

13 October 1975

READING 2

Having just returned from eight full talks with the Shankaracharya we want gradually to pass on to anyone we can reach, all the richness which he handed to us. So this week we start with the first question and answer when we got to him on Sunday morning September 21st.

First we set the scene: Most of the time our party consisted of 6 (including translator Jaiswal and his wife). As we entered his private room we had a welcoming smile and sat on mats about a yard from his big couch. No audience hall this time and only two or three others present. Everything recorded, typed by Lady Allan and corrected each day.

R. We have brought questions, of course, but for myself I come to say thank you and bless you for all your wisdom and patience now evident as your words 'come True' in our experience.

For example, this which you said long ago:

Even if *you* cannot remember yourSelf, the relation that has been established between you and me means that I, myself, at one end will enable you to remember, and you will see that from my end, at least, this relation is always maintained and carried through without a break.

I now realise that *I have nothing of my own*, and yet that if I have some inner peace the guidance comes. How to repay this vast debt? How to show the Truth more in one's thoughts, words and actions? This longing to *be a better man* has drawn me to your physical presence again today.

He replied with a very warm smile:

S. This realization that 'I have nothing of my own' is the best possible realization. This is the greatest achievement of evolution possible, because it signifies that the level of the ordinary human existence has been transcended into the Universal level. In this Universal level the Universe as a whole gains predominant importance, and the importance of the individual is correspondingly reduced. But it also signifies in the same moment that the whole Universe is yours.

This same thing has been explained in the Vedas where there are two chapters related to this particular facet of human knowledge that the individual has nothing and, at the same time, if he *knows* that he has nothing, then the whole Universe belongs to him.

The first aspect – that which says 'there is nothing of my own,' belongs to the emotional aspect of the individual; and the second which says 'the whole Universe belongs to me,' is related to the intellectual aspect of human existence. Of course (he said), there is really no such division; but even so the realization can only come in that way. The effect is that one reaches very close to the Absolute – the Param-Atman – because one has transcended the individual to the Universal level.

The physical effect of all this is that the individual becomes very light-hearted. The mind also becomes very light, and when it is very light it can take into account the whole of Creation.

The Shankaracharya is very pleased to hear that such a thing has been made possible.

Pause for questions

COMMENT

Dr. R. This idea of the relation of the individual to the Universal is a fascinating one, and the more you dwell on it, the more productive it becomes.

It's an idea, Colin Lucas, that I know you have considered. For example: In studying a wood or a forest, you can take each *individual* tree and examine it very thoroughly and know all about it. Some biologists do that. But others (in what is now called 'ecology') take the whole forest as the habitat of thousands of different species – the different trees, shrubs, insects and mammals all part of the life of this forest, and seen as one single *whole*, together subject to the local conditions and the changing seasons.

The same is true of the astronomers: they study (say) one solar system very precisely and carefully, know all about it, and now actually explore parts of it. They can examine the spectrum of a star – know its composition, how old it is, what stage it is in; they can often listen to it by radio antenna. But then they and other astronomers can study the whole galaxy – all the stars of a galaxy together as one single spiral nebula with all its various contents. And now some astronomers have found super-galaxies which consist of many, many average galaxies like our Milky Way – all working as one whole.

So these two aspects are constantly in use scientifically, but they are all contained in this original idea in the Vedas called Vyashti (individual) and Samashti (Universal – the particular 'universe' you are studying).

We see, of course, that in our System the 'Ray of Creation' follows the same pattern. We take All Galaxies and of those galaxies we take our galaxy – the Milky Way; from all the stars of our Milky Way we select our Sun – our Solar System; and from all the planets, planetoids and comets we take our Earth with her satellite the Moon. So the Truth is often being expressed in this way.

The same in Psychology. We study individuals, but all their little differences are contained in the whole human nature – the 'Ideal man'. Most interesting, don't you think, Dr. Fenwick, this idea? (He agreed)

Mr. Weigall. You have often spoken about the individuality. Do you refer to that facet of the personality which reflects the Param-Atman alone?

Dr. R. Not the 'personality', Al, but the *Consciousness*. Each individual Consciousness is a unit of Universal Consciousness. Each of us here in this room is an individual; each one is unlike anybody else in the world – he has his own fingerprints, his own nature and his own pattern of living – Sean, myself, Al Weigall, *each* person can feel himself emotionally as 'me', as an individual.

At the same time, if we each realise that we have nothing of our own as we have inherited everything, we become one unit or 'atom' of the total organisation centred on Colet, both in this country and in other countries. Yet that is only one small atom of all the people meditating in the world based on the system of meditation that the Holy Tradition of the Shankaracharyas has put out. The individual meditator merges with 'All Meditators'.

One's Consciousness grows from the very small to bigger, and bigger, and bigger, and in that way transcends to the Universal. This is Self-realization.

Miss Wright. Is it rather like Alice in Wonderland looking through the tiny doorway into the wonderful garden the other side? She has to become nothing in order to get through? ('Yes, indeed.')

HISTORICAL NOTE

For 25 centuries the Shankaracharyas' Tradition has guided the leaders of widely different spiritual organisations by prescribing meditation and answering their questions but never interfering with them.

The above question/answer represents the climax of a special method evolved by H.H. for meditators in his own Ashram; which reached us in August 1971 as a reply to a question of Mr. Rabeneck's in New York. We began to practise this intensively by means of a New Year Programme (1972) which can still serve for initial study by anyone who decides to 'begin Work'. The method consists of 'giving up' one's personal outlook at any and every moment (and especially in the half-hours of meditation) and replacing it by remembering the Universal Self (Param-Atman). We now know some of the delights to which this 'giving up' can lead.)

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