

28 June 1976

## READING 7

### PART 1

We started Reading 6 last week, with the sentence: ‘Most people seemed to find no difficulty in seeing that the Physical (sensory) world which we share and the Subtle (psychological) world which is so individual are simultaneously in action; but some make the idea of a Third or Causal world rather hard to distinguish’. The difficulty is resolved by finding the right instrument to use and this instrument is *Emotion* – but Emotion purified of self-elements so that it functions at its full speed.

*Logic* can convince one that there is a two-way flow between Physical and Causal; energy is passing outward from unity to multiplicity, and at the same time a feedback mechanism is operating from without inward since much-cherished impressions, thoughts and experiences are being stored, first in the short-term and then in the long-term memory systems. Where logic fails and first-hand experience has to take over, is to discover that higher levels are out of range of our fleeting daytime ‘consciousness’. Thus in dreams at night the subtle level plays back to us in infinite variety those cherished daytime experiences; and in deep and dreamless sleep, though there is then nothing between us and the Causal level, we know nothing about it.

So we have to give up logic and verbal descriptions, as was pointed out so long ago in the Musings of Chuang-Tzū:

You cannot speak of ocean to a well-frog – the creature of a narrower sphere. You cannot speak of ice to a summer insect – the creature of a season. You cannot speak of Tao (Consciousness) to a pedagogue; his scope is too restricted.

But with the availability of the Meditation to everybody, even pedagogues get a chance! At every initiation session there are always three or four people who (though they may have had a profoundly sceptical approach) suddenly, as soon as the Mantra gets to work, are hit by a new experience of consciousness which we call ‘Insight’. So we can perhaps follow Chuang-Tzū as he continues:

Now that you have emerged from your narrow sphere and have seen the great ocean, you know your own insignificance and I can speak to you of great principles... only from subjective knowledge is it possible to proceed to objective knowledge... Tao has its laws and its evidences; it is devoid both of action and of form... Spiritual beings draw their spirituality therefrom... To Tao no point in time is long ago... Predestination and chance are limited to material existences. How can they bear upon the Infinite? Tao is something beyond material existences. It cannot be conveyed either by words or by silence. In that state which is neither speech nor silence, its transcendental nature may be apprehended.

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## PART 2

We have said that Emotion in purest form is necessary for seeing oneself and the world at the Causal level; and reawakening of the sense of wonder (which comes with release of abundance of Sattva) is perhaps the purest of the emotions. The experiences which are coming to us as the result of regular meditation resemble the physical experiences of a blind person who sees for the first time.

(The last Monday meeting included a quotation from the *Listener* which may help those who have not heard it. Some of the more experienced may prefer to go on to Part 3 and we hope they will shed some light on it!)

Interviewer M.H. Can you imagine what it must be like to have lived nearly thirty years as blind person, and to wake up one morning being able to see? That is what happened to Sheila Hocken, a Nottingham housewife, who had been virtually blind since birth... She had had numerous operations on her eyes as a child and none of them had helped until last September she again underwent surgery for the removal of cataracts and, for the first time in her life, she could see clearly.

This is Sheila herself:

When I first looked (after the bandages were taken from my eyes for two minutes) it was like an electric shock – really as if somebody had hit me, almost indescribable; white first, white of the nurse's apron. It was so dazzlingly bright that I had to turn away. Then so many colours; there was green – dark and pale; a beautiful royal blue which had so much depth. I didn't imagine blue like that.

M.H. How much could you see before you had the operation?

Sheila. Very, very vaguely. I could distinguish light and dark. I could see shapes, but I could not see what people looked like. I thought I could see colours but I suppose it was like looking through a really thick fog. But, suddenly, here was all this brilliant light, flooding into your eyes.

M.H. What did you make of all that?

Sheila. All I could say and all I can still say is, I didn't imagine the world was such a beautiful place. It is really fantastic. When I meet people now I am always astounded that they are not always going on about how wonderful things are. When I go out, I say: 'Isn't the grass green? Did you see the sunset last night?' People are not interested; I suppose they take it all for granted. What a shame to miss a sunset.

Dr. R. It seems to me that this description on the physical level of the sudden appearance of sight is just like the spiritual feeling of the sudden intense revelation which comes with release of Sattva on the Causal level. One has the feeling that one is always taking everything for granted – all the wonder has gone out of things and suddenly you get it back.

Chapter 9 of St. John's Gospel is all about the physical miracle of giving sight to the man blind from birth; but as pointed out on p.182 of *A New Model*, it can also be seen to describe the sudden inner illumination in people who have been spiritually blind.

Mrs. Gould said that she had heard this Radio programme, and what really struck her was the fact this was a very ordinary woman and yet she was speaking pure poetry – as if someone had put the words into her mouth.

Dr. R. Yes, the poetry came especially when she was asked: ‘What was it like when you first came out of hospital and stepped out into the real world?’

Sheila said: It was like the first day; it was like the first sunshine! To me it had never been there before; it was as if it had all just been invented – just for me. And I saw this green stuff on the floor – I couldn’t believe it was grass; I had to touch it.

And there were trees everywhere. I just didn’t imagine that trees grew everywhere just like that, and they were all different shapes. This was September and the autumn was coming. I have always loved autumn because there are so many things that a blind person can tell about autumn – the smell is different, the sound of the leaves; but nobody could ever have described to me what autumn really *looked* like. It was fabulous – the orange and the red...

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### FOR SENIOR GROUPS ONLY

#### THE CAUSAL BODY

**In the 1970 Record there is a passage which is not easily understood:**

S. The Causal Body is the combination of the Antahkaran (inner organ or ‘soul’) with the light of the Atman reflected as in a mirror; but this so-called ‘coming together’ of these two is an illusion. The illusion is illustrated by the way you see your face in a mirror – the face seems to be ‘in the mirror’ but in fact it isn’t really there. The only reality is the Self.

Q. As the subtle can exist without the physical body, can the causal body separate from the subtle?

S. The separation of the physical from the other bodies is very ordinary knowledge which anybody can understand; but when it comes to the subtle and causal bodies this requires first-hand knowledge. Once an individual has experienced this true knowledge or knowledge of the Self, then he sees that any idea of these bodies existing separately from the Self is illusion. In fact, they must always coexist since the subtle is itself the emanation of the causal body... Even the physical body takes another shape on the subtle level when we experience a dream.

In fact in our dreams we still seem to have the physical body of hands and feet; we still seem to have a mind and a ‘feeling of I’ – everything seems to be present as a physical experience, though there is no physical basis for it. So this ‘dream body’ which is created by the subtle body is of a peculiar nature – nothing seems to be impossible for it (it can pass through doors or walls, can change its size) and it makes an illusion out of our physical life.

The quality of the causal body may be described as the state in which we have no notion of anything external – just the pure being, which is never lost even in profound sleep. In that causal body all the Samskara (the ‘Essence’ which develops according to the time and place) lies dormant. In the same way in the Universe also, when the creation is withdrawn, then all the causal bodies lie dormant in the Absolute each with its essence. There is then no physical body, nor subtle body; and yet there is a causal body which lies within the Absolute, and at His word, all these seed-like causal bodies flourish again and find their place and relative positions in Creation.

(Record, 9 March 1970)

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