

8 June 1982

**MATERIAL PREPARED BY DR ROLES FOR:
JUNE MEDITATION MEETING**

Though the Advaita Meditation came to us in 1960, for many of us consistent work on Self-study began with this question to the Shankaracharya in August 1970, near the start of the small book of some of our records printed by Nolan Howitt and brought over by Michael Harris from Wellington.

Q. Is there any further advice that His Holiness would give on the subject that the Self (Atman) alone is real and looks on all the changing events and situations as a passing show, without getting involved?

S. In order to appreciate the Self described in the Upanishads, one needs simple methods. Many such descriptions have been given in the past but more light can now be thrown on the subject. Pure consciousness belongs to the 'silent impartial Observer', upon whose inlook or outlook are imposed the changes and limitations we experience every 24 hours of our life. These are seen by this Observer as a passing show while He (the Self) remains always the same. Just as pure gold always remains gold, while its uses and shapes and forms are innumerable; as the sky we observe whenever a plane takes us above the cloud ceiling is always the same; or as the waves of the sea cause no loss or gain to it; so all these passing shows of nature do not change the Observer but only provide variety in the appearance of the world we see.

(Record, 30 August 1970)

The recent visit to India has enabled us to look at two of the earliest of these Upanishads in their original form, free of subsequent commentaries and interpretations. One, the *Mandukya* meaning the 'frog', explains that in three jumps a frog who is being boiled in the desert sun can reach the cool and quiet depths of the Self within. The Self, it says, is subject to four conditions. First, the material condition wherein the Self experiences three-dimensional matters through the organs of sensation with perception turned outward, known as the daytime condition.

The second is known as the dreaming condition, perception turned inward, wherein the Self enjoys imponderable (psychological) matters. These go on by day and by night, but alternate, one being active while the other rests.

In deep sleep man feels no desire, creates no dream. This undreaming sleep is the third condition where the Self takes charge of both sides of our nature. In this state the Self is filled with joy, but the individual being asleep knows nothing at all. When he awakes however he can know that the Self is the Lord of all; the inhabitant of the hearts of all; the Creator and dissolver of beings. He can be defined only by what He is not. He cannot be seen, grasped, bargained with; He is indefinable, unthinkable, indescribable. The only proof of His existence is union with Him; the mirage of the world disappears in Him; He is peaceful and good.

(Record, 2 September 1964)

In another of the Upanishads (which seems also to have been written down around the 6th century BC) this is confirmed:

He who desires one thing after another is born wherever his desires can be satisfied; but, the Self attained, one desire satisfied, all are satisfied. The Self is not known through discourse or learning however great. He comes to the one He loves, takes that one's body for His own. He is found by the daring yet cautious man. He who has found Him seeks no more; the riddle is solved; desires departed, he is at peace. As rivers lose name and shape in the sea, wise men lose name and shape in the Absolute. He who has found spirit *is* spirit.

(From Mundaka Upanishad 3. 2. 2–10

In: *The Ten Principal Upanishads*, trans. Shri Purohit Swami & W.B. Yeats.
Faber & Faber, 1987)

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