

9 May 1978

GENERAL MEDITATION MEETING

(On the platform. Lord and Lady Allan and Mr. Michael Fleming)

Lord Allan. Mrs. Roles has just told us that the Doctor had a very successful operation this afternoon and he, himself, rang up Mrs. Roles to tell her all about it. (laughter) That gives us great cheer and it shouldn't be too long before he is with us again.

Michael, you wanted to say something.

M.F. It's just to say that Initiations have been planned for Sunday, 21st May, and Wednesday, 24th May. If there are still any latecomers that you have in mind, please let the office know in the next two days so that we can go through the right motions with them.

A. Anybody likely to have anybody else? (3 hands up)

I would like to read one short piece of advice from the Shankaracharya and then I thought we might meditate straightaway.

A. The feeling of the need for surrender seems to be around frequently in meditation. What does this mean and what must one do?

S. No feeling is wanted during Meditation. The process is different. The meditator doesn't have to *do* anything, not even surrender; but the Ultimate or the Absolute embraces his limited being and that is what expansion feels like. We are not attached, but everything is added.

(Record, 12 August 1964)

MEDITATION

A. It would probably be nice to meditate again before we go. Anything anybody wants to say?

Miss Irvine. Could we please hear again the answer to your question? It was rather difficult to hear.

A. Certainly; sorry. (repeat of above answer from H.H.)

Now, anything people would like to ask about from the last Meeting? Or comment?

Mr. Hodge. What you just read – could you sum it up as identification with Param-Atman? Is that the way to look at it?

A. I think it means giving up all sense of 'I'. Then letting the Absolute, the Param-Atman as you say, fill one's being. Turn the pot up to the eternal Grace that is ever-flowing down.

Miss Newington. The difficulty is that if you do that, it is the meditator doing something.

A. One has got to stop thinking about it and do it. I'm sure that's the advice you would give to many people you have seen and helped with their meditation. Meditate and let it be.

C.N. It's something that has always worried me; I feel that I'm doing something and not getting myself out of the way.

A. You are doing something when you get yourself out of the way. Then you have to leave it to the Almighty. It seems to me that whatever you call it – the Param-Atman, God, is really always longing to come into our hearts, but we shut them to it. What do you think, Michael?

M.F. The most important thing to remember is that the Param-Atman's presence is always there. One doesn't have to go anywhere or try to get anything. For me, this feeling of 'one's got to get something' gets in the way.

Mr. Wenham-Prosser. Is it rather a feeling of 'nothing to gain and everything to lose'?

A. Or exactly the other way round! (laughter)

A.W-P. Not gaining anything for yourself – you have to lose all yourself. Then, of course, it is the other way round!

Mr. Koren. Isn't it before Meditation that you can do something – like listen to good music or read something from the Shankaracharya or other Scriptures?

A. Yes; I imagine we have all got our own ways of preparing ourselves. That's fine so long as we don't make rituals out of them.

M.F. Do you think that one lets oneself get too far away in between? There is really no substitute for not doing that in terms of everything that's in front of us all the time.

A. Yes.

There is another sentence or two I was going to read sometime; perhaps now is appropriate:

S. If any thoughts intrude during Meditation, one should drop the thought and start the Mantra again. The sound interference is like a line drawn in the water – as it is being created so does it disappear. One need not chase the line and let things happen.

(Record, 10 August 1964)

A. All interruptions are just a line drawn in water.

Mrs. Gould. At the last Meditation meeting, Mr. Lucas reminded us of something Mr. Ouspensky had said about not making excuses and subsequently you read something that Dr Roles had written to you. Could you read it again this evening?

A. I'm afraid I haven't got it with me.

You have something you were going to read, Michael.

M.F. This is in answer to a question:

S. The inner thoughts which usually disturb the peace of the night are perhaps greater than the outward disturbance. It could be possible that a man could meditate sitting down in the middle of the road among the loud noises from motor cars and cows and all that is going on. [In Allahabad, everything seems to go on in the middle of the road!] But it would never be possible for a man to meditate properly if there is noise going on inside him. The noises inside are usually far more upsetting than the noises in the road. And those people who begin to meditate and begin to go inward, they meet up with all the noise that they have collected in ages past.

To illustrate this, He gives another story:

Somebody once went to a Realized man and asked to be given the Meditation. The Master asked him: 'As you were coming along to me, what did you see on that way?' He tried to recollect, but could remember only one thing, that there was a donkey lying on the road. The Master said: 'All right! I will give you one little exercise and if you can do that, then I will give you the System of Meditation. Just go and sit quietly and get that donkey out of your mind. Take your time and come back to me when you've done it.' The poor man tried for two hours, but he found that the memory of the donkey became only clearer and clearer as he went on; he couldn't get the donkey out! After two hours he was in despair and came to the Master and said: 'I'm extremely sorry, but that donkey is not getting out of my mind at all!' The Realized man said: 'Listen boy; you saw that donkey only *once*, and yet you couldn't lose him even after two hours. Now there is a mass of stuff that you have collected in your mind throughout the ages. In life after life you have collected this stuff, and it will be much more difficult to remove all that which you have lived with, than it was to remove something you just saw once! So you mustn't expect to get rid of it all in a few days. Now, if you understand *that*, you will realize that Discipline is necessary; and if you are determined and really want to get rid of all that burden, you will have to be quiet and have patience. And from your experience with the donkey you must first realise that you *must not try to get rid of anything!* *Don't* fight with your desires; *don't* try to push them out; *don't* try to settle them. But just be carefree about them; get the 'couldn't care less' attitude. Just lose them, neglect them, and they will go away one by one. Don't struggle with them. I tell you that is the only way it can be done.

(Record, 25 October 1962)

A. How does that strike people?

Mr. Harbord. I was wondering about what you said earlier about letting the Grace of Param-Atman come in and I wondered how to do this. I think you have answered it with that story.

A. Good. The story, I think, relates particularly to the System of Meditation. We can have our pots open all day! It's really this that Dr. Roles has been suggesting that we do this term. Those of you who go to meetings will remember that Dr. Roles, in one of the papers, gave this quotation from the Shankaracharya:

S. The realization that 'I have nothing of my own' is the best realization because it signifies that the level of individual consciousness has been transcended into the Universal level. The effect of these realizations is that one transcends the individual consciousness to the Universal level and then the mind of the person drops its burden. And when it becomes as light as a feather, it can take into account the whole Samashti which is the Universal level.

(Record, 21 September 19754)

A. That's really the technique, Simon, for every day – continual remembrance that 'I have nothing of my own'. Do people feel that they can understand and move towards this feeling?

S.H. We get this feeling in the turning – the whole psychology and teaching of Rumi is related to this.

A. (to Lady Allan) Wouldn't you agree with that? (Yes.)

Miss Scrutton. Isn't it important not to think of 'my' meditation?

A. It's very difficult, but it is right, isn't it. This feeling of 'I' intrudes and spoils so much.

Miss Stern. If one has meditated and it appears to have gone well, one has to be so careful not to give oneself a pat on the back.

A. Or waste the energy in other ridiculous ways which one often does.

Lady Allan. Something Mr. Harbord said reminded me of something that relates to this. It's not just one half hour, it's one in many half hours, many days, many different circumstances, many years – a sort of wholeness. I was reading just recently what he said about the turning – it's many different occasions, many years, many places, make the whole; it's not just the one occasion.

A. Did everybody hear that? That's very good.

Bearing in mind that we were studying the idea of and trying to understand Samashti and Vyashti and also to comprehend the meaning of the Vyashti being absorbed in the Universal Samashti, Dr. Roles asked me to find some references that might be suitable to read this evening. (to Lady Allan) Would you read, please.

M.A. This is a story that followed a question and answer about the true Ahankar – the true feeling of 'I'. He refers to restricting this feeling of 'I', limiting it to the individual which in the terms you have been referring to is Vyashti:

Swami Ram Das had a disciple who was king of the Marathas in the South. A famine was occurring in South India. Being a king, he decided that some work was necessary to provide a livelihood for the starving people; he therefore started to build a magnificent palace and a large lake, so as to employ a hundred thousand people. After starting the project, and while the work was in progress, the thought occurred to him, 'If I wasn't here, all these people would have died of starvation, so I am their saviour and without me their lives would have been in jeopardy.'

His Guru, Swami Ram Das, a Realized man, became aware of the thoughts of the king; so he visited the king and stayed the night. Next day he asked the king to accompany him for a walk. During the walk he saw the dressed stones assembled for the palace lying ready to be put into place. One stone which was very large (40 feet in length) was lying by the path. Swami Ram Das asked the king what the stones were for. The king replied that they were for the roof of the palace, saying: 'I thought, O Ram Das, that if I didn't build this palace then the people would be unemployed and would perish.' Swami Ram Das replied: 'That is very commendable – I would like you to cut this large piece of stone across the middle.' The king, being a disciple, agreed. He called his labourers, who cut this stone in half. They found that there was a cavity inside about two feet square; and in the cavity there were a pair of birds and some grains provided as food for them.

Swami Ram Das said. 'Well, my disciple, you are certainly very clever, you are providing food for thousands of people outside, and even within the stone you have provided food for these birds!'

The king suddenly got the point and realised his mistake, namely that it is only the Absolute who provides everywhere, and for everyone – and not the king. The king apologised to his Guru.

The Guru in his mercy always forgives, once the lesson is understood. The conclusion is – if the feeling of ‘I’ is for the single person (Vyashti) then it must be false. If it is for the Universal Self (Samashti) then it is right.

(Record, 27 January 1970)

A. Any comments on that? We’ll read one more:

Samashti is the Universal Being, the Absolute. If one accepts the limitations as *imposed upon* the Absolute, then one is not possessed by Rajas or Tamas, is not attached to the action or the outcome that one has grown to associate with performing certain actions. So when the feeling of ‘me and mine’ arises related to anything in the Universe, this Ahankar will be governed by Rajas and Tamas. On the contrary if the feeling is derived from ‘Thee and Thine’, then all activities or all vantage grounds to which Ahankar rises in any individual, will be of service to him and humanity.

He quotes a story about Hanuman as an example:

When Hanuman (the Monkey God) went to Ceylon (Sri Lanka), he burned all that was golden and marvellous belonging to Rakshas (demons) just single-handed, and then came back to report that he had traced the whereabouts of Sita. He described how he jumped in one leap from India to Ceylon and killed the Rakshas and uprooted many trees. Whilst he was describing his achievements to Rama, his Master, Rama thought, ‘Is Hanuman’s Ahankar (ego) just claiming all this in the pride of his own strength?’ But after Hanuman had described all these achievements, he said, ‘This was done only by means of *your* strength which worked through me.’

So if one forms the mental attitude that everything available to the individual belongs to the Absolute, the individual being only the instrument in performing glorious activities, then it will be a Sattvic Ahankar. If one thinks that all the situations belong to the Father of All, then the germ of Rajasic and Tamasic Ahankar will not penetrate the individual, and he will consider himself to be only smaller compared with what has gone before. In the same way, one should always think about all the glory which becomes available to individuals that it will all belong to the Absolute, and we in our activities will just be instrumental in putting this glory into the world. This is the right attitude and by this feeling, the self-pride (false Ahankar) will not pervade the individual.

(Record, 30 January 1970)

A. Shall we meditate again for a little?

MEDITATION

A. It seems these last two meetings that we have managed to meditate together with great peace. I wonder if it is because more of us are really giving it all up and letting the Mantra take over?

Anything you would like to say, Michael?

M.F. In relation to what you said earlier about Vyashti and Samashti, in a very small way I couldn't help being impressed by the unselfish happiness of everybody on hearing the good news about Dr. Roles at the beginning. And in every period of meditation there is a chance to be unified in this positive way. Not very easy to put, but if one had the habit of affirming this more often, with what is in front of one, things would change.

A. Very nice. Anybody got anything else before we leave?

Mr. Lamb. These statements that have been made about Samashti and Vyashti make me feel that perhaps we should live a little more dangerously – in the sense of not protecting oneself too much.

A. I don't know that dangerously is the right word! (laughter) Though I understand what you are getting at. Joyously is another word. Knowing that 'I have nothing of my own', and then the next step – 'everything belongs to me'; I am nothing and God is All and I am part of God; so I am All. This feeling of universality should give us immense joy and certainly we then wouldn't care a rap about what we so often think is important, but which is, in fact, derived from what the Vedanta System calls 'Ashudda Ahankar' – our false 'I'.

Mrs. Simpson. It's good to hear you emphasise the joy and freedom because we so often don't have this positive attitude.

A. Yes, I'm sure that's right. It was a little bit sombre in the room, but I hope we have been joyous within.

Miss Stern. A nice thought to take away was written on a church – 'To serve with Love is to work with Joy!'

A. A very nice thought.

Miss Irvine. Could we all send our love to Dr. Roles.

A. Mrs. Roles is here and can hear that and the great cheer!
June 13th is our next meeting.
Thank you very much.

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