

Dr. R. For sure there was! From the moment of entering the Ashram we were permeated with the serene happiness of His Holiness and his staff – old friends who are always so warm and welcoming.

There are several aspects of this interior happiness:

There is the extreme happiness we get from a simple statement of Truth in a few words that go straight to the mind and heart; and from the example of a man who lives his teaching under all sorts of pressures and situations, apparently enjoying the overcoming of difficulties for its own sake.

There is the happiness to be got from almost any human relationship that we can have – family circle, close friends and just anybody we meet. You'll hear some striking examples of that which we enjoyed during this last visit and since we have been home here.

Above all, there is the certainty that (under the protective cloak of a fully Realized man with a great Tradition, a System of Meditation and a framework of Knowledge) there are untapped sources of happiness always just ahead of wherever one is today.

Our job as a Society is to transmit to all who approach us something of this Eternal Source of Spiritual happiness, which can lift us all above the very depressing and difficult industrial and social conditions we are all going through in this crisis.

Here is something I want you to enjoy before we meditate together. It came right at the end of our visit but doesn't need much leading up to.

In the course of our 8th and last audience I asked:

R. In trying to dedicate one's actions to the Param-Atman, one finds there is much unworthiness in our thoughts, our words and our casual postures and actions that one could not possibly dedicate to the Supreme Self. If one wants to do what one says and say what one thinks, it seems to be a full-time job?

S. In dedicating to the Absolute or to the Self, the most important part is the *heart*, and that is very simple. If that is properly achieved in its simplicity, all the rest should not bother one, because nothing else is very important. One can see from so many examples that this is so. Here is one:

There was a great elephant who was proud of his size and strength, but when he went for a bathe he was caught by a crocodile in mid-stream and dragged out of his depth into the deep water. He was helpless and couldn't

do anything; but just when he was about to be drowned he happened to catch with his trunk a lotus flower floating on the river, and offering that flower to the Absolute, to his God, he begged Him to save his life. So pure was his offering that the God came running barefoot from his throne to save him.

One might wonder how one could dislodge the Absolute to come barefoot from His throne by just a little flower! But it was not the flower, it was the spirit behind the flower – it was the heart which prayed.

After one or two further examples, he told this Story from the *Ramayana*:

S. There is another episode from the life of Lakshman, the younger brother of Rama. When he was a child, he had a bit of a temper and one day he got very cross. He picked up a stick and broke all the chandeliers in the palace, and anything made of glass, and destroyed quite a lot. It was reported to the King, his father, by the Minister that just now they had seen that bad boy, Lakshman, in hot spirit doing all that damage. The King told them to call the priests to celebrate the occasion by opening the doors of the treasury, distributing alms and (he added) 'Let's have music and singing!'

The astonished Minister said, 'I hope I expressed clearly what Lakshman has been doing' – he thought the King was trying to be funny! But the King said: 'Well, it's nice to see that my small son is growing up and has gained enough strength to do all these things. Don't you think this is a cause for rejoicing, so let us rejoice together!'

So we must understand that the Absolute is not really interested in the details of the bad behaviour of the individual (or of mankind) during the growing-up period! The Absolute, or the Atman, wants the human heart in its simplicity and directness. When *that* has been dedicated, everything will follow in the course of time, and one need not worry whether man's actions are small or big, good or bad, efficient or inefficient. That doesn't matter – the real dedication He requires is only of the heart.

(Record, 24 January 1974)

Dr. R. This is the real answer to these questions about the myth of 'making constant efforts'; and on that subject Mr. Ouspensky pointed out that there are apparently only a few occasions when our negative emotions reach such a peak (i.e., when we have exceptional cause for anger or grief, for worry, for misery) as to change our whole nature by dedicating the heart and mind to Param-Atman, and thus transforming them into positive. When nothing much is happening, nothing very much can be done, but at these crucial moments if one can convert a negative into a *positive* vision of Love, Faith, Hope, Happiness, it is *that* which takes one through the states of consciousness to Turiya; we are all going to get plenty of opportunities in the next month or so!

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PART 2. CONTINUATION OF THE QUOTATIONS GIVEN IN READING 1

Some of you may prefer to omit Part 1 and follow the continuation of the talk between Mr. Whiting and the Shankaracharya on November 9th:

W. Is it possible to hear more about actually providing this 'rest'? We seem to know the words of his answer but they remain to be realized.

S. The '*rest at the physical level*' provides enough energy for any individual to carry through eight or nine hours of activity. This is how the human race keeps going in the ordinary way. At least people with common sense appreciate this, and provide themselves with enough physical rest to keep in good health and carry on normal activity.

The *rest at the subtle level*, by cessation of conflicting desires, adds another dimension to the idea of 'rest'. It is within this dimension that efficiency arises, and this works through all activities, from ordinary physical work to artistic work. Thus rest at this level between fulfilment of one desire and initiation of another, will be rewarded with increased ability to steer one's little boat through the sea of life.

The *third level of rest*, which is profound stillness or total immobility, is within the realm of the Absolute. Since the causal realm cannot be described, one has to learn about it from its effects. One can see it in the activities and dispositions of such men as provide themselves with Spiritual rest.

There are three prominent features:

Firstly, they show love and affection toward everything they encounter. All activities will be initiated with love, and then held and nourished with love till they come to their fulfilment. All relationships with individuals or difficult situations, direct or indirect, will be lit up and guided only by love and affection.

Secondly, their ideas, intentions or motives will be pure and simple. Purity and simplicity widen the horizon, and such men think and work for the whole of humanity and only through the Laws of the Absolute. Divisions into groups, races or nations disappear, and only Natural Laws are recognised. Their thoughts naturally encompass the whole human family and its intrinsic goodness.

Thirdly, the physical movements of such people are geared only to the natural rhythm, and the result is grace, simplicity and economy of movement. They never rush into any situation; are never agitated; and perform all actions in an efficient, sublime, and refined way. Whatever they do will emerge from stillness, be maintained in stillness, and again submerge in the same stillness which they experience in this great 'total immobility'. This would establish an ideal or a standard for the common man to aspire to if he somehow awakes to the need to improve his lot.

(Record, 9 November 1973)

If we set before us such a high ideal of Self-realization, we should find it easy to look at our own particular problems, and measure up our own progress to match this ideal.

[We shall soon be in a position to hand on to you our own recent audiences bit by bit just as they were recorded.]

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