

3 December 1979

READING 9

We have come to the end of this Michaelmas term and (although there was a general request for one more paper) it is the opinion of those who came back from India in September that we all need to go more deeply into the quotations from the Shankaracharya's answers. Only what is put into practice will stay in the memory. So if you have any spare time over the Christmas holidays do read again the parts that chiefly appealed to you – copies will be in the library for those who haven't got the papers.

As a summary of the relation of the 3 Gunas to the 'feeling of I' (Reading 8, Part 1) we give you a brief description from the 1970 record:

So all three Gunas participate in all situations and events, to keep them going in the regulation of the Universe. The Atman (the witness) sees all these streams of Gunas which show the dominance of Sattva or Rajas or Tamas but who, being free of identification, is never attached to any of them.

On the basis of the stream of Gunas their relative preponderance gives rise to three kinds of people. There are people who are happy and healthy because there is an abundance of Sattva in them and most of their activities have good results because these are basically Sattvic. Then there are people who are predominantly under Rajas and with this is associated all the activity and movement that we see around; they don't give the impression of being wholly good. The third kind are regulated by Tamas and nothing seems to come out of their daily life but lethargy and sloth or negative opposition.

But the best man is one who is neither attached to Sattva or Rajas or Tamas. He simply witnesses everything without actively liking or disliking anything. So one who can, in this human life, be simply a witness of everything, of whatsoever happens, enjoy the interplay of the Gunas like a drama without any attachment, is the only person who has understood Truth; and he is the wisest of all.

(Record, 1 February 1970)

If we see all this going on in our lives we will appreciate the passing events that fill the daily paper and the other media, and get the truth that: 'It is the Gunas which act' and so 'remain firm in both our Knowledge and our Being'. And then, by the end of a day or a lifetime, we will have received much tangible profit from this Knowledge.

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