

Saturday 27 September

Mr. Dixit Translating

R.A. Yesterday H.H. told us that the Absolute was available everywhere, his love was available everywhere, and all one had to do was to surrender. I was going to ask why is it so difficult to surrender when one wants to so much? At the very end I saw that one had to surrender even the desire to surrender.

H.H. The reason is our attachment to the world. Take the example of the sun and clouds: the sun is always there but the clouds come and cover the sun and we are unable to see it, although the sun is still in existence; the world and our attachment to it, these are the reasons, this is the chief hindrance to realising the Absolute. The method to overcome this hindrance is prayer, meditation and things like that. When we are able to reduce this hindrance by work on it, then we get some sort of a union with the Absolute and there is joy, bliss.

We cannot have two priorities at the same time, either give priority to the Param-Atman or to the world. As soon as the priority given to the world is given up, Param Atman is there.

Take the example of the balance; when the two pans of the balance are empty then the level is perfectly horizontal; as soon as something is put in one side it comes down and the other side rises. Similarly when the mind is not relieved of these worldly desires and things like that, then that side of the balance weighs down.

So, to experience utter bliss it is necessary to free the mind, to free the balance from the weight we are putting on the worldly side. Worldly matters are due to Rajas and Tamas but thoughts of Param-Atman belong to Sattva, the more we have them the more joy and bliss we experience.

R.A. H.H. has often, in our talks, mentioned prayer. He mentioned it again this morning, and yesterday he was talking about the two types of prayer: prayer that glorifies the Absolute, and the prayer in which one confesses one's weaknesses. I would like to ask, is there a third type of prayer where one can petition for help and if so, could he teach us how to do it?

H.H. No need, He already knows what you want. It's not necessary.

R.A. We, in London, have the benefit of H.H.'s teaching and of Dr. Roles' guidance. On the whole we devote the recommended time to meditation. Yet, for most of us, full Self-realisation still seems far off. It appears that to get the best results we must improve the quality of our meditation and of our personal work. Has H.H. any advice?

H.H. Duration of meditation is not important, but keenness of desire, that is the important thing. As long as no very keen desire is there, difficulty will be experienced. When the desire to meet the Absolute is perfect, pure union with Param-Atman is instantaneous.

Whatever type of prayer we use to reach the Param-Atman, it goes through the Antahkarana.

... just as by light, darkness is dispelled. Take the example of a room which has been shut up for ages, as soon as you open up and switch on the light, it becomes illuminated at once. But the illumination does not clean up the rubbish in the room. As soon as the light enters we can see the rubbish and dirt lying in the room, then the duty of a good man is to clean the room. This is the thing we have to work on. The difference is that a good man cleans the room, but a bad man does not clean the room but just lives in it as it is. To get union with Param-Atman, with his help we are enabled to see our own weaknesses. Similarly our Chitta is like a room and the light of the Param-Atman illuminates the rubbish, we have to remove it so that Param-Atman can come and sit in it. The more cleaning up we are able to do, the more enjoyment we will get out of the appearance of Param-Atman.

J.R. May I ask, is this work in which we can all help each other, as well as clearing our own, can we get help from other people in clearing the dirt away, by meditating together and by example?

H.H. You should clean yourself. You can help others to have light so that they may also do it for themselves, but you cannot do it for them.

R. Just as we have our own study or private room where we retire to after business is over, so you said, the Atman has his own private room, and I think one knows where that is in the Antahkarana. Is it necessary only to come and sit quietly there without making demands, not to disturb his peace? We say during initiation, "The rhythm of the Mantra will take you to this private room, and there your Creator may manifest himself if he wishes to." Is that right?

H.H. Antahkarana is the seat of Param-Atman, it is the place where Param-Atman comes and sits, it is felt between the throat and the heart. From there the light is radiated to the brain and the rest of the body.

The construction of the Antahkarana has been explained several times at audiences and also through correspondence. These four divisions, or rather they are not divisions, but different forms—Manas, Buddhi, Ahankar and Chitta. One part, the intellect, thinks, one part desires—like that.

M.A. In his answer to Mrs. Roles. H.H. spoke of "making a decision that will not be altered by any other force later on." I feel a decision of this strength can only have the required force through Grace: so many decisions become just intentions. When taking one's marriage vows in Church one asks God's help. Can one ask help in making such a decision so that it is supported?

H.H. In connection with the example of marriage, it is common experience that after marriage there are occasions when friction arises between husband and wife, but all these disagreements are temporary; inside the heart of both there is desire for welfare of each other.

Similarly, one could say we are married to the Param-Atman. Param-Atman is calling us all the time and although the individual (the Jiva) wants to go to the Param-Atman, yet the hindrance is only this, that the Jiva thinks, "I am also something." The obstacle to union is separation in the heart. This state of friction sometimes reaches such a state that husband and wife may even stop talking to each other!

Gandhi (1869-1948) and his wife (she died in 1944) were living a communal life, and she was required to clean the communal commode! She refused, but Gandhi said she should do it because she had made her vow over fire to obey him. Then she walked out of the room and left the house. Gandhi called her back and asked her how she could leave him when she had made her promises. She said, "I promised to stay with you, but I did not promise to clean for everybody." In spite of the friction, they actually stayed together their whole life until Mrs. Gandhi died in 1944. She was even allowed to stay with him in prison for her last two years.

This does not mean that the determination to meet the Param-Atman is not there, for the determination still exists; we are always ready. It depends on our state of mind, though its changes need not worry us unduly. The root cause of all this is the idea which sometimes take root and assumes form, the idea that 'I am also something'.

M.A. So the decision has already been taken—one need not worry?

R.D. That is what H.H. means, but the danger is this: the thinking that "I am somebody."

M.A. So the decision isn't taken by oneself, but by the Atman? One hasn't tried to make the decision alone? It has already been made?

H.H. The person who asks is the one who makes the decision, whether it is Atman or the individual, the one who asks the question is capable of making a firm decision.

R. This, to me, is a very thrilling idea, the idea of the marriage vow between the Atman and the Param-Atman; it seems in ordinary human marriage that if one of the partners is over-anxious and over-possessive it doesn't work.

Does the same apply—I suppose it wouldn't? In this other relationship, it is perfect?

H.H. In the case of Param-Atman, he has already given us plenty of possessions, plenty of rights, so that makes all the difference. Param-Atman is very generous and gives everything. Such an attitude would be difficult to find in the case of a human marriage.

Param-Atman has already given whatever he has to the Jiva, as much as it would need throughout its life.

M.A. What H.H. said this morning about light showing what needs cleaning up, and that a good man sets about cleaning it up while a bad man just uses it, this is very helpful because when one comes here, one expects everything to be easier, but very often it seems more difficult, and perhaps this is related to the fact that with the extra light available one sees more of what has to be done?

H.H. When we are expecting someone whom we love very dearly, then we make all possible arrangements for their comfort, cleaning the room, furnishing it, etc. Something like this is done when we try to think of the Param-Atman. In the first case the person whom we love comes from somewhere else, but in the case of Param-Atman he is already there, he doesn't come from anywhere. There is a feeling, because we realise Param-Atman, yes he's come, and the joy felt is something like that which we feel when we meet our human guest. Here is joy, there is pleasure in the meeting, and if this state lasts for a long time then it becomes natural.

About the preparations for receiving the guest, if we take great delight in all the work we do, we don't feel tired.

If you eat in a hotel your stomach may be full, but that food will not fill your heart. But if your son comes home and he takes food which you have prepared with love and special care for him, it will fill his heart as well as his stomach.

Take an example from the life of Lord Krishna. When Lord Krishna was a child his family had all the amenities—lots of servants, lots of cows, but his mother, Yashoda, preferred to prepare the curds and such things with her own hands.

Similarly when one tries to meet Param-Atman there is the same pleasure in doing whatever is necessary ourselves. We never get tired.

R. (missed during turnover of tape)

H.H. Knowledge based on love.

R.A. One gets the feeling of occasional visits by Param-Atman, but to make the visits more permanent one has perhaps to have a more attractive place for him to stay?

H.H. The preparations which we make for receiving Param-Atman, the perfection with which we make them depends on the relationship we establish between Him and us, so much so that I think we agree there is a feeling of universal brotherhood. In everything, everywhere we see Param-Atman. The feeling you have for your family grows to include your community, then your nation, and then the whole world: from being limited we become un-limited and the whole world becomes our family, and we have the feeling, "Everything is mine, and I belong to everybody."

For example, there is the story of Swami Ramtirtha. He was a teacher at college and he believed in the practice of universal brotherhood. Whatever salary or pay he was getting, he tried to help everyone with it. He used to put it on the table so that anyone who needed money could take it.

His wife said, "I have prior right, why do you not put the money in my hands?" But Swami Ramtirtha replied, "It is for everybody, and you are one of everybody; if you need it, you can also take it. I see God in everybody so how can I keep anything back; it is not that I am trying to help others, but because I keep seeing God!"

So in this way we can spread what we acquire to cover the whole universe. Param-Atman can reveal himself in various forms; the universal brotherhood just because it is universal doesn't mean that everything becomes just the same in all cases. He takes different forms and to each form we have to modify our attitude accordingly. If Param Atman comes in the form of a child, then we have to greet him with love; if Param-Atman comes in the form of a servant, we see God in the servant but we should accept his service; if Param-Atman comes as a learned man he needs respect, we have to modify our behaviour accordingly. If we are in the world, whatever our rôle, it is service to the Param-Atman.

Sunday 28 September

No Audience owing to illness of Jaiswal.

Monday 29 September

J. I noticed that H.H. was having trouble with one of his eyes so enquired if He would prefer the audience cancelled, but He replies that the eye has nothing to do with talking so we may carry on!

R. We want to try to carry with us on return to London the lovely inner peace and clarity of mind which we enjoy in H.H.'s presence. Is there any special self-applied discipline that He would recommend? For instance, control of restless and involuntary movements at times when Rajas comes instead of Sattva?

H.H. At such times there is only one thing to be recommended and that is love of Atman, love of the Self within. Having achieved love for the Atman, all that which is non-Atman, which is apart from Atman, will be set aside because it will not be so attractive, and if the worldly things which are non-Atman, non-Self, have lost their attraction, then one will find inner peace and clarity of mind and restfulness. Sattva is certainly for the light through which all the energy is made possible, and having acquired some light and energy one must use it in some activity. Having used energy in activity one must also go into Tamas to get oneself charged so that one can begin the next day.

In the 14th chapter of the Gita there is a shloka which describes the qualities of Sattva: that it is light, it is energy which is made available to the individual, and that Rajas, which activates the individual, must also be used for whatever work is presented to us, and one cannot go on with Rajas all the time, so nature will call us to take some rest (Tamas), and this is the cycle.

We collect and take different types of food and fruit and we cook them to make them ready for our consumption but together with the food we add a little salt to make the whole thing palatable. Salt, by itself, is not a food, but an aid for the food. In the same way Sattva, itself, is not a food as such, it is not for living, but just to help living. By Sattva one gets energy, and if one gets energy one must use it. So one cannot resign from Rajas and Tamas; one has only to learn to love Atman, and this love of Atman will keep everything else at a distance and in its place where it will not have too much attraction. This will give one a vision of the Self, and vision from the Self which will keep everything in proper proportion.

R. Buddhi seems to need convincing that we are always in the presence of the Guru and Param-Atman, After all, in H.H.'s physical presence one is careful to behave properly, and therefore gets inner promptings about what is appro-

pritate to the occasion. There was a saying by a patriarch, “learn to live all your life as if in the presence of a noble guest.” Is it to be achieved just with this remembrance?

H.H. In the natural set-up of this creation there is this unity which is logical, which is natural, which is causal. In fact nothing is separated or divided in the causal realm. We can take it on trust that on the causal level there will always be unity. But apart from the causal level unity can be achieved on the subtle level. Whenever you have a thought it will reflect all the light and words which you have heard here, will present itself in some form, and the Guru will be there—so whatever light, whatever knowledge, whatever promptings come to your heart, even when the Guru is not present in physical form, then you should see that the union is taking place in the subtle level. It is the union of the Guru or the Param-Atman through the knowledge in the individual which is also immanent and present.

As far as the physical realm is concerned it is also the creation of the Absolute, and the unity is there though it may be difficult to see, and difficult to comprehend, but nevertheless be assured that the unity is always there. Whenever you remember, it becomes immanent. Even if you do not remember, it is still there but not consciously known.

R. During our last visit, nearly two years ago, H.H. gave us a wonderful Sunday morning audience, in the course of which he pronounced both the first Sri Shankara’s “Jnana Mudra” (the shloka beginning “Brahma-satyam, Jagan-mithya”) and also how our mantra, with its three sounds should be pronounced in a long slow way. We have tried to get everyone to hear this, but unfortunately our recording was interrupted by the loud striking of the Ashram clock! Would H.H. please pronounce them again (at any time he wishes as long as the clock is not striking)?

H.H. First the Jnana Mudra (which we can safely pronounce again now, since the clock struck five minutes ago). As has already been shown to all of us: the thumb is joined to the next finger, and the other three are left separate. This indicates that the thumb is taken to be the root of all, it is the Brahman; the next finger is supposed to be the Jiva, the individual: and there is shown the unity of the Brahman and the individual.

The three fingers indicate the Prakriti governed by the three Gunas which are illusory and temporal. So they have their appearance in time and space and multiple combinations, but in reality it is the existence of the Brahman alone and there is no difference between the Brahman and the Self at all.

This is what was said by the first Shankaracharya as “Brahma” “Brahman is the Truth and the World is not Truth and there is no difference between the individual and the Brahman.” There is a shloka [*we have only had half of it*] and the complete shloka reads:

Ardhashlokain prarakshyami grantha—kodhibhi
Brahma satyam jaganmithya, Brahma jivaiva naparah.

The meaning of this is: “In half a shloka I am going to describe to you the Truth of the whole universe which has been collected in millions of books, and that half shloka is this: Brahman is the Truth ... etc.” This is the half shloka in which the wisdom of all the books is enshrined. Whenever the shloka was being given to his disciples Sri Shankara used to demonstrate it by the Jnana-Mudra (hand-sign).

As regards the Mantra we have been given to use during our Meditation, this Mantra is not to be pronounced aloud. It must only be within the mind, so when we sit for meditation, collect ourselves, close our eyes and lips, then we recite the Mantra within ourselves and this repetition has to be done in such a way that gradually the Mantra fades and lengthens, the time of each repetition lengthens. After some time you will see that one doesn’t hear anything of the Mantra itself, but has the consciousness of the Mantra. So even the mental repetition is brought down to the inner consciousness, where there is no differentiation of the Mantra, or the Meditator or the act of meditation.

R.A. I have a very simple question which sometimes causes me a little trouble: we are told that the Mantra, the Meditator and the object of Meditation become one. When I think about this I am never quite sure what the object of Meditation is? I feel it is to be united with Param-Atman; how does one achieve this unity of Meditator, Mantra and object of Meditation?

J. Were we given that there is an object of Meditation? Wasn't it act of Meditation?

R. Well, we have also been told several times that the object of Meditation is Param-Atman.

H.H. The three factors in Meditation are the Mantra, the Meditator and the Act of Meditation. But before such an act of meditation can be done it is necessary for the individual to acquire some convincing ground so that he may embark upon the activity. If he does not know the reason why he does something, he will not love it. It is only in relation to this that it has been explained again and again that the whole meditation system is for the unity of the individual with the Param Atman, but as far as the actual meditation is concerned, the three-fold parts remain these the meditator, the mantra and the act of meditation.

R.A. If one finds oneself with fewer burdens in ordinary life which demand one's time and energy, and one wants to devote that extra time and energy to the spiritual life, how should one do it?

H.H. Whatever you have cherished and acquired in your active life, and whatever seems the best achievement of your life should be given to others so that everybody else could share it.

There are two ways of doing this sharing—one is by speech, by explaining to others about the goodness of life, or the goodness of existence—that is by precept. And the other is by living according to those principles—by example. Example goes much deeper, it makes more impression than just words, so to give people example has much more potential, it is much more effective. But again, words have to be used because it is in the nature of things that they must be explained in a precise and simple way so that people can be convinced of its goodness, and then they can be brought towards it.

In everyday life people go to their offices, and on Sunday they get all the odd jobs done at home, and they find certain pressures because they only have Sunday to get these jobs done, since one will not get another opportunity for the next six days. The same will happen when one retires: one will find that there will be many pressures, pressures to educate, pressures to share whatever one has achieved in life—you will find if you are aware of these things that you are never without work at all.

The thing to learn is that whenever a great man appears among us we drop all our activities and go to pay our respects or try to help the great man who has come among us. We need the same sort of feeling towards the unity of the Brahman with the Jiva, the Wisdom, and we should try to bring it into our lives, leaving aside all unnecessary activities, make our life an example so that people get attracted just by one's presence, and then they will start respecting and following you.

R. Thank you very much for your answer: we were a little nervous that Lord Allan might be wanting to go and live in a cave and meditate all the time!

R.A. I was tempted to do that!

H.H. The Himalayan cave is within each one of us; that is where we need to go, and whatever the demands of the outer world, we can come out from the cave within us and perform our activities, and then go back again, one does not need to go to the physical Himalayas!

All the ways in the world are for experiencing bliss, but they all add up to two main ways of experiencing bliss. One is to experience it alone by oneself, and the other is to experience it together with others. In India

there are two types of people: one who likes to go into a Himalayan cave, or any other mountainous cave and practise their meditation, or whatever their solitary practice is; but the Acharya, the system to which H.H. belongs (Acharya is teacher, Shankara-acharya), they, having experienced the inner peace, they come out and establish a platform where they share everything with the ordinary man. It is exactly in keeping with the drama of the Absolute who created this universe only to find and share the pleasure with the whole of the universe.

Those who belong to the tradition of finding liberation and bliss just by themselves and for themselves are thought to be on an inferior way; the superior way is the one in which one has to find experience of liberation and bliss and share it with others.

R.A. In the Shankaracharya tradition, does the person have to find the bliss and knowledge in solitude first and then come out into the open?

H.H. At the earliest stage it seems essential that one must have more seclusion for practice of the meditation, scriptures and other disciplines. H.H. himself did visit the Himalayas and stay there for some time and even here, in the plains, he would stay aloof more of the time than with the people. But having achieved this inner peace in a mature way then it is not necessary to go back and live in the Himalayas as he used to. Now H.H. stays in the Himalayas only for a short time and also is not alone there, because even there he attends to the needs of a lot of people.

So the question is: when does one become mature? One should allocate some time for oneself and one should do the meditation and then go into the world and see one's relationship with the world, notice how much it attracts, and how much detachment has been acquired. When you find yourself in the world without any attachment, then you are mature and you can act anywhere, but as long as you don't feel mature, when this inner peace is not a natural phenomenon in the individual, then some seclusion is certainly necessary, and one must find some secluded time for oneself and the meditation.

M.A. Is this daily seclusion, not a long period?

J. Yes, just daily seclusion.

H.H. The nature of man is such that he can live in the multitude much more easily, and it requires a discipline of practice to enable him to learn to live alone by himself. Those who are not prone to live by themselves, if they are put in a lonely situation their mind very soon becomes agitated, and they will not in fact be at peace at all, so they must be brought back into the crowd again. H.H. himself, on many occasions, arranges everything here in the Ashram and then disappears for a week or two somewhere in a secluded place where nobody knows his whereabouts, and he stays in a hut all the time except for the calls of nature and to bathe. He goes out for half an hour and then returns and stays there in one place all the time; but this has been achieved by practice through the years, and for an ordinary man it would be very difficult and much pressure on his mind will follow if he tries to separate himself, cut himself off from society.

R. I feel that H.H. might like us to draw this visit to a close and if that is so I would like to say that every time we come, H.H. says everything in a new way; it is never an old teaching, and we will try and preserve the newness of the approach. Yet, with all this newness, it gets closer and closer to the simplicity of the original Shankaracharya's Advaita. I would also like H.H. to find before long the seclusion that he might like, but meanwhile we wish him all success on his tour of India.

J. Apart from your thanks, in translating I also added a wish for his blessing, on completion of our talks.

H.H. Dr. Roles is now very much like granite and fully supplied with the material. He is equipped now to guide any number of people anywhere. Although there is really nothing fresh to be given, yet it is in the nature of spiritual living also that the disciple and the Guru keep on meeting, and there is nothing wrong in meeting and this simply goes on as long as one lives. As far as H.H. is concerned he doesn't have any desire to do any particular thing, but he has placed himself inside and outside at the mercy of the Absolute, and whatever the Absolute wants him to do at some place, he simply responds and fulfils that. He does not know what he will be doing next, he does not intend to keep his knowledge stored in any particular way, to speak it or spread it in any particular style. He expects the same from Dr. Roles, Lord Allan, Mrs. Roles and Lady Allan—that just as a tape-recorder receives the sound and then it is played back without any interference for the enjoyment of the one who records and the recipient, so like tape-recorders with this knowledge of the truth and the experience of the Self we should play it back to the common people in your country so that they can also enjoy and make use of the eternal knowledge; we are nothing but simple instruments of the Absolute and he blesses all of you again and gives his blessing so that you can do all that with firmness in your country.

R. Without being a burden to H.H. we would love to keep in some sort of physical contact.

H.H. It is in the Will of the Absolute also that we keep connection on the physical level.

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