

1 November 1976

## READING 5

### THE LIGHT OF KNOWLEDGE

Some simple and illuminating things (which you haven't yet heard) were said when three of our friends (two from New Zealand, one from London) met with the Shankaracharya in January of this year.

[Note: To link it with our present discussions we recommend that you consult Figure 2, which is the same as Figure 1 in Reading 3 with a few additions. What H.H. calls the 'Jiva' is the ordinary feeling of 'I' – the 'personality' which we feel in the head behind the forehead. Though the mechanism which connects it with the Causal Level is to be found in the central emotional core of the brain ('The Heavenly Heart'), it is felt by us round the physical heart, between the diaphragm and the throat; and that is how we are to understand the word 'Antahkarana' meaning inner organ or 'Soul' for it is more a 'state of unity' than a place.]

N.H. We were told that the Atman, which is unlimited, descends into the Antahkarana which is limited. How can that which is unlimited enter into that which is limited?

S. When the light of the sun 'descends' the sun does not descend; yet we cannot separate the two – the sun and the light of the sun! It is in the same sense that the Atman is said to 'descend' into the Antahkarana.

N.H. Is there a precise procedure in your tradition, from which in our state of ignorance we can start? And what plan of action is necessary to cleanse the Antahkarana so that it seeks (and speaks) the truth? This I ask so I may help the group in New Zealand.

S. Certainly we have to cleanse the Antahkarana, for it picks up impurities from all the changing combinations of the three Gunas. We remove this dirt by providing light. What kind of light is this? Is it the light of the sun (by day) or the stars and moon (by night)? Or is it something like gas or oil or electric light? No, it is none of these physical kinds of light. The light is the immaterial light of the Atman.

We can see the image of the sun in still water; but if the water is in motion, the image appears to be quivering. The quivering is of course, in the water, not in the sun. Or if the water is muddy then the image is unclear; but the mud is in the water not in the sun!

What are the methods of purifying and cleansing the Antahkarana?

I will explain in more detail, though you already know some of these very well. Actions appropriate and well-performed; in school or spiritual work, dedicated actions, a clear mind and willingness to serve. Then forming the attitude that *everybody* is part of the same universal Self (Param-Atman); and treating others as we would like them to treat us. Remembering that the same pure Param-Atman permeates all the living beings we come across, as all are part of one single whole. These are the things which provide the light by which the Antahkarana is purified.

(Record, 21 January 1976)

(Pause, perhaps for Meditation)

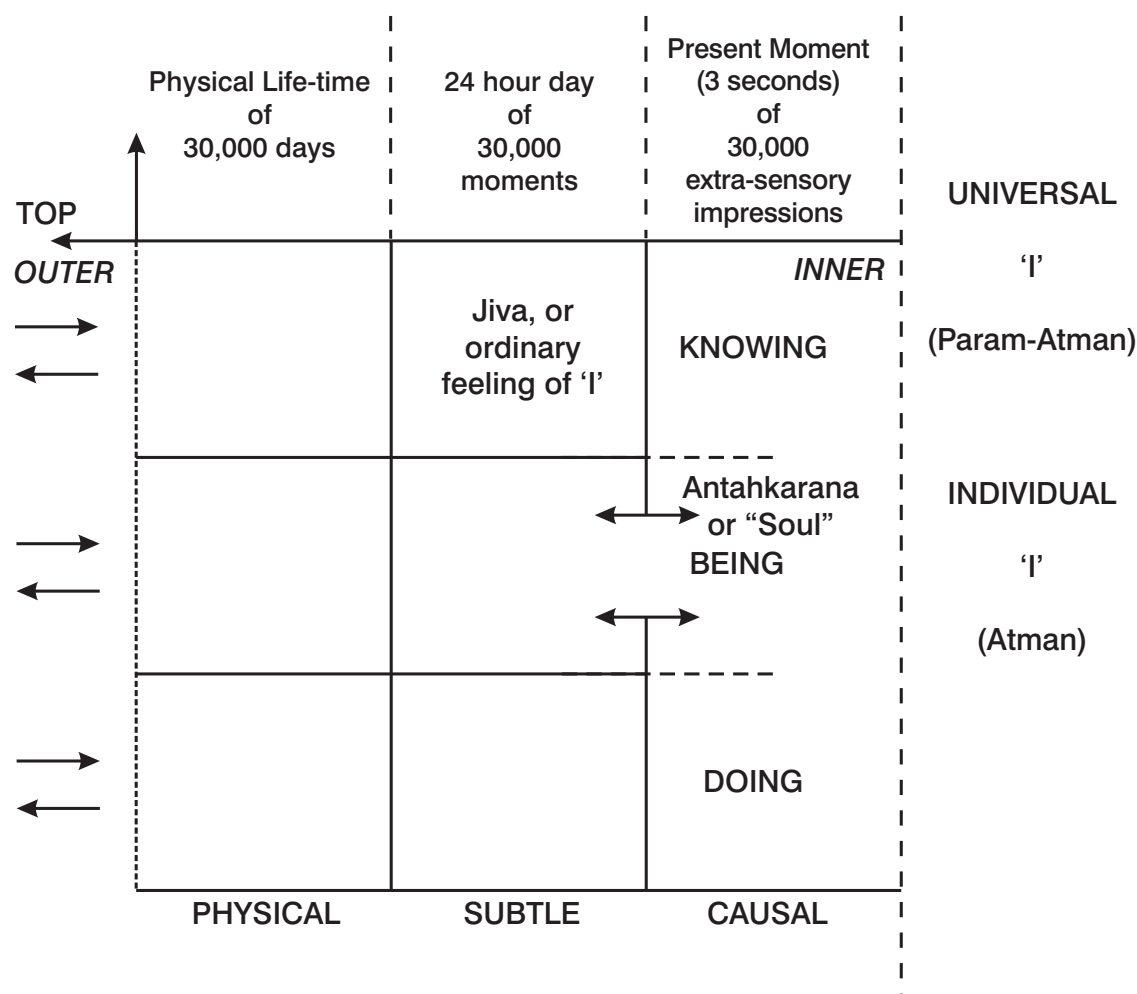


Figure 1. Three levels of the Brain and the Three Worlds.

S. (continues): Consider another kind of light besides those physical sources we have mentioned. Knowledge is a light that illuminates the mind (subtle level). It is not a light that can be physically described – vibrations transmitted by physical matter – but it is something definite which enables us to know.

Knowledge has two faces – one is 'yes' the other is 'no' – acceptance or rejection based on whether something is true or untrue. If we sit in a dark – completely dark – room (or in the 'hour of physical death'), that which knows something like 'I am here', 'I continue to exist' has a knowledge that never dies – the only permanent knowledge. That knowledge, which we also experience in the darkness of the night has to be linked with the knowledge we acquire through the senses in the daytime. The union of those two is expressed in our worldly actions. Unless that sort of knowledge that 'I also exist' joins up with our external sensations and actions, then we are not expressing True Knowledge.

All other lights fade out in the light of knowledge. The eye by itself cannot see anything; there must be light from the brain – just the intention of seeing what we are looking at. Many things enter our field of vision without our seeing them [quite often we don't see something straight in front of us if we forget what we are looking for]. Also we can see something without understanding its significance [we can, for example, see the printed words: 'Whoso is without sin among you let him cast the first stone' without understanding them i.e. taking them to heart and remembering them at a critical

moment]. Seeing and understanding both becomes possible with the light of full Consciousness.

N.H. The words of the Realized man seem to bring this Light of Knowledge into the darkened Antahkarana.

S. But the Realized man is not putting anything into the mind of the unrealized man; there is no transfer of any substance. The words only awaken something which already existed in the mind of the other person. So the removal of mistaken ideas (which is really the imparting of knowledge) is all that the words of a Realized man can do.

R. (a written question from London): What is the relation of the Atman to the feeling of 'I' we all have?

S. Strictly speaking there is no difference between the Jiva and the Atman for both are the same.

Take, for example, a human family. The head of the family is called by the wife 'husband'; by his parents 'son'; by his children 'father'; yet all these are the same person! You can distinguish the individual Jiva by observing that it is full of fears arising from the body's sense of self-preservation. Atman itself, being immortal, does not know death or physical danger; but when these fears are imposed on it by a mortal man, then it becomes the individual 'I' (Jiva).

(*ibid*)

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