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**AUDIENCE 4****ALLAHABAD**

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N.G.H. Please tell H.H. we would like to devote today to meditation – questions on meditation. We see the Meditation as a method by which the ordinary space-time existence may be transcended and the state of absolute Being entered into.

H.H. Yes, that's correct. You enter into the realm of Absolute through medium of meditation. Meditation is not an end in itself – it is only the method to approach the Absolute.

N.G.H. We feel the need of a little history of this system of meditation. We have heard that in the late 1940's it became apparent to Guru Deva that a new method of work on Being was needed for mankind today who did not seem to have the fibre to follow the hard traditional methods. We would be grateful if H.H. would tell us what events led up to his Master Guru Deva discovering the simple system of meditation we have inherited.

H.H. The system of meditation is very old – the *principle* of meditation is old. It is true that Realized Persons (souls), when they come, try to make it easier, so as to suit the needs of the present times. This actually, in effect, means that Guru Deva did not *invent* anything, the principle of meditation is always there – he only tried to simplify it for us.

N.G.H. Did he feel there was a need at the time to simplify it?

H.H. That is what H.H. has just said – this is the general property of all the Realized Souls – they always try to make things easier for the generations that follow. Because degeneration is inherent in nature, as we go on from time to time, degeneration must follow. So Realized Souls always do as was done by the last Guru (Guru Deva) – make things easier .

B.R.H. Was the form that it was given this time particularly to help those in the West who have no tradition of meditation?

H.H. The easier method adopted now was *not only* with a view to the needs of the Westerners. It was with a view to meet the needs of *all*. Even in the East, people were getting weaker and weaker. They were not able to resort to the same old austere penances which the Rishis and the Munis used to do before. So that the easiest method of meditation was evolved for the needs of all, not particularly for the Westerners or Easterners.

H.H. gives an illustration that 'Veda' was originally one word – 'OM' Pranav. But later on it was divided into four sections – Yajurveda, Atharvaveda, Rigveda and Samaveda. Later on even this was found to be difficult. Commentaries were written. Then it was further simplified till Vyasa came and he wrote the substance of them in the form of the stories and anecdotes, history.

So this is very old practice here in India, that as the Realized Persons come, they know the past, the present and the future, so that they can envisage what is coming and with keeping that in view they give their Teachings.

N.G.H. We have heard that the system of meditation we are practising is based on the 5th step, Pratyahara; 6th step, Dharana; 7th step, Dhyana; and 8th step, Samadhi, of Patanjali's Raja Yoga. Is this so?

H.H. The previous practice of Raja Yoga was to go through all the eight stages, one after the other, but it was felt that with the growing deterioration in the capacities of persons, it would be a very heavy load and people will lose their patience if all the stages were gone through.

So it was thought proper to start with the 7th step, Dhyana. Now when a person does Dhyana, then all the previous six steps come automatically in some degree. Previously they were made to practise these previous steps one after another and then they were considered fit to enter the realm of the 7th step. But now we *start* with the 7th step. When you sit for a Dhyana or a Meditation, Yama, Niyama, Asana and Pranayama, Pratyahara and Dharana, these six automatically come. Briefly:

'Yama' means control. When you sit, you control yourself naturally; you have a fixed time, that comes under Niyama – 'Niyama' means discipline. 'Asana' means sitting erect; actually, the Scriptures say one should sit comfortably in a relaxed position. It's not sitting cross-legged, but essential part is to sit in a relaxed situation comfortably. So you are allowed to sit in a chair, but you are asked to keep your spine straight, which is a part of Asana. Then the 5th is Pratyahara. 'Pratyahara' means when your mind goes out and you have to bring it back. So later in Dhyana you are meant to keep yourself concentrated, you don't 'go out'. Then comes Dharana. 'Dharana' means the pause between two desires. So in Dhyana, you achieve that also to some extent; there is no desire, the pause which comes between the two desires is being practised in Dhyana.

So all the six steps automatically are imbibed to some extent in Dhyana. So although we start now with Dhyana, the 7th step, actually we are covering the entire range.

N.G.H. Would you tell H.H. that in meditation, once the body becomes very still, this seems to make everything else so much easier. This very still state of the body seems to be a big key in meditation?

H.H. In the Bhagavad Gita, which uses the words of the Lord Krishna, he says this, that one has to be still and comfortable, in a relaxed position.

Before actually going into the next question which you have just raised, connected with your previous question H.H. gives a history, an illustration:

[Retold (with additions) from *The Record* 1964, p.32]

Brahma is one of our Trimurthi or Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh (Shiva). Brahma the Creator. His son was Nachiketas (of Katha Upanishad) and *his* son was Valmiki. Valmiki was the first poet in Sanskrit. But before he became a poet, he got into bad associations – bad company. He was a householder, he had children. And he was meeting his own needs and those of his family by stealing things and by killing and looting.

Once upon a time, some Rishis happened to come down where he was and explained to him, 'Look here, whatever you are doing to maintain your family is not good for your future. You had better go and ask them whether they who are enjoying the fruits of your ill-deeds will also share in the consequences which you are about to suffer by doing these deeds – whether they will be participants in the results also.'

He went home and asked them and got the answer: 'It's none of our concern how you get us the money, how you feed us. We are your obligation and you have to feed us. Why do you do wrong things to feed us? Do only good things. We don't ask you to do bad things to feed us! So we are not going to share in the result of your bad deeds!'

Well, that opened his eyes, and he came back to the Rishis and said: 'Do something, tell me something by which I can improve my future.' These Rishis then told him to sit down and chant the mantra 'Ram'. But he was so much used to these ill-deeds that he could not chant the word 'Ram'. When he found it difficult, then the Rishis agreed, 'O.K. If you can't say 'Ram', say 'Mira' (which means 'killing'.) But say it quickly.' So he started repeating it. It was natural for him to kill, so he could do it easily. He said 'Miramiramira'. By saying 'Miramira' quickly, it became 'Ram-ram-ram'. He then got so much absorbed in it that he was sitting still, and this stillness was the cause of his Dhyana.

By saying 'Mira' and, becoming 'Ram' it was the same, he got so engrossed in it that in the period of about a year his entire body was covered with clay. Ants made their home in that clay. He didn't feel it because he was engrossed in something else. He was so still that he didn't mind what had happened to his body. After a year, the Rishis came again and removed that earth and they found that he was all enlightened.

They said, 'Now you have become perfect.' After that, he developed the power of seeing into the future, and he wrote the Ramayana even before Rama was born!

H.H. concludes from this that it is the *sitting still* which is the key. Whether you say 'Ram' or 'Mira' is not the point. It is this sitting and getting absorbed that is the main thing.

M.J.H. At the time of initiation, there are two portraits on the altar. One is of Guru Deva and the other the present Shankaracharya. These must obviously represent the manifestation of God. Is it the function of the initiator to link the new initiate with God through the Divine Teachers?

H.H. This is the old tradition. (He refers to the recitation on the written copy of the initiation ceremony): It starts with Narayan, from him Vasishta Shakti, from him Padma-Bhovam (Brahma): these are all teachers, gurus. It comes down to Shankaracharya then Padma Padan, Hastam Laakam – these are all disciples. So much so that in the same tradition comes Guru Deva; from Guru Deva comes H.H. So it is a long chain and the Teachings have originated from Narayan himself, the Lord Vishnu. So it is not that the disciples are left to use their own imaginations – the principles are old. It will look different at the present time and at the subsequent times when the technique may have changed; but the principle remains the same. They do not have the freedom to change the principles.

M.J.H. Is it correct that at the moment of giving the mantra, the mantra is in some way implanted in the Prakriti or the Karana Sharira (causal body) of the new initiate?

H.H. Yes, that is so.

M.J.H. How can the initiator best prepare himself so that there will be the necessary energy for that implanting of the mantra to happen?

H.H. It's not only that you as an initiator have to prepare yourself, you have also to prepare your disciples. So the teacher has to read before he can teach, and we have to do both things – you have to prepare yourself by your practice and see that your disciples also learn to do the practice.

He gives an illustration to which he already referred yesterday:

Those who are old practitioners have an advantage over new practitioners. There can be new drivers of a car and old drivers. New car-drivers and old drivers, both can drive a car, but in the moment of difficulty, the old driver will steer clear, while the new driver will fumble. So the experienced driver will be able to steer clear. Similarly, the initiator who has got longer practice behind him should be able to initiate and teach the newcomers by virtue of his older practice. The length of practice which you have had beforehand will give you power to initiate and bring to culmination your disciples – to teach them properly the process of Dhyana (Meditation).

M.J.H. The implanting of the mantra at that deep level – is that done by the power of the tradition and the Divine Teachers in it? Does that take care of it, at the moment of giving the mantra?

H.H. That is right, you carry the blessings and the power, energy, of the previous tradition.

M.J.H. You remember how I was telling you yesterday that in our own society, it is as though people have forgotten the nearness of God. In actual fact, our people come for the initiation into Meditation with almost no prior training. They have heard about the Meditation perhaps for only one week. They are told that it will help their efficiency, that they will find the source of life through it, but beyond that there has not been much other preparation. We have often wondered whether there should be more.

H.H. That isn't a difficulty – it doesn't make any difference. If they come only to improve their efficiency, that's all that is necessary. H.H. says that is much better, because they have a certain amount of attraction; they have, as it were, an axe to grind to improve their efficiency. If they come with that particular object, it is all right because they will get the energy, they will get efficiency, but in addition to that they will get in touch with the source of energy. Not only will they get energy and that by-product will be there, but they automatically get connected to the Source of energy which will be of greater importance to them. So H.H. says that it's all right, it should not be a worry.

Suppose there are two persons who are unwell, one is a child and the other is an adult. Now the adult knows if he takes the bitter medicine that will cure him; the child has not heard about the bitter medicine. But he knows sweet things, so he is given bitter medicine with sugar so in his desire to take sugar he takes bitter medicine also, so that is perfectly all right, we shouldn't bother about it at all.

M.J.H. Except that there is no sweeter thing than Dhyana!

N.G.H. As meditation guides in New Zealand, we are often told the experiences of new meditators. We guide them back to the mantra, but as guides we feel it necessary to understand these experiences. Could H.H. explain the following:

After being initiated, one person said:

A section of my mind carried on the mantra without prompting or attention. A light-heartedness preceded a pulsing expansion in the head, but not in any physical sense. I seemed to rise to a vast overall view that was there and which was not accessible by either any path or any effort.

H.H. Internal uplifting does not necessarily have any outside expression, but yet the internal uplifting is basic, is more important and is fundamental.

A car is moving very fast on the road, say a speed of 80 or 90 miles per hour. You will feel the car is moving very fast, but at the same time, an aeroplane is flying above at a much faster speed. It will appear as if the car is going faster than the aeroplane, because he will see the car nearer than the aircraft. The car will therefore appear to be going faster than the aeroplane.

Similarly, since we are used to seeing outside things, we may not appreciate the internal upliftment as much as what we are seeing outside. At the same time, it is the internal upliftment that is the real thing.

N.G.H. Another initiate spoke of how he found the mantra vibrating at the base of the spine; it seemed to move up the spine to a place above his head. What is taking place here?

H.H. Some people feel, experience that sort of thing. It is not abnormal. The Chetan-Shakti, (energy) gained by the recitation of the mantra gets a tendency to go upwards, and as the special energy travels through the spine, one feels that the mantra is going up.

N.G.H. What guidance should one give to such a person?

H.H. The guide should tell him to carry on and in course of time this will settle down. Because it is in the beginning stage that things like this happen, sometimes one experiences jerks; sometimes one experiences a feeling of pulsation all of a sudden, just as lightning comes suddenly. That sort of feeling you can get, but it will all settle down. It's only in the initial stages that this sort of thing happens.

N.G.H. Another initiate said upon receiving the mantra:

The mind opened up – it seemed immense – unlimited. The vibrating mantra permeated everywhere. There was light and love everywhere too.

What guidance here?

H.H. This stage shows that the happiness which was confined before to feelings of joy and sorrow, is now coming up and developing towards unlimitedness – sort of ananda. The ananda is developing. Nothing in particular is to be done. He has only to be told he is getting on along the right lines.

N.G.H. Those who have been meditating longer have given the following experiences which we would also like explained:

I saw this light at the end of a tunnel. It was light that had no external source. It seemed related to the Self, it seemed to be always there.

H.H. This tunnel is some Nadi [pronounced Nadee, 'nerve path, psychic current'] inside, probably the Sushumna Nadi, (the seven autonomic plexuses) and at the end of it he sees that light which is his own light in the head. It is small inside, but he feels that it is very big and so it is perfectly all right.

N.G.H. Could I ask about this light in the head? Could H.H. say a little about what that light in the head is?

H.H. It is like the headlight of a car and sometimes it shines and other times it disappears.

N.G.H. After a period of good meditation, this inner light seems to come during deep sleep. When I awaken in the morning, it seems that there is a memory of this inner light which is ever-shining. Could H.H. explain this experience?

H.H. Dreams in sleep are also of three kinds – sattvic, rajasic and tamasic. In sattva, such dreams come as you describe.

N.G.H. In Wellington we have a member with a painful form of cancer. He has a strong desire to meditate, but is concerned that the drugs given to kill his pain produce a state of Bliss in him. He feels that finding Bliss through the drugs is cheating.

H.H. When he feels this Bliss (even as a result of a drug) at that time, he should try to meditate. If he can't, then he should know that his present condition is a result of previous karmas, and that he has to bear it, but if he chants the mantra aloud in that state of his health, that will enable him to improve his future and also get strength to bear with the result of the past.

B.R.H. One thing he finds difficult is that he doesn't have as much attention as he would like to give to the mantra. Is there any way he could use the mantra so that he can stay with it more easily? One of the effects of the drugs is that he goes to sleep and loses his attention. Could he repeat it aloud or is there some other way?

H.H. He should get rest, that is primary. As and when after the period of rest or sleep he comes back to consciousness, he should repeat the mantra, that will help.

The drugs given are not likely to cure him, but only have the effect that he doesn't feel the pain which he would otherwise (normally does) feel, and as a result of the drug, he sometimes loses consciousness also. I suggest that before he loses consciousness after taking the medicine, when he isn't feeling the pain, he should recite the mantra. Should he go off again, as soon as he regains consciousness, he should again go on with the repetition of the mantra. The effect of this will be much more than the drug.

Translator. Actually, H.H. has said at an earlier date that the period of this loss of consciousness, when he isn't repeating the mantra, will be treated as if he has been reciting the mantra throughout.

B.R.H. In what H.H. has said today and also many times previously, it seems that what is so important is one's attitude in such a situation. For most people, such an illness is thought of

as a calamity – the worst thing that could happen. Could H.H. say something about it being a point of opportunity, can it be seen as that? We have been told that everything that happens is right, it has a reason. Could he say something about approaching such a situation as a terminal illness from this point of view?

H.H. There are two things, the good of the body and the good of the soul. Now this pain which he experiences is in the body. By his attitude he can do good for his soul. Whatever he is experiencing in the body is the result of his previous karmas, but by thinking good thoughts now, by thinking that whatever God has done is for the good, by taking that attitude he will be able to elevate his soul and that will give him the energy for bearing this trouble. As also in finishing the results of his previous karmas. But if he doesn't take this attitude, and feels miserable about it, then what will happen is he will be creating new associations which will carry on and give him the next birth and he will again have to bear the result of the bodily existence and bodily pain and so this will go on.

But if he adopts the idea that whatever God is doing is for the good of my soul, then he will go through this with a lighter heart and will be able to finish the result of the previous karma without creating any further.

M.J.H. The following is from a person who also has been meditating for some time:

Often, just after I have meditated, I feel a deep connection with the person who initiated me into the meditation (Mr Howitt). On one or two occasions, I knew he had gone very deep in his meditation. I was filled with Bliss from top to toe. Another time although I was aware he had not necessarily gone deep, I was in his meditation and not my own. I can remember thinking how wonderful of him to have such feelings.

H.H. Wherever the initiator will go, he will take the disciple with him. The tradition of the Guru is like a railway engine. If ten carriages are attached to that engine, then these will run at the same speed as the engine, so that if ten disciples are attached to one Guru, they will run at the same speed as the speed of the Guru. But if they are disconnected, then you will need the manpower of ten people to even shift one carriage a very small distance.

N.G.H. We have a lovely place in the country just near Wellington and we go away for one week quite often and we use that whole week for the practice of meditation. The last time we went, we felt that the very strong presence of H.H. was there. It pervaded the place, and we found this feeling of his presence did just that – it gave us energy to remember the Self – to remember the Self has given everything, has become everything and it made the practice of giving up attachments so much easier. We felt that it was his subtle presence – we were sure of that!

H.H. By his memory, remembering, the Guru is present inside every disciple.

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