

2 June 1980

READING 3

(for 2 weeks)

PART 1. 'THE PRISON'

A couple of weeks ago someone asked at one of the newer groups. 'Why do we *want* to stay in prison?' Indeed what normal person could possibly stay inside once they knew they were being unfairly prevented from getting anything worthwhile out of this troublesome life?

Last week at the Wednesday Work Party speaking with reference to 'Escape from the self-made prison' (Reading 2, Part 2, line 1) Mrs. Mosby made this comment that: 'There was no need to be downcast when we saw that we are in prison because at such moments we must be already out of it.'

The Work Party also ask to know more about the 'mini-ladder' which was described in Reading 1 and at the Meditation Meeting. They are indeed 'getting warm'. Here lies for us our immediate way of escape, for it means giving up the illusion of 'I' in all our own ideas – step by step – and replacing it with the thought and love for the Universal Param-Atman.

They and all of us must realize that it is not much good 'hearing more about it'. Ascent of this little ladder is entirely a practical matter for each person to discover for himself, and in doing it we shall make other, unexpected discoveries. So, first step is to do just what you have to do – no more, no less – and do it as appropriately and beautifully as you can, for the Atman is always looking on. In this way you will have no quarrel with yourself, nothing done amiss, nothing left undone. Then there would be fewer 'bad thoughts' (2nd step) which would give place to good thoughts (3rd step). If we got no further than that on the ladder we'd be quite safe and sound; but in doing that you get many a taste of the 4th step, a little spurt of special energy (Sattva guna). Lovely. Do it today, why would you do it any better if you put it off?

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About the prison, the System we learnt from Mr. Ouspensky comes to help us. It said that no person stood much chance of breaking out by himself for all are in the same prison. He needs help from one or two fellow prisoners who can keep an eye on the guards and help him tunnel or saw through bars; and above all he needs help from someone or some people who have previously escaped and who can smuggle in tools and wait for him outside. Hence the need for a real School, which is based on the principle of 'Three Lines of Work' – work on oneself, work with and for the people in the School and work in promoting the relation of the School with the outside world.

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PART 2. 'NATURAL SAMADHI'

Those who are indexing volumes of audiences with the Shankaracharya, keep discovering fresh clues which have been forgotten. Even before the visit of Lady Allan's party last summer, when the main theme was this one of finding the small gaps which occur naturally during the day which are especially favourable to Self-remembering, there had been previous forgotten