

12 May 1975

READING 2

Some people got worried by last week's paper because they took it personally as if they were being accused of 'defective thinking' or something. But Mr. Ouspensky's description of four levels of the working of the human mind was a vast general picture of the whole of humanity, past, present and to come. It showed how the human mind brings on itself all the troubles to which mankind is always subject; but also it shows how simple and individual is the way of escape – and how quickly escape can come directly we understand what to do.

The horizontal line in last week's diagram (which goes from darkness and ignorance on the left to clarity and consciousness on the right) is based on the way the forepart of the human brain is made – the part in which we can be directly conscious and which we can learn to control. It has many properties – it can act like a mirror and reflect only the outside world or only the inner world, or both; it can be a 'see-through' glass which merely transmits impressions for expression in thought, feeling or action. It can be quite *still* like the surface of a pool, or it can be dirty or turbulent, etc., etc.

The point is that what it reflects at a given moment depends on our own will and what we make the mind do in that moment *Now*: Try it for yourself and see that your picture of the world can change instantaneously if you lift your mind from the particular to the Universal – the Param-Atman. Then you immediately come into the clear. A third force enters to resolve the duality.

It may be coincidence (but maybe not!) that in two private talks by the Shankaracharya to his people on 25th & 28th April 1975 (just received) we are given this illustration:

S. We are all devoted to *something*. Devotion takes you to the object of your devotion whether it be the Param-Atman or the world. If you are a devotee of Param-Atman you get Param-Atman; and if you are a devotee of the world you get the world. But while Param-Atman is changeless and gives happiness, the world is changeable and gives us any unhappiness we have...

What is 'the world' that surrounds (and permeates) us? It is the name given to something which is not what it appears to be.

A mirror undeniably shows your face in it; but the face is not 'in the mirror' at all – so much so that the mirror can exist without the face and the face without the mirror.

(He means, I believe, that your reflection in the mirror only appears because you put your face there!)

Similarly we cannot deny the existence of a world around us and yet the world *for us* at any moment is only that small part that we allow to reflect in our mirror. Seeing *differences* is seeing the world, and not seeing the differences is seeing the Param-Atman. Diversity is the world, unity is Param-Atman. The most amazing thing is that the formless has a million forms, and the omnipresent is seen as present at only one place!

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