

Swansong

Over the last two months we have followed the great cycle of teaching from the System on the universe. It begins with the individual, separate from the world, wondering about the nature of the universe and where mankind fits in to it, then seeing in the Ray of Creation the design of the universe on the grand scale where even the whole of mankind hardly appears, then scaling down to find mankind's place in the local universe, the solar system, and finally returning home with the description in the Food Table of how the energy that flows in the universe also flows in the individual human being.

Something of the inadequacy we usually feel confronted by the universe is caught in *The Black Cloud* by Fred Hoyle, the famous cosmologist much admired by Dr Roles for his often unconventional views. In the book a black cloud enters the solar system and threatens to cut off the sunlight reaching the earth. But it transpires that the cloud is intelligent and communication with it is established. It turns out to have a vastly superior order of mind, and before it leaves it offers to impart its mentality to volunteers. Unfortunately, both of the volunteers die from brain fever in the attempt!

We have a similar source of power within us; the full power of the Absolute is something few of us experience, but if it is accidentally encountered it is overwhelming in its intensity, then seen to be completely blissful. As for our day to day encounters with this power, in the saying that 'the same energy flows in us as in the universe' we should insert the words 'occasionally' and 'weakly'. The Food Diagram shows that the reason for our feeling of incompleteness lies in the missing 'conscious shocks', in most of us filled rather more haphazardly than we would like.

A more detailed look at the Food Table showed us that the shock which is closest to being under our control needs a particular triad to bring emotional energy into self-remembering. In other words a little Sattva has to be there already prepared for the real flow of Sattva to be turned on.

Another theme we followed related to the Ray of Creation and the Food Table was the esoteric interpretation of the Lord's Prayer, which reveals itself to be a multi-layered acknowledgement of the power of the Absolute at different levels: the Ray of Creation and the Law of Three encapsulated in a simple supplication. It also points to what we lack, 'our daily bread' if only we knew how to ask for it.

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What can we do about it? As the Shankaracharya said: "All one can do is make these little efforts from day to day" (*Record* 9.11.73). The aim is to achieve stillness, as told in a paper by Dr Roles written just before his last Christmas; the paper had the title 'Peace, Perfect Peace' (81/42):

Our Shankaracharya . . . has told us of all the experiments they tried before the system of meditation which we inherit, emerged. Since the need is greater than ever today, this is a synopsis of what he has told us about the three levels of peace and mental rest (*Record* 1974):

- (1) The rest or stillness at the *physical level* provides enough energy in sleep at night to employ in eight or nine hours of activity for any individual and keep in good health while living normal and productive life. This keeps the human race going—though not everybody knows the secret of physical rest.
- (2) The rest of the *subtle level*, by cessation of conflicting desires brings another dimension to the idea of rest. On this level, efficiency arises through all activities—physical, mental and artistic work. Nature provides a number of opportunities each day when there is a moment between the end of one activity and the beginning of another. Everybody needs to know about and learn to experience the existence of these ‘moments of opportunity’ in which all desires can be stopped and the thinking process comes to an end.
- (3) The rest of the *Causal level* becomes available when all activities of the physical and subtle bodies—the desires, the thinking processes and even the feelings have been stilled at will (for a short period during meditation).

Since the Causal realm cannot be described one learns about it by its effects on the long term in the activities and dispositions of such men who provide themselves with *spiritual rest*. . . . Whatever they do will emerge from stillness, be held in stillness and again submerge in the same inner stillness by which they experience the great total immobility.

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One also learns about it in the meaning of the great Indian epic of the Mahabharata in this story which His Holiness went on to relate at the same interview, and which many of you like very much:

During the great war in India (described in the Mahabharata), one day Karna was appointed commander-in-chief of the whole army. When he was going to the battle field, his charioteer said to him. “Although you are a great warrior and an efficient leader, it would not be possible for you to vanquish Arjuna because he is supported by Shri Krishna, who has achieved this profound stillness.” (Karna was proud of his descent from the Sun God, and also of his own strength and efficiency).

The charioteer told him story about a flock of crows. One of them was strong, clever and good looking, so they made him their leader. This king of the crows felt proud of his exploits, and hence looked down upon all other creatures.

One day a young swan appeared in that vicinity. They all assembled around the swan and asked him if he knew about the great deeds of the king. He pleaded ignorance and wished to see their king. The king crow appeared and asked the swan about different types of flight. The swan, in his simplicity, said that he knew only one style.

The king crow then embarked on an exhibition of his 101 styles of flight. Having performed his 101 types of acrobatics, the king wanted to see the art of the swan. The young swan took off in a graceful, gentle and natural flight and, as usual, increased his speed only gradually. Since the crow was small and swift he flew fast, and realising that the swan was left behind, he came back to cheer him up. The swan gradually increased his speed, and it was not very long before the crow was tired and trembled, and ultimately fell into the waters of the sea. The swan came down and rescued the crow and helped him back to his flock. The crow then became ashamed of his pride, and

thanked the swan for his modesty and magnanimity. You see, the swan lived a natural life, while the crow occupied himself in acrobatics and cleverness.

“The ultimate victory goes only to the natural, steady, still and simple man; while the clever, smart and arty-crafty waste their energy in trifling pursuits only leading to their destruction. So, my great master, you must keep in your mind the steady, still and natural Krishna, for no one ever transcends Him or anyone whom He likes to support.”

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