

Wednesday 11 January

N.G.H. The answers His Holiness has given over the last days have clarified and simplified many things for me. However, in reading through his words, there are certain points which I would like clarified. Today I wish to put these points—(I have kept them simple and short to help with translation.)

N.S. Whatever success I might have achieved in translating for you at these audiences is only due to the Grace of Maharji. It's none of my doing, it's all his,—we call it Kripa. That Grace of his has prompted you to make your questions short and simple!

N.G.H. What is the relationship of Atman to Vyashti; of Atman to Jiva?

H.H. The relationship between Atman and Vyashti;—the Lord of Vyashti is Jiv-Atman; the Lord of Samashti is Param-Atman. So that Vyashti is the individual—Samashti is the entire Cosmos. Now Atman is the Lord of Jiva. The Lord of the Cosmos is Param-Atman, the Lord of the Jiva is Atman.

N.G.H. Does the Jiva's sense of individuality, when he forgets the Atman,—this forgetting that he is the Atman—does this arise in the Vijnanamaya Kosha?

H.H. When the individual forgets that he is Atman and considers himself to be the body, then he is Jiva. When he remembers that he is Atman, then he is Atman.

N.G.H. When he claims the knowledge that belongs to Vijnanamaya, is that Ahankar? When he doesn't claim and knows that the knowledge belongs to Atman, is that Aham?

H.H. That is correct. When there is Ahankar, then he becomes Jiva, but when he is devoid of Ahankar, then he is Atman.

N.G.H. Could His Holiness say a little about Aham?

H.H. That which feels the sense of Ahankar, that becomes the Jiva; then the Jiva gets all the bondage—all the Dhyana and all the other Sadhanas, they are done by that Jiva. But that which feels that he is Atman and not the Jiva is never bound; there is nothing to be done by him, he is beyond all doing. And, in other words, that means that the entire difficulty arises when one identifies himself with the body, with the Antahkarana. When you identify yourself with the Antahkarana and the doings of the Antahkarana, all the four functions of it, then you identify yourself with the Jiva, but when you do not identify yourself with the Antahkarana, then you are Atman.

N.G.H. So it's Jiva who believes he is the one who is born and dies?

H.H. Yes, your interpretation is correct. The Jiva experiences birth and death but Atman never takes a birth nor dies. He gives a very good illustration: that of a person who is ill, he needs some medicine. Now, Jiva is the person who needs medicine—one who is healthy doesn't need any medicine, and that's Atman, and Atman doesn't need any medicine. That means he is free.

There is no bondage—the Atman does not have to do any of the Dhyana or Sadhanas. He is already in tune with Param-Atman.

N.G.H. Is this when, in the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna is speaking to Arjuna and says that Arjuna has been born many times but he, Krishna, has not been born, he takes a body when sin is rampant?

H.H. In Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna says to Arjuna, “several births you have taken, and I have also taken a

number of births, but you do not know them and I know them”. So the person who knows is not bound by birth and death, but he who does not know is bound by those births.

Chapter IV verse 5: “I have been born again and again and from age to age; thou too, Arjuna! My births are known to Me, but thou knowest not thine.”

N.G.H. With Samashti—can we understand that as the universe? Or (to N.S.) I think you translated it the other day as ‘existence’. How are we best to understand the word ‘Samashti’?

H.H. ‘Cosmos’ is the correct word for it.* There are five elements; earth, fire, air, water and ether of which the Cosmos is made; the entire Creation means Samashti. He says we have to be very careful about one thing—there should be no misunderstanding of that one point—that ignorance relates to Vyashti and not to Samashti.

*In the Doctrine of Cosmoses of our Western System, it is called Proto-Cosmos. (F.C.R.)

N.G.H. I see; the Lord of the Cosmos looks after everything—everything would obey him without question.

H.H. There are three essentials—omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence. These are the three great qualities of the Param-Atman, the God of the Cosmos.

In a theatrical performance various rôles are allotted to various actors and some of those actors sometimes start feeling that they are the persons whose part they are playing. Others remember that they are not what they are depicting themselves to be, but they are something different from the character which they are only just enacting. So the one who remembers that he is enacting a part is different from the one who actually starts feeling that he is the person whose part he is playing.

Param-Atman is the person who remembers that He is himself and is not actually the person whose part he is playing—he is someone different, but he is depicting someone else. But the Jiv-Atman starts feeling that he is the person whose part he is playing; so that makes all the difference. That’s why the Param-Atman is not bound, has not got any bondage, although he also comes and takes birth, even then he doesn’t feel the bondage. Just like Arjuna and Krishna.

N.G.H. Could His Holiness explain how ‘concentration’ functions in Tamas, Rajas and Sattva?

H.H. There is no concentration in Tamas, that’s only sleep; in Rajas concentration could be there, but there will be some disturbance—Vikshepa; and in Sattva there is real concentration, and then there is even some stillness about it: the concentration in Sattva brings about some stillness and you can even stop the process of concentration while you are actually concentrating in Sattva, and there will be nothing but a sort of voidness. The result of concentration in Sattva is either that one will do the work very well or that one will be still.

N.G.H. (to N.S.) What is the word that you translate for ‘concentration’?

N.S. Actually the word I used was Ghar-Chintan.

H.H. Sattva could be experienced in concentration in two ways—one could be active, and one could be still; it can present itself in two ways—when one is doing the work with deep absorption and when one is still. Now when one is still, that is better than when one is actually engaged in some work.

N.G.H. Could His Holiness explain further his statement, ‘the greater the concentration, the greater the experience of Samashti Shakti’?

H.H. You wanted some further light on this aspect. I will illustrate the point.

Supposing there is water, and a light is thrown on that water and the water is not still, it is rippling; in that case the reflection will not be clear. But when the water becomes still, then you will be able to see the image reflected clearly. Similarly, when the concentration is deep, there is stillness; the greater the concentration, the greater the stillness, and in the stillness the reflection of the Samashti is clear.

Antahkarana is made to stand still by the process of Dhyana and the greater the stillness which is achieved the greater is the force of Samashti—the oneness with the Samashti is being experienced.

But this is only half the answer, because there are two things—Mal and Vikshepa—while Antahkarana is just like a pool of water. If the water is not still, Antahkarana is not still, then the reflection will be poor. At the same time if there is mud, if it is dirty, then too, even if it is still, then the reflection will be poor. So the Dhyana helps to do both things, it removes the mobility or the rippling of the water—it removes Vikshepa—as well as cleansing, which means the removal of the Mal.

N.G.H. What in man concentrates?

H.H. Chitta. This is responsible for doing all the concentration. It is Chitta which is affected by Mal and Vikshepa. Mal is caused by previous Samskaras—previous connections, and Vikshepa is there because of present connections—not separate.

N.G.H. Speaking of subtle communication, His Holiness explained the other day that it was the Shakti of Param-Atman flowing through everyone that caused subtle communication to take place. He said it was due to Sattva. I understand Prema as the outpouring of Param-Atman. How is Prema (Love) related to Sattva?

H.H. Love is the natural quality of Param Atman. It is exhibited in Sattva, so the natural quality comes out only in Sattva, otherwise it is all artificial.

N.G.H. Is it there that the force or power of Sattva is reflected?

H.H. Yes, there are two effects of Sattva; one is the stillness and the other is light, and when the two are present one can experience Param-Atman. Light means knowledge. When there is light and stillness then the Antahkarana will experience the Param-Atman; there is nothing in Vyashti which is not in Samashti.

N.G.H. Could His Holiness say more about the equilibrium of the breathing in and out and why it is so important. Is it related to Prana and Vyana?

H.H. The word is not Vyana, it is Apana; Prana means breathing in and Apana breathing out. When you are exhaling then there is a loss of power. If the two are not equalised then there is persistent loss of power, and when the Prana and Apana are equalised, then the power is preserved. That's why it is so important—so that you should not lose the Shakti, but you should preserve it; it is a spiritual force which you preserve.

N.G.H. So breathing in and breathing out—this is in the air, is it?

H.H. When you breathe in then you get fresh air, and when you breathe out, then that is polluted air, so in this air both things are there—oxygen and carbon dioxide. When you inhale you are getting oxygen but when you exhale then you are giving out carbon dioxide, and oxygen brings power (shakti), and that is true even for flowers and trees—the trees give out carbon dioxide at night and that is why we believe that it is not good to sleep under the trees at night or to keep growing flowers in your room at night.

N.G.H. When the body becomes very still, like a statue, and one has lost complete feeling, memory of it, what is it that looks after the body—is it the Prana?

H.H. When you are absolutely still it is not the Prana which is looking after the body it is the Chetan Shakti*—the life force—life power. Because in Samadhi even the process of breathing in and out stops; even in Samadhi something has to take care of the body. You can't possibly say that Prana looks after the body because at that time there is no Prana, there is no breathing in and out. Chetan Shakti is the life force and looks after the body when in Samadhi when there is no Prana, as well as at other times when the body is still and the Prana and Apana have been equalised.

*Sakti—from the verbal root sak, 'to be potent, to do something'. Goddess Sakti is the consort of Shiva—like 'Purush and Prakriti'.

N.G.H. Does the Chetan Shakti have a vehicle in the physical or subtle bodies?

H.H. The Chetan Shakti is sometimes called Prakriti also and actually this power, this Chetan Shakti, works through Antahkarana and it gives power for Chitta, Buddhi, Ahankara and Manas to work—all these four things are activated by the Chetan Shakti, even the Prana, Apana process is activated by the Chetan Shakti.

He is giving an illustration of the clock (which began to strike):

This life force is like the winding of the block or watch. Once a watch is wound it goes on ticking as long as that life force is there. Similarly, in an individual this life force is working as long as it has to work.

Now the life force in the Samashti works as the life force in the Vyashti too, so that you are able to experience that also. The person who winds is different from the watch; that is known as Samashti Nature and with the help of that even the nature of the Vyashti, which we call Subha (temperament)—even that can be improved. That Nature is not the watch itself—it is separate from the watch and the life force winds it up, makes it work.

B.R.H. Does that individual temperament (Subha) determine the shape, the form, of the 'watch'?

H.H. That is correct. That determines the shape, but the shape can be altered also. The nature of the Vyashti is improved by the life force of the Samashti, then an improvement can be wrought in the shape.

N.G.H. In one conversation with Dr. Roles, His Holiness spoke of the voice of the Beloved which arises in the stillness and gives guidance from time to time. Could His Holiness say more about this voice?

N.S. This reply of His Holiness explains how I have managed to serve you during the sessions as a translator. It is only through his kindness, his grace, that I have managed my job.

H.H. When there is connection between Samashti and Vyashti by virtue of concentration, even things which you do not know, knowledge of those things dawns on you. So that's how the voice of the Samashti functions and enlightens you when you are thinking of the Beloved. The voice of the Guru, after all, is pervading the atmosphere; you are able to catch it because of the stillness which you have managed to get to by Dhyana.

N.G.H. And this voice arises in the Antahkarana? (Yes) Is the causal body (Karan Sharira) made of the substance of Prakriti?

H.H. The causal body is ignorance.

B.R.H. Could one say then that there is no such thing as a pure causal body (Karana Sharira)? It only exists in ignorance?

H.H. There is something like pure Karana Sharira (causal body) also, but there is no ignorance there. In other

words, there are Sukshma and Shtula Sharira (subtle and gross bodies), there is the pure (Shuddha) causal body, which does not take birth, because, as a result of the actions which have been done, ignorance has been removed; so there is no birth or death for that any more. He comes only for the purpose of doing good to others—say for the sake of the country or for civilisation—that sort of incarnation would be there, but not like normal beings who are born as a result of their deeds. But for the ordinary causal body, it is not pure, but the life and birth would be there as a result of the deeds which he does in ignorance, as a result of the ignorance those deeds which are done would result in birth and death; but for the pure causal body there would be no such thing.

N.G.H. In the ordinary person such as you and I—to N.S.—what rôle does this causal body play? What is its function, its purpose?

H.H. This is responsible for making one feel that which is not there—illusion. And that is ignorance. That which is not there when one feels it is there, then that is the function of the causal body.

N.G.H. This sounds to me like the part that goes from life to life which, when a man dies, determines his next embodiment?

H.H. Yes; illusion, which was spoken of, is the causal body. It is all illusion, ignorance, so that the causal body establishes a relationship with the subtle body by taking on itself the thing which is not there, and that is responsible for birth and death.

N.G.H. (to N.S.) Could you tell His Holiness that this is not generally understood in the West at all—the causal body—it is thought that that is what one should get into because that's where the great unity is, and this is what is believed by so many people.

H.H. In the West this Atman which is connected to Chetan is not properly conceived of, and that's why there is this difference in view about the causal body. Because they don't have the same conception about Atman as we have; they are more materialistic and concerned with solid things; but we consider there is something—Atman—also, which is working behind all this, and that is responsible for the difference in view. What do people in the West say to the question, “Whose bodies are these—the causal and subtle bodies—to whom do they belong?”

N.G.H. In the West the man thinks that it is his causal body; he doesn't really know; he says 'I' to this body generally. So the right way to look at it is that these bodies belong to Param-Atman, for his use?

H.H. If somebody asks, “Whose is this tape recorder?”, then the answer is that it belongs to Mr. Howitt. You can't say that this tape recorder is of the tape recorder—it has to be of someone else; the person who owns it will have to be distinguished from the machine itself. Similarly, when you ask the question, ‘After all, whose are these bodies?’, it has to be that they are the Jiv-Atman's. Now when the Jiv-Atman is purified then it becomes Atman, so that with the Jiv-Atman there is birth and death—it is in a bondage; but with the Atman there is no bondage, it is beyond any bondage.

N.G.H. Is it in the causal body that Atman and Param-Atman are united, when the Antahkarana is stilled?

H.H. This will be very clear to you if you think of two pots full of water placed together; one is small and the other is bigger. Now, if you place them in the sunshine the sun will be reflected in both of them, the small pot as well as the bigger pot. But the thing which is being reflected is the same; only one sun is being reflected in the small one as well as the bigger one.

Similarly, that which is being reflected in the Antahkarana of Samashti is known as Param-Atman, and that

which is being reflected in the Antahkarana of the smaller Vyashti, that is Atman. But in reality Atman is not different from Param Atman and the thing which is being reflected is only one.

If the water of the smaller pot is dirty or not still, then the reflection will be also of the same kind; if it is coloured the reflection will be coloured so that it is an illusion; we say that the light which is being reflected is coloured or is dim or such, but there is no difference in the light, light is the same. The difficulty is with the water. So with Antahkarana of the Vyashti. As and when it is cleansed, you do not have to feel that the light which is coming in the Vyashti is the same as the Samashti—there is no difference. If any difference is being felt it is because of the impurity of the Antahkarana of the Vyashti.

I will raise a question on your behalf; the next question would be,—what is the relationship between Atman and Param-Atman? The reply is contained in the Vedas where it has been said that when you feel that Atman and Param-Atman are one it is Brahman; there is one Brahman. When you feel they are different, then it is Param-Atman and Atman.

R.M. During Dhyana, then the Mantra is repeating inwardly, automatically, in Chitta, should the attention be directed to the sound of the Mantra itself or the clear stillness underlying the sound?

H.H. The function of repeating the Mantra is to cleanse, to remove the pollution of the causal and subtle bodies etc. You will be able to get a very complete idea from this simile: if you throw a piece of stone into a pond there will be a noise as the stone is landing in the water, but besides that, it will create ripples and the ripples will go on spreading towards the shore. The circles will go on widening until they come to the edge of the shore and disappear.

Similarly with the Mantra; when it starts repeating you hear the sound but as you go on repeating, the sound goes inside and slowly, slowly disappears. Just as the ripples disappear. And then the sound settles down and tries to cleanse the body, mind and Antahkarana, the Chitta—everything.

R.M. Earlier, His Holiness explained that the knowledge described in the third Shloka of Shankara's Atmabodha was of two degrees; relative knowledge held within the Vijnanamaya Kosha and true knowledge. When the Antahkarana is completely still, how does the knowledge of the Atman then arise?

H.H. Atman is Knowledge personified. No fresh knowledge is to come to Atman. It is already the embodiment of Knowledge but that is not being experienced because of the dirtiness of the Antahkarana. With the Antahkarana becoming still you are able to experience that Knowledge. So that no other knowledge need be brought from outside—it is already there in the Atman.

The Antahkarana is an embodiment of three qualities—Sat, Chit and Ananda. Sat means 'always in existence', Chit means 'it is alive', and Ananda means 'it is blissful, full of happiness'. Chit, 'alive', means Knowledge. Sat is always present. Chit is Knowledge (Jnana), and Ananda is blissful.

These are the three qualities of Atman which are always present but because of the smallness of the Antahkarana these qualities are not experienced to their full extent.

If the Antahkarana is bigger, as in Samashti, this (experience of the qualities) will be bigger. When Antahkarana gets lost or disappears, even then this exists, this Sat, Chit, Ananda. This continues to exist. When the Antahkarana is formed then if this is smaller it takes a smaller shape. When it is bigger it is bigger in shape but this Sat, Chit, Ananda—these three qualities always exist.

R.M. When a householder dives deep in Dhyana and gains power he has no trouble in carrying out his job with energy to spare. What is the best use of this extra power?

H.H. As a businessman, supposing you earn more than what you can spend, what will you do with it?

R.M. *Invest it.*

H.H. You can do the same thing with this extra power. Help others—those who do not know—teach them.

Thursday 12 January

N.G.H. *Would you please convey the following to His Holiness: I saw clearly during the night how my thinking is usually upside down. In formulating questions I saw how I normally think from the viewpoint that I am the body, desires, thoughts, stillness, etc. The beautiful words of His Holiness yesterday made a powerful impression on my thinking. To formulate questions from the viewpoint that I am the Atman which is not separate from the Param Atman immediately cleans out a lot of ignorant thinking.*

In the Vedantic system, is there a name for knowledge that begins from knowing one is the Atman, and knowledge which starts from the viewpoint that one is the body, desires, mind, etc.?

H.H. There are not two words in the Vedantic system for the kinds of knowledge you have said, but until you know you are not the body the matter does not become clear.

N.G.H. *As I understand His Holiness' words, he said that the sounding of the Mantra cleans and stills the Antahkarana. The Mantra 'RAM' is composed of three letters; could His Holiness say if each of these letters plays a particular function in the cleansing and stilling of the Antahkarana?*

H.H. The Mantra 'RAM' is composed of three letters: 'Ra', 'Aa', and 'Ma'. These three combined together make it RAM. All these three letters have a different meaning and function. 'Ra' is indicative of force—Agni. The function of it is to start cleaning. 'Aa' depicts pervasion. It pervades the entire body. 'Ma' is indicative of peace, so that when the Mantra 'RAM' is uttered, the force enters the body, pervades the entire body, and by cleansing leads towards peace.

N.G.H. *Does the cleansing have to do with wiping clear the effects of the past?*

H.H. That is right. The samskaras that have been acquired in the past, particularly bad samskaras, they are all wiped out by the repetition of the Mantra.

N.G.H. *So the second letter—the Aa—does that expand the consciousness of the man,—having cleansed the past?*

H.H. Yes, that is correct.

N.G.H. *So the Ma sound has to do with overcoming Vikshepa?*

H.H. Yes; when you start the Mantra you start with Ra and end with Ma; and when you come to the Ma then there is stillness, which is indicative of peace.

N.G.H. *When the Mantra refines and is no longer heard, what effect is it then having on the bodies of man?*

H.H. When the Mantra is refined, as you say, and is no longer heard, the effect on the body is that it experiences that stillness which is responsible for cleansing the past and not allowing new samskaras to enter. So the Mantra has gone inside and has pervaded the entire system, thereby it blocks the entry of fresh samskaras from coming in. And at the same time it lets those samskaras which are already there to go out. Think of a valve, which lets the air in but does not let it out—this is just the opposite—it lets the bad samskaras go out but does not let the bad samskaras come in.

N.G.H. *When it is working at that level, does it have an effect on the causal body (Karana Sharira)?*

H.H. It affects all the three—causal, subtle and physical.

N.G.H. *If Chitta is responsible for the automatic repetition of the Mantra, when the Antahkarana is stilled this function must cease. Does this mean that Meditation ceases when the Antahkarana is still?*

H.H. When the Antahkarana begins to still, then the Meditation (Dhyana) does not cease but it becomes deeper.

N.G.H. *I would like to ask about the initiation ceremony itself. The names that are recited for invoking blessings and divine revelation such as Narayana, Shakti, Govinda, Yogananda, Shankara—these men, were they special vehicles by which Param-Atman connected with the Jiv-Atman of men in a particular time and place? Do the vibrations of these great mediums still act, and help men on the Way?*

H.H. The five gods which are invoked, one of them is invoked at the time of the initiation, not all of them. But any one is selected out of them and that particular God is more helpful for daily life, so at the time of initiation a sort of connection is established—a relationship—a friendship is established between that particular God and the person being initiated. All the five gods are equal and they are perfect, so any one which is selected out of those five leads the man throughout his life, both in his worldly affairs as well as in his spiritual purpose.

It is very helpful, particularly in worldly affairs, that the guidance is more. The guidance for the spiritual part is also there but it is more helpful in the daily routine of life.

N.G.H. *Could he say a little on 'Narayan'?*

H.H. There appears to be some confusion, for they are all the name of the same power, same God, Param-Atman. That God has manifested himself in the various forms, and individuals differ in their nature, so that particular aspect which appears to one most, it is easier to have harmony with that particular aspect of God. The name and the form of all these five differ, but actually they are all one, there is no difference between them.

N.G.H. *Could there be a special Mantra for a householder whose nature tends to Bhakti, Jnana, or is the general Mantra RAM sufficient for the householder?*

H.H. One is enough.

B.R.H. *I quite often help in the ceremony for initiating people into the Meditation, and this is always a happy and invigorating task. Earlier His Holiness said that the initiation ceremony always carries a beneficial effect, but a more powerful effect is gained if the meaning is understood.*

Could His Holiness please explain the inner meaning behind the form of the ceremony?

H.H. (to NGH) How do you initiate? How is the process of initiation done?

N.G.H. *This is the ceremony that Dr. Roles taught me in 1963, with His Holiness' permission; he himself was taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, and this was the initiation where they are given the word RAM.*

H.H. Mahesh Yogi learnt it from here.

N.S. (to B.R.H.) *I repeat your question.*

H.H. The meaning behind the form of the ceremony? That is what I want to know from you! What is the form? How does it take place? The custom here at the time of the initiation is that the person who wants to

take the initiation is first made to worship the (?), and after that he is made to sit here and his Holiness recites the Mantra himself and after that the disciple will also be made to recite the same one.

Whilst this process is taking place, whatever His Holiness considers best, he sends his force into that disciple, that's how the connection is established, and that is the process which is done here.

Now His Holiness wants to know what you do?

N.G.H. Firstly, there is a portrait of Guru Deva and of His Holiness on the table, a dish of water, some rice, incense, a lamp, camphor; and then I have to say the first part in Sanskrit, which is said to be invoking the blessings of the divine Guru.

Then comes a cleansing process; I think it is APAVITRA, PAVITRA PAVAR (N.S. continues the invocation)—then an offering is made of a number of things—Vastum, Snanam, Pushpam and so on. Then there is a little piece that says GURU BRAHMA, GURU VISHNU etc. and then everyone else leaves the room and one gives the word, says the word to the person receiving the initiation, when I hold in mind His Holiness and his master, so that one attempts to be passive and connect them with this force. Then the person is asked to go away and practise the Meditation as he has been taught.

H.H. The underlying meaning is that the person who is giving the Mantra, who is initiating, his power also goes to the person receiving it. So that when he recites that Mantra and practises the recitation of that Mantra then he is not alone, he has got a power behind him.

N.G.H. I would like to just confirm here that the form we are using is the correct one?

H.H. His Holiness remembers that he did tell Dr. Roles to let you do it, and it is perfectly all right, you have got his permission to continue as you are doing. He only wanted to check! He wanted to find out that whatever had been told to Dr. Roles, it has been correctly conveyed to you! And that's why he was trying to find out!

R.M. His Holiness mentioned that when the Mantra is given, this establishes a relationship with the disciple. This is working, because in Wellington, we often experience an awareness of Mr. Howitt and his own Meditation even though we are not with him physically.

H.H. That does happen. It is the natural corollary from it. The result of Meditation is that you always remember the person who has initiated you.

B.R.H. In Wellington, people sometimes come to receive the Meditation without having had any previous contact with the knowledge aspect. How much knowledge and understanding of the Meditation is needed beforehand to set the Meditation on a firm path?

N.S. What knowledge do you mean?

B.R.H. About what the importance of the Meditation is—how it relates to one's ordinary life—what its function is.

N.S. Excuse me, I would like to be clear myself. Unless they know what Dhyana is, how will they be prompted to come and take the initiation?

B.R.H. This is something that is generally known about, and those who do come to be initiated usually feel that it would help them in some important way, but they don't have any more understanding than that, usually.

H.H. Only this much is necessary to tell them before the Meditation—that there is a very big power stored inside and the process of initiation into Dhyana will enable them to get a key to that store. Just as there are mines inside the earth, mines of gold, of silver of other metals, and in order to get that treasure one has to remove that

upper layer and dive in—dive below and extract that wealth; similarly, there is a very vast power inside the human being. In Dhyana one is, as it were, able to unlock that treasure and get possession of it.

B.R.H. There are several people in the Wellington group who are very interested in herbs and their various uses. Could His Holiness please explain a little about what this particular affinity is that such plants have to the Antahkarana of man?

H.H. There are many types of herbs. Normally these herbs remove the ailments of the body, but there are certain herbs at least in our part of India, which have an effect on the Antahkarana, particularly the Buddhi. As it were, they increase the power to reason, improve the intellect. His Holiness does not know if those herbs are available in your part of the world or not, but there are certain herbs which have a direct relationship with the Antahkarana as well, but then there is a method prescribed and even Mantras have been prescribed to collect that herb before using it. For example, you have to collect the herb at a particular time and by repeating certain Mantras there is a certain power which helps the herb to act on the Antahkarana. That is how the relationship of some herbs exists with the Antahkarana.

B.R.H. Could I just ask here also;—in the West there are known to be some herbs with a very powerful effect on the Chitta, but this is not generally understood and is often abused. Some of these in fact seem to have this very powerful effect on the Chitta which even changes the level of consciousness completely; because of this they can be dangerous. Could His Holiness please say something about this?

H.H. There are also medicines or herbs which react on the Chitta and Manas also. Some develop the bad aspect and some develop the good side. So one has to be very careful and use only the right method—the right method of using those herbs. Sometimes, even the same herb if not properly used, will produce a bad effect, but if properly used will produce a good effect. With us, this word RAM is also a herb.

R.M. The householder following Bhakti sees no difference between the Guru and Param Atman. How should the householder following Jnana see the Guru?

H.H. It is more necessary for a person who is following the Jnana of the householder, who is following the path of Jnana, to feel that there is no difference between the Guru and Param-Atman. Of course this is desirable for those who are Bhaktimargh (householder) but for those who are Jnanamargh it is even more necessary for them to feel that there is no difference between Param-Atman and Guru.

For the householder who is following Jnana, the Guru, Param Atman and Atman are one and the same thing. So also for Bhakti. But for those who are following Bhakti, they get liberation after they leave the body, after they die; but those who are following Jnana, they get liberated even before death, leave the body, for they are taught to practise that they are not the body.

R.M. Could His Holiness explain further how good company affects the decision of Buddhi?

H.H. As you sharpen your tool when it becomes dull, similarly Buddhi gets sharpened with good company. That is how it is then able to take correct decisions.

R.M. Does the relative knowledge of the Param-Atman which is held in the Vijnanamaya Kosha come from the scriptures and the words of His Holiness? Can it come from any other source?

N.S. Excuse me; this is not clear. His Holiness is only repeating what is recorded in the scriptures. He has not got anything of his own, he only tells you what is there in the scriptures.

R.M. *The reason I asked that is that it covers particularly the illustrations that His Holiness uses for which he uses modern things.*

N.S. *Can it come from any other source—what other source?*

R.M. *Do you remember I asked a question about the third Shloka of the Atmabodha?—about the knowledge. The reply was that there are two types of knowledge. Yesterday I asked a question about the knowledge when there is no Vijnanamaya Kosha, where we have the knowledge from the Param-Atman. Then the other knowledge which is held within the Vijnanamaya Kosha—where does it come from? What is it? Is it the Truth in the scriptures? Because it is that knowledge that leads to action which brings liberation.*

H.H. There are four sources of the knowledge of Param-Atman. The first is the Vedas, the scriptures; the second is the word of the Guru; third is the illustrations which have been given, and the fourth is one's own experience. When all these four sources combine together, then one gets the real knowledge. Unless a harmony is reached in all these four, then there will be no clear understanding of the Param-Atman and one will have to start again to obtain that harmony.

R.M. *So the main spiritual practice of someone on the Way of Jnana would be study of the scriptures?*

H.H. Those who cannot study the scriptures, they can accept what they are told they contain. Instead of studying them themselves, they can start by accepting what they are told they contain. For example, a child has to accept that the alphabet 'A' is written like this—(demonstrates). If he does not accept that he will not be able to acquire any knowledge. Similarly, if one is not able to study the scriptures himself much he should accept that which he is told by the Guru about the contents of the scriptures and start from there. This is known as Bhakti—he has to have faith in the Guru. If you remember the illustration you were given earlier about the two artists; these are the two artists—Jnana and Bhakti—but both of them culminate at one point. It is not that there is any difference between the two, they ultimately culminate at the same point, and as such the only difference between the two is this—a person who is travelling on the path of Bhakti accepts first and then knows later; the one who is going on the path of Jnana says that he will, by his critical intellect, first know it and then accept it. But his knowledge could not be complete unless he accepts it. So that the two unite, act, at one place and then alone your knowledge of the Param-Atman will be complete. Short of that, it will not be complete.

N.G.H. *What is the uniting point, the point where the two come together?*

H.H. That's the completeness where the Param-Atman is unified with the Atman. The two getting united.

N.G.H. *A number of people in the Wellington group have been asking about Siddhis. The Transcendental Meditation Society has been offering to teach people, at great cost, the knowledge of the past and future, knowledge of other minds, the ability to become invisible, the ability to levitate and fly. The mechanics of the practice are such that enlightenment grows within while the phenomenon of the Siddhis takes place both within and without. One member of the Wellington group—Mrs. Matthews—asks:*

1. *'Is it true that the successful performance of the Siddhis is in effect a test of the degree of the growth of enlightenment?'*
2. *'What is the relationship between Self-realisation and the Siddhis?'*

H.H. This answer will cover both questions. These Siddhis are a great hindrance towards Self-realisation. It will be easier for an ordinary man to get Self-realisation by the practice of Dhyana. Those who get involved in these Siddhis, they will not be able to get Self-realised. I will explain further; Siddhis are of two types; some Siddhis are small Siddhis, just the light which has related to them. The others are Sattvic Siddhis—those which

are acquired as a by product of the Dhyana and its progress. One has not to make any effort to acquire them. No money is needed for that! These small Siddhis are related to Tamas. There are mantras which help to acquire those things but the Sattvic aspect is different. By Sattvic Siddhis it is possible to help others. It is possible to know what others are thinking. This is not to be abused. This is to be used only for the betterment, just as Jesus Christ did. He used his Siddhis, which he acquired without any effort, for the healing of others.

N.G.H. Would you tell His Holiness this is very helpful. Offering people the ability to fly has an attraction, as instead of just sitting down and practising meditation, they think if I go along and pay my money and I can fly, then I can see something for my practice!

H.H. That's very wrong to think that if you start flying you will be able to see something inside—this will only lead to ego. Here is an illustration of a person who has acquired these Siddhis.

He had acquired the Siddhis of getting anything from anywhere. So he had collected a lot of things. Once a gang of thieves came and they started collecting these. He said, "All right, you can take them, but I'll get them back from wherever you take them, and get you prosecuted". The gang of thieves thought that the best thing to do would be to kill him first and then take them away so that he could not get them back again. The poor man was killed. So the Siddhi which he had acquired was the cause of his assassination rather than his liberation.

R.M. (from Mrs. Matthews, an artist)—I saw something enter my daughter at birth that had a shape like this: At what stage does the 'soul' enter the human foetus/child? How does this happen and can the mother 'know' or sense this?

H.H. The life power force is there even when as soon as the foetus is placed inside. It has no power for movement at that time. Subsequently when it becomes nourished then the power to move comes in in the foetus. So that it is not correct to say that something has come from outside. The power that is still there is from the very beginning. It has only acquired power to move subsequently by nourishment, that's when one feels something has come. So that's when the power to move has been acquired.

R.M. Are the three bodies in the foetus immediately after conception? When a horoscope is cast, is it cast from the time of birth, or from the time of conception? When the scriptures talk about a man being born, do they mean at the point of conception or the point of birth?

H.H. A horoscope can be cast both ways. Actually, with us before one goes for the conception, the good aspect of good time is calculated. That is known as mahoot. One finds out a good time for the conception, and the conception is allowed to take place according to that. Then if you cast a horoscope from that point of conception you will be able to forecast happenings while foetus remains in the body. But if you cast the horoscope from the time of the birth then you will be able to predict what is going to happen afterwards, after the birth. But if the horoscope is cast on the basis of conception, then it will be possible to forecast what is to happen during the pregnancy period, and actually it will then be possible to predict when the birth will take place. So the time when the birth is to take place has a relation with the time of conception. It is not easily possible to know the time of conception. Exact time of conception will be difficult to calculate. As such the horoscope will be difficult to cast on that basis. It is a more practical way to cast the horoscope on the basis of the birth, which is known to everybody.

N.G.H. It makes me think of that story you told me the other evening of the poet who wrote the life of Rama before it took place.

H.H. That's the beauty with our methods and systems, that we can know things that are to happen and they are recorded even before—not after things happen.

N.G.H. Does this mean that there would be so many signs to show that there is going to be an incarnation, or an avatar? All these signs show that this must take place at a certain point, and there would be wise men who know.

H.H. This is also, by and large, said in the Bhagavad Gita. It is said we come to know as to when the incarnation is to take place—that sages by their penance can know much earlier than men when it appears.

N.G.H. There is the story in the New Testament on the life of Jesus—how the three wise men followed the star in the East and it led them to the place where Jesus was born. Could His Holiness comment on this?

H.H. This is right. One can know by diving deep into the science—one can know when one is likely to get married, one can know when one is likely to get a child and one can know how many children he will have; one knows which of the children will be a disobedient child and which of the children will be an obedient child. All that can be ascertained—the science is so perfect—one only has to dive deep into it; so there is nothing to wonder that these three persons could know that Jesus Christ was to be born at such and such a place at such and such a time. Normally it is only in relation to powerful souls that one knows but even in respect of others, if one dives deep one can know about the future.

R.M. I would like to ask a question to clear up a point; it was said that you could forecast the horoscope of someone from conception. Does this mean that the Jiva is there straight after conception—because it is the Jiva which is forecast?

H.H. Yes, the Jiva comes, but in a latent condition.

R.M. And when does this latent condition change to being an active condition?

H.H. That comes with the nourishment.

R.M. Is that about 3 months?

N.S. (That is a medical point).

N.G.H. (from Mrs. Saunders—a potter) Is creativity connected to the fountain of knowledge? Can a man be creative without having the desire to create? Do the greatest poets and musicians consciously tap the source, or do they come to it by accident?

H.H. The power to create can be acquired by consciously tapping the source but sometimes, because of practice in the previous lives, it does come as an accident also. But if it does come as an accident then that only means that it has been practised before, of which we are not aware, so that the greater part is the product of practice in this life as well as the practices that have been done before.

N.G.H. This next question is from Mrs. Andrews. I asked a question for her the last time I was here with Mrs. Howitt, and she has cherished that answer and it has helped her over the years: (NA) I feel I need to know what the material world is; I look at it and sense it as things beautifully arranged, but more and more I understand that the things sensed are but the surface of the real. Could His holiness show how to understand this mistaken idea correctly?

H.H. We dream when we are asleep but while we are dreaming we don't feel that we are dreaming. While we are dreaming we feel that it is real, there is no unreality about it. If good things are happening we feel happy in the dream but if some bad things occur then we feel sorry and are distressed about it, even in the dream; but we

do not feel that it is unreal while we are dreaming, but when we wake up we know that it is unreal. Similarly that dream is while the body is sleeping, but this bigger thing—this is the sleep of ignorance and whatever we are seeing we are dreaming in that sleep of ignorance. While we are dreaming in the sleep of ignorance we dream that this is all real, but when we wake up from the sleep of ignorance, that is when we know the acquired knowledge, we will know that this was all unreal.

*N.G.H. So this lady's feelings, that it is just the surface, is part of her waking up from ignorance (Yes).
Thank you, that will help her very much.*