

17 February 1975

READING 4

Though the full report of the Meditation meeting on the 11th February is being made available, we should like the small weekly groups to have for discussion what is probably the most important part, namely this part at the beginning:

Dr. R. The chief thing we all need stems from a fairly recent answer to a question which you, Allan, asked the Shankaracharya, and which you worded rather like this:

The meditation leads to the discovery of the treasure which lies within all of us. What one wants above everything is to keep this treasure away from anyone that will waste it such as – from within, the false ‘I’, and from outside, the wrong kind of people who will just waste it and spoil it.

He sometimes calls those wasters ‘bad company’. His answer was: (reading):

We were given a ladder of the steps of Knowledge and of Self-realization. (Dr. R. I won’t detail those steps; you can find them out from anybody.) But it is in the first step that the Way lies. This is what we call the ‘Impulse’. In the ‘impulse’ is enough energy and momentum to lead one towards understanding, or getting, or knowing more of the Truth – better ideas to advance more quickly. If one gets ‘good company’ within and without, it is natural that the progress will be regular and much more rapid.

(Record, 9 March 1970)

Dr. R. So I would like to corroborate from one’s own experience that his expression ‘good impulse’ refers to moments when one gets this impulse to do with Self-realization or meditation, for these are what brought you all to the meditation – the various impulses or experiences you had as children and all through your lives. When you begin meditating you get more of these impulses. Never neglect them; wherever you are, whatever time or place, if you get an impulse, *do something about it* – even if it is only to pronounce the Mantra to yourself once or twice, or to collect your attention if you are active and in public; or, if you are alone, you could just close your eyes and repeat it a few times. But always respond to it, because then these impulses come more often and with greater intensity so that you get a voice like the ‘voice of conscience’, which is loud and sharp. But if you neglect them, then for a long period they’ll get fainter and cease to come until you get another shock to get you back on the ladder!

Any questions about that? You all know what I mean about these impulses which come from somewhere deep inside?

(As no questions were asked) Dr. R. said: Universal assent! – no answer means assent! (he laughs) But I’m sure at heart we all agree even if it is difficult to speak about it!

Aren’t there any questions, though, about recognising these from all the other impulses that one gets? or in what way can one regulate one’s life in order to get more? – and so on, a lot of questions really centre on this most important point!

Prof. Guyatt. I do feel a difficulty, Dr. Roles. I am not quite sure how to put it, but because your life is smoother, you tend to take it to yourself.

Dr. R. Yes, rough or smooth, we take everything to ourselves. But really what I want to know is whether, if your life is smoother, do you get more of these impulses? Personally, I get them more cogently when life is rough and difficult – not too smooth for too long.

We are speaking about the impulse to come away from trivial things towards your Supreme Self. I am putting it back on to the Professor!

Prof. G. It's split; it's a bit of both!

Dr. R. Mixed, perhaps, but they all have something to do with the Supreme Self – some flavour of Self-remembering. It doesn't matter if it's mixed with other things or anything; it's just this taste, this flavour, which the Sufis refer to as 'wine'; 'Come, fill the cup!'

[We learn to distinguish the taste of the 'good wine'. And the Param-Atman can turn water into wine, as Christ did at the marriage in Cana of Galilee.]

Q. Surely it's a question not so much as to whether the impulse is there, but how to bring it out?

Dr. R. No, no! The all-important thing is that an impulse is an impulse! The Atman may be there all the time and *is* throughout your life, but if He is giving you instructions – sending you an impulse – you must respond to it.

Mr. Torikian. Does the intensity of the impulse vary?

Dr. R. Oh, yes, very much; and the more you respond to it, the greater the intensity.

Mr. T. Would you say that there is a chemical change in the body when one gets this impulse?

Dr. R. If the impulse is strong enough – intense enough – then there is. One suddenly feels totally different. But even if the impulse is weak and feeble – not strong enough to produce much chemical change – you must still pay attention to it and distinguish it.

It happens in many sorts of ways; such as an impulse to help somebody – suddenly you remember that a person you know is in trouble. The impulse which triggers that may also come from the Divine Self and must be responded to if you possibly can.

Again, if you remember something good you have read, find it and turn to it again at the earliest opportunity.

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If we look for them and become sensitive to them, we find that there are many more such impulses than we imagine, and we recognise the Truth of this passage from *The Cloud of Unknowing*:

This work asks no long time as some men suppose if it be once truly done; for it is the shortest work of all that men may imagine. It is never longer nor shorter than is an atom, the least part of time. For even so many willings or desirings, and no more and no fewer, may be in thy will in one hour as there are atoms in an hour... And He by himself without more, and none but He is sufficient to the full and much more to fulfil the will and the desire of our Soul. And our Soul by virtue of this reforming Grace is made sufficient to the full to comprehend all Him by love... And this is the endless miracle of love, the working of which shall never end...

Therefore take good heed of time how you spend it, for nothing is more precious than a moment. In one little moment, may heaven be won or lost... And therefore take heed to this work and to the marvellous manner of it within thy Soul. For if it be truly conceived, it is but a sudden stirring, without warning, speedily springing unto God as a sparkle from the coal. And it is marvellous to number the stirrings that may be in one hour wrought in a soul that is disposed to this work. But fast after each stirring, for through corruption of the flesh, it falleth down again to some thought or to some deed done or undone. But what matter? For fast after, it riseth again as suddenly as it did before.

(Chapter Four)

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