

Commentaries by Sri Ramana Maharshi

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Editor's Note: This copy of the commentaries of Ramana Maharshi (one of PB's most formative teachers), was based on notes taken by PB and Munagala S. Venkataramiah during their time studying with him at his ashram in Arunachala. The notes were later compiled into a book and published by the Ramanashram. The notes are presented primarily in the form of questions presented to Ramana by pilgrims to his ashram. Our version was an early bound copy, made prior to official publication, referred to in the community as the Ramana Maharshi Red Book.

For more information about the people and texts PB quotes or references here, please see the file titled "Wiki Standard Info for Comments." For more information about the editorial standards, spelling changes, and formatting that we have implemented – including page and para numbering – please see the file titled "Introductory Readers' Guide." We have introduced minimal changes to the text; our changes deal with inconsistencies of spelling, educated guesses at illegible words, and the rare modification of grammar for clarity's sake. Whenever there is any question as to whether what is typed is what PB wrote, please consult

*the associated scan of the original pages, currently to be found in a PDF of the same name.
– Timothy Smith (TJS), 2020*

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(7-1)⁷ UNPUBLISHED
COMMENTARIES
BY
SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI.

(7-2) Recorded partly by Paul Brunton, Ph.D.
And partly by Munagala S. Venkataramiah.

(7-3) In typed “Commentaries by Maharishee”
there occurs the phrase: “Deha Adhyasa.”
It means: super-imposition [of ,]⁸ or
false attribution to, the physical body.
(b) page 82, same book, “Lakshya” means
“aim, target, goal.”

8

(8-1) to bring M’s terminology into line
with my own thought, interpret his
'Self' by 'Mind,' and his admonition
'Look Within' as 'Look within the

¹ Front cover

² Back cover

³ Void page

⁴ Blank page

⁵ Picture of Shri Ramana Maharshi

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⁷ The paras in this file are unnumbered unless otherwise noted. Para 7-3 was typed on another sheet of paper and pasted here by hand.

⁸ “of,” was typed above the line and inserted with a caret.

'Mind' NOT 'Look within the body,'
thus raising it from the mystical
to the philosophical
—PB

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Chapter 1: Beyond Yoga

11
BEYOND YOGA
[1]⁹

(11-1) Miracles? Wonders? Clairvoyance? Clairaudience? What are these? The greatest miracle is to realise Self. All these are side-tracks. The realised man is above them. Leadbeater describes hundreds of former lives seen by clairvoyance.

⁹ The original editor inserted "1" at the top of the page by hand.

Of what use is this? Does it help him or others to know the Self? What are these lives by body-births; the true birth is in the Self. You could be in England now (astrally) but will you be better off? You will not be a bit nearer realisation.

(11-2) The sights and sounds which may appear during meditation should be regarded as distractions and temptations. None of them should be allowed to beguile the aspirant.

(11-3) Q: Do the appearance of visions or the hearing of mystic sounds come after the concentrated mind is still and blank or before?

A: They can come both before and after. The thing is to ignore them and to still pay attention only to the Self.

(11-4) The Maharshi has one unvarying attitude towards psychic visions to teach disciples. Even when his disciples come and report that they have seen his own picture appear to them, transfigured in brilliant light, he counsels them to put aside all "form" to remember that what is thus seen is perishable; it has had an origin and must have an end: that what has to be seized upon is the intuitive perception of the Self.

(11-5) Mind is the real Kundalini. The representation of Kundalini as a serpent is merely to assist duller minds. The forms of representation of Chakras are also illusionary.

(11-6) What good will the Siddhis (Occult powers) do? Suppose you exercise all these wonderful powers? You are desiring and trying to fulfil that desire, and when a fresh desire breaks out, you expend your energy and attention to that. Is not the net result mere worry to the tossed

12 BEYOND YOGA

(continued from the previous page) mind? If happiness is your real goal and aim you must ultimately come back from your diversion with Siddhis and try to find yourself, by enquiring who it is that wants the happiness.

(12-1) Q: Why is the peace which I feel in your presence not enduring after I go?

A: These flashes are only signs of the enduring revelation of the Self. That peace is the real nature. Contrary ideas are only super-imposition. This is true yoga. You may say however that this peace is acquired by practice. It is the wrong notions that are given up by practice.

(12-2) People often misunderstand Samadhi. He told story of Yogi who spent hundreds of years in trance on Ganges and on awakening his first thought was for some water he had asked for before entering the trance. The thoughts had resumed their sway. The trance was useless. Real attainment said Maharishi was to be

FULLY CONSCIOUS, to be aware of your surroundings and the people around, to move among them all, but not to merge your consciousness in the environment. Retain in your inner independent awareness of IT. That is the highest - not to sit in trance which merely halts the mind. The mind must be destroyed entirely, not merely arrested.

(12-3) "Man runs the course of his samskaras. When taught that he is the Self, the teaching affects his mind and imagination runs riot. His occult experiences are only according to his imagination of the state "I am the Self." But when he is ripe for receiving the instructions and his mind is about to be sunk into the Hearth, the instruction imparted works in a flash and he realises the self. Otherwise there is struggle.

(12-4) Visions add zest to meditation but do nothing more.

(12-5) [To one who declared he had gone to Muttra and seen Krishna there in a vision, M said: "The seer, the seen, and the seeing were all one, all within yourself. Nobody else saw it. It was your own fancy. Yet that you really did see it was also true."]¹⁰

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BEYOND YOGA
[3]¹¹

(13-1) Occultism and theosophy and the like are round-about and circuitous routes to the same goal. Ultimately their followers will arrive at the Self. But their leaders do not teach the meditation on the Self. Thus Radhasoami teaches to listen for sounds and look for 'lights.' Meditation on Self is the direct, quickest and right route to realisation. The Upanishads declare, "That which sees not, hears not, thinks not, that is the 'Infinite'" Yet the Radhasoami teachings instruct their pupils to listen to sounds however exalted these be; just the same with those who meditate on the sound of Aum. All these are meditation on hearing something when the Infinite itself cannot be heard. Similarly with those occult groups which are developing psychic visions, clairvoyance, chakra-centres, etc. They are trying to see forms, when the Reality is not to be seen. Vichara: In this there is no attempt to see or hear the Real, but only to realise it. Radhasoami's is a round-about way; they are making for the same goal, but they are wandering around to get there; the meditation on Self is the straight, short and direct path, which does not concern itself with planes and degrees.

¹⁰ The original editor inserted "To one who declared he had gone to Muttra and seen Krishna there in a vision, M said: "The seer, the seen, and the seeing were all one, all within yourself. Nobody else saw it. It was your own fancy. Yet that you really did see it was also true." at the bottom of the page by hand.

¹¹ The original editor inserted "3" at the top of the page by hand.

(13-2) Just as in school there are different classes, lower grades and higher ones, so these occult, psychic and mantric systems represent lower grades. The highest class in the school of life is that devoted to Vichara, enquiry into true Self. This is practically the same as Jnana yoga. It is a matter of maturity.

(13-3) Inferior to Vichara: The main object of central teaching of systems like the Vedas which give much of Cosmogony, is that Brahman is real and that the world and all other things are unreal. But all sorts of aspirants have to be appealed to, the dull and the sharp alike. To enable the dull to follow the central teach-

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BEYOND YOGA

(continued from the previous page) -ing a graded Cosmogony is given viz. "Brahman begetting Prakriti, whence Mahat-Tatvam followed, thence the Tanmatvas, the elements of the world and the body in succession. But to the sharp intelligence of other aspirants the Vedas say "It is by the Self being clouded by Avarana, or a covering of ignorance, this dreamlike illusory or phenomenal world appears. In reality the Self is not covered. It only appears to be covered to the eye of the persons who are under the impression that they are the body.

(14-1) The theory of evolution, the philosophies of planes and degrees, the systems of spirit descending into matter and evolving back, the idea of the self developing towards perfection – all these things are for uncultured (spiritually) materially-minded people. But for advanced spiritually-minded people these thoughts are discarded. They keep the mind tied to forms and objects; therefore they are false from the highest standpoint. Similarly, theosophy talks of evolving selves. How can that be? The true self is infinite, formless, beyond time and hence beyond evolution, it cannot grow to perfection because it is already perfect, free, boundless. But theosophy and such systems are useful for beginners, for those persons who think "I am the body" or "I am this person." Advanced minds do not need them.

(14-2) Theosophical teachings are kindergarten. They are half-truths. Realise the whole Truth that you are free now and you will be free.

(14-3) Forms which interfere with the main course or current of meditation should not be allowed to distract the mind. Bring yourself back into the Self, the Witness, unconcerned with such distractions. That is the only way to deal with such interruptions. Never forget yourself.

(14-4) Asana is not necessary for the Jnani's course. He can practice in any place or posture.

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BEYOND YOGA

(15-1) Q: What if one meditates incessantly without actions?

A: Try and see: The predisposition will not let you do it. Dyana comes only progressively with gradual weakening of vasanas by Guru's grace.

(15-2) Intellect is the astral body. It is only an aggregate of certain factors. What else is the astral body? In fact, without intellect n Kosa is cognised. Who says that there are five Kosas? Is it not the intellect itself?

(15-3) There is no kind of sorrow for one who leaves off seeing through his physical sense and begins to see everything as his own Self. Further this grief (of the loss of his wife) does not indicate real love. The love which one evinces towards external objects and forms is not the real love. Real love has always its abode in one's own Self.

(15-4) Q: There are beautiful colours in meditation. It is a pleasure to watch them. We can see God in them.

A: They are all mental conceptions.

(15-5) The objects or feelings or thoughts, i.e. all experiences, in meditation, are all only mental conceptions.

(15-6) Arundale's so-called Nirvanic visions mean subject and objects. How can they exist in true Nirvana?

(15-7) When Sundaresa Iyer, local teacher described yoga experiences, including visions of light ringing of bells etc. Which he was have Maharshi replied they come, and they would pass away. Be only the witness. I myself had thousands of such experiences, but I had no one to go to and consult about them.

(15-8) Q: Can we not see God in concrete visions?

A: Yes, God is seen in the mind. The concrete form may be seen. Still, it is in the devotee's own mind. The form and appearance of the God-manifestation are determined by the menta-

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BEYOND YOGA

(continued from the previous page) -lity of the devotee. But the finality is not that for it has the sense of duality. It is like a dream vision. After God is perceived, vichara commences. That ends in the realization of the self. Vichara is the final method.

(16-1) Q: Did not PB see you in London? Was it only a dream?

A: Yes, he had the vision. Nevertheless he saw me in his own mind.

Q: But did he not see this concrete form?

A: Yes, but still it was in his mind.

Keeping God in your mind as everything around you becomes Dhyana. This is the stage before realization, which is only in the Self. Dhyana must precede it. Whether you make Dhyana of God or Self, it is immaterial, the goal is the same.

(16-2) Q: Through poetry, music, etc. one sometimes experiences a sense of deep bliss. Will practice of this lead to a deeper Samadhi and ultimately to a full vision of the real?

A: There is happiness at agreeable sights. It is the happiness inherent in the Self. That happiness is not alien and afar. You are diving into the pure self on occasions which you consider pleasurable. That diving results in self-existent bliss. But the association of ideas is responsible for foisting this bliss on other things or happenings. In fact, it is within you. If you do so consciously, you call it Realization. I want you to dive consciously into the Self, i.e. into the Heart.

(16-3) The querent does not agree with me. He asked how to realize Self and when I told him, he was not satisfied, because I gave him the simple truth. He wants something unusual and unnecessary. So the best thing for me is to keep silence. Let him try his own methods.

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BEYOND YOGA
[7]¹²

(17-1) Q: St. Theresa and others saw the image of Madonna animated. It was external. Others see the images of their devotion floating in their mental sight. This is internal. Is there any difference in degree in these two cases?

A: Both indicate that the person has strongly developed meditation. Both are good and progressive. There is no difference in degree. The one had conception of divinity and draws mental images and feels them. The other has the conception of divinity in the image and feels it in the image. The feeling is within, in both instances.

(17-2) Q: In the spiritual experience of St. Theresa, she was devoted to a figure of Madonna which became animated to her sight, and she was in bliss.

A: The animated figure prepared the mind for introversion. There is a process of concentration of the mind on one's own shadow which in due course becomes animated and answers questions put to it. That is due to Manobala (power of mind) or Dhyanabala (power of meditation). Whatever is external, is also transitory. Such phenomena may produce joy for the time being. But abiding peace, i.e. Shanti does not result. This is gotten only by the removal of Avidya.

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BEYOND YOGA

¹² The original editor inserted "7" at the top of the page by hand.

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Chapter 2: Fallacies of Religion

19
FALLACIES OF RELIGION
[9]¹⁴

(19-1) When we worship images and forms we are really worshipping ourselves in the images.

(19-2) Q: Do Vishnu, Shiva etc. exist?

A: Individual human souls are not the only beings known. But instead of pursuing inquiry in this direction why not inquire after yourself? To whom do these ideas arise?

(19-3) Scriptures say God created you. But do you see God or anything else in your sleep? If God be real why does He not shine in your sleep also? You are always, - now the same as you were in sleep. You are not different now from that one in sleep.

(19-4) Soul and God are only mental conceptions. Do you think of God in sleep? If God be real, He must remain always. You in sleep and wakefulness are just the same. If God be as true as yourself, God must exist in sleep as well as the Self. This thought of God arises only in the waking state. Who thinks? Is it the body? The body does not speak. If so, did it speak in sleep? Who is this I? Are you aware of being in the body in sleep? The fact is that you are neither within nor without the body.

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FALLACIES OF RELIGION

Chapter 3: The Meaning of Religion

21
THE MEANING OF RELIGION
[11]¹⁶

(21-1) All these religious rites are of some help but merely to create the attitude of devotion in the hearts of worshippers. Ultimately all must turn inwards away from external things, and find the Self. The body is the true temple, mosque or church. All other churches are for beginners. We must worship the Self within.

(21-2) Why should it be specially picked out among so many hills? God is everywhere. Why do you specify him as Arunachala? Arunachala is within and not within. The Self is Arunachala.

¹⁴ The original editor inserted "9" at the top of the page by hand.

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¹⁶ The original editor inserted "11" at the top of the page by hand.

(21-3) Q: Is the sacredness of Benares etc. a matter of faith or is it externally also?

A: Both.

(21-4) The word “Pradakshinam” (Going round) signifies “the whole is within thyself.” Going round this Hill is equivalent to going round this world for the whole of the universe is contained in Arunachala. Even this is (equivalent to) contained in going round the Temple of Arunachala. Even the last is contained in going round one’s Self i.e. the Atman.

(21-5) Q: For whom are the scriptures?

A: If one thinks “I am this,” another thinks “I am that” and so on. There is a class of thoughts and so different religions are the result. The truth remains as it is, not affected by any statements.

(21-6) God is the supreme power that creates, protects and destroys all these various universes.

(21-7) Q: Is discovery of Self dependent on the observance of caste rules? Or should we flout them?

A: Not in the beginning. Observe them to start with. They serve as a check on the vagaries of the mind. It is thus purified.

(21-8) Q: There are strifes because there are so many religions and creeds.

A: Will there be no quarrel if only one religion prevails? (Laughter in the hall).

(22-1) Q: As for God’s help in my effort, is not that to be acquired by worship etc. Will not that be helpful?

A: Iswara’s grace and worship for it, etc. are intermediate steps adopted and necessary to be adopted so Long as the goal is not reached. When it is reached God is the self.

(22-2) A visitor asked Sri Bhagavan for Prasad from his lunch and Maharshi said: “Eat without thinking of the ego. Then what you eat becomes Bhagavan’s Prasad. If I give you one morsel from my plate, each one will ask for a morsel. What will be left for me, if I distribute the whole plate to others? So you see that is not devotion. There is no significance in eating a morsel from my plate. Be a true devotee.”

(22-3) Q: Should I continue idol worship?

A: So long as you think you are the body, there is no harm. It may lead to concentration of mind. Get one-pointed.

(22-4) Q: Is there a separate Being, Iswara who is the rewarder of virtue and punisher of sins? Is there a God?

A: Yes.

Q: Has he an end? Does he get dissolved in Pralaya?

A: Pralaya is the soul held by maya. If you can, with all your defects and limitations, rise by Jnana into realisation of Self and above all Pralaya and samsara, is it not reasonable to expect that Iswara who is infinitely more intelligent than you is above and beyond pralaya? Enlighten yourself, by realising your self.

(22-5) Q: Should I practice Sandhya (morning and evening religious rites?)

A: If you think it necessary by all means practice it.

(22-6) Everything in Gita and other scriptures is said to suit the particular temperaments of the hearers.

23

THE MEANING OF RELIGION

(23-1) Q: Young men who are taught scriptures in their early age, are found to detest the same later.

A: The revulsion of feeling is not due to age but due to misunderstanding. If rightly guided they will appreciate the scriptures all the more in their mature age.

(23-2) All creeds are but preliminaries for the masses, leading up to the real truth of the Self. The religions are not necessarily the highest expression of the highest wisdom of their founders, who had to consider the times in which they lived and the mental capacities of the people. The highest wisdom is too subtle for most minds, and so a whole scheme of worlds, gods, bodies, evolution etc. had to be given out because people seem to find it easier to believe all these things rather than believe the simple Truth of the one reality – Self. Thus, reincarnation, astral planes, survival after death, etc. are true but only from a lower standpoint. It is all a matter of the standpoint. From the highest, that of the real Self, all else disappears as illusory and only the Reality remains. It is true that subtle astral bodies exist, because in order to function in the dream-world a body is necessary for that world, but it too is real only on its own plane whereas the One Self is always real, always and eternally existent, whether we are aware of it or not. Hence it is better to seek that, because the other self-bodies are only conditionally real.

(23-3) An ordinary Christian is only satisfied when told God is in some far off heaven, not to be reached by us unaided, that Christ alone has known Him and alone can save us. Hence when told the simple truth that the kingdom of heaven is within you, he is not satisfied and will read far-fetched meanings in the statement. Mature minds alone can grasp the simple truth in all its nakedness.

24

THE MEANING OF RELIGION

(24-1) Q: What of idols?

A: They have a deep significance. Their worship is a method of concentration of mind. The mind is wont to move externally. It must be checked and turned within. Its habit is to dwell on names and forms, for all external objects possess names and forms. Such names and forms are made symbolic of mental conceptions in order to divert within itself the mind from external objects and make it dwell within itself. The idols, mantras, sacred syllables, rites, etc. are all meant to give food to mind in its inward course so that it may become capable of being concentrated, after which alone the supreme state can be reached.

(24-2) Isvara has individuality in mind and body, which are perishable, but at the same time He has also the transcendental consciousness and liberation inwardly.

(24-3) Isvara, a personal God or Supreme creator of the Universe does exist. (This is true only from the relative standpoint for those who have not realized ultimate truth, who believe in reality of individual souls). From Absolute standpoint the sage cannot accept any other existence, than the impersonal Self, one and formless.

(24-4) Iswara has a physical body, a form and name, but it is not so gross as this material body. It can be seen in visions, in the form created by the devotee. The form and name of God are many and various, changing with religions. His essence is same as ours, the real self being only one and without form. Hence forms he assumes are only creations or appearances.

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THE MEANING OF RELIGION

[15]¹⁷

(25-1) Iswara is immanent in every person and every material object throughout the universe. The totality of all things and beings constitutes God. There is a power out of which a small fraction has become all this universe, and the remainder is in reserve. Both this reserve power plus the manifested power as material world together constitute Iswara. To worship this Creator man must understand God's nature and man's relation to IT. All moral conduct, all rational thought is the right worship of this God. Even the Western sceptic who does his limited best to understand God is right worship. The real source is not this relative God but can be reached through this.

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THE MEANING OF RELIGION

¹⁷ The original editor inserted "15" at the top of the page by hand.

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Chapter 4: The Meaning of Mysticism

27

THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

[17]¹⁹

(27-1) Q: Is it harmless to keep on with smoking?

A: No, for tobacco is a poison. Better to do without it.

(27-2) Q: "What are the passions?"

A: They are the same force as is used in meditation – only diverted into other channels.

(27-3) Q: Do you recommend that meat and alcoholic drinks be given up?

A: Yes. It is advisable to give them up because this abstention is a useful aid for beginners. The difficulty in surrendering them is not that they are really necessary, but merely because we have become inured by custom and habit to them.

(27-4) Till the mind is firm in realisation, it must have some picture or idea to think of, else the meditation will quickly give place to sleep or (wandering) thoughts.

(27-5) Yes, meditation in early morning upon arising is best time because mind is then free of thoughts, cares etc.

(27-6) Re: Meditation in a group or alone: The latter is advisable for beginners, but we must learn to advance to the point where we create our mental solitude; then it does not matter where we are. We must learn to find solitude (mentally) in the midst of society; we should not give up our meditation because we are among people, but carry it on even then, but do not do it ostentatiously – do it secretly. Do not make a physical exhibition of the fact that you are meditating.

(27-7) When attention is directed towards objects and intellect, mind is aware only of these things. That is our present state. But when we attend to the self within we become conscious of It alone. It is therefore all a matter of attention. Our minds have for so long been attending to external things that the latter have enslaved it and drag it hither and thither.

28

THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

(28-1) Q: It is said that the yogi should sit on a deerskin for meditation, as this prevents loss of magnetism during meditation?

A: It is not necessary to use one. The earth will not rob you of the effects of your meditation because you do not happen to use a deerskin.

¹⁹ The original editor inserted "17" at the top of the page by hand.

(28-2) It is good that you have given up smoking. Men are enslaved by tobacco and cannot give it up. But tobacco only gives a temporary stimulation to which there must be a re-action with craving for more. It is also not good for meditation practice.

(28-3) If the mind wanders we must at once realise we are not the body and enquire "who am I" and the mind must be brought back to realise the self. Thus all evils are destroyed and hardness is realised.

(28-4) You can meditate with eyes open or shut, which ever suits you best. It differs with different people. The real sight is when the mind looks through the eyes; if it is not looking through because occupied with some interior things, it does not see though the eyes are open. Similarly noises. If you pay attention to them, you hear them. But if you persistently pay attention only to the within Self, you will not hear them.

(28-5) Q: The mind is fickle and wandering. How to control it?

A: If you at once direct your attention to the question Who is the individual to whom this fickleness occurs, the tossing of the mind to and fro ceases.

(28-6) There is a subtle essence in all food; it is this which affects the mind. Hence for those who are endeavouring to practice meditation to find the self, there have been dietetic rules laid down which it is advisable to follow. Satvic foods promote meditation whereas rajasic meat and tamasic food hinder it.

29

THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

[19]²⁰

(29-1) Q: How are lust, anger etc. overcome?

A: By Dhyana; the holding on a single thought and putting off all other thoughts.

(29-2) Q: What is to be meditated upon?

A: Anything you prefer. But you should stick to one thing. Contemplation means fight. As soon as you begin meditation other thoughts will crowd in, gather force and try to sink the single thought. The latter must gain strength by repeated practice. This battle always takes place in meditation. Peace of mind is brought about by contemplation, through the absence of varying thoughts. When dhyana is well established it cannot be given up. It will go on automatically even when you are engaged in work, play or even sleep. It must become so deeply rooted that it is natural.

(29-3) Q: Is heart the same as the physiological heart?

²⁰ The original editor inserted "19" at the top of the page by hand.

A: No. It is all meant to help the aspirant. It is only the source of the "I" thought. That is the ultimate truth. Seek your source. The search takes you automatically to the heart.

(29-4) By Yogi practice one starts with the lowest chakra, goes down, and then rises up, wanders all through, until the brain centre or the thousand petalled lotus is gained: by jnana practice one settles down in the Heart Centre directly. The heart-chakra of yogis, called anahata is not the same as this Heart. If so, why should they progress further on to Sahasrara? Moreover, the question arises, because of the sense of separateness persisting in us. We are never away from that centre. Before reaching anahata or after passing it, one is only in the centre, whether one understands it or not, he is not away from the centre. Practice of yoga or vichara remains in the Centre only.

(29-5) Q: What is pranayama?

A: "Prana" is equivalent to Self, Soul, Atman, etc. as it is the life-current, whatever name you give it. Pranayama is the control of the body, the

(continued from the previous page) sense and the intellect through the breath. Mind is thus controlled and thus dies down with this practice. Mind and prana originate from the same source. By control of breath mind subsides and then an unconscious blank state is produced, a swoon or trance like death. Although that state is the natural state, the man who has not controlled mind is dazed and is merged in it. It is a state of great peace, true, but it is temporary, and when it ends the yogi wants control again. It is necessary for him to go beyond pranayama and to gain direct-control of the mind, and thus practice a permanent peace, sahaja samadhi - not merely temporary samadhi. The thing is to get the capacity to bring mind to peace, to make it still, and not allow it to wander. For that pranayama is given out. Retention of breath, this leads to contemplation but as that is for the advanced man; puraka is the beginning, the comes kumbaka and last is rechaka. Pranayama is useful only in so far as it helps to get mind-control. For those who seek mental peace this is enough, but there is a highly-detailed, complicated Pranayama for those who seek siddhis - occult powers.

Pranayama is for one not endowed with the strength to control mind. There is no way so sure as the sages' company for this purpose. Pranayama need not be exactly as described in Hatha yoga. If engaged in devotion or meditation, just a little control of breath will suffice to control mind. Mind is rider and breath the horse. Pranayama is a check on the horse. By that check the rider is checked. It may be done just a little. Watching the breath is one way to do it. The mind is abstracted from other activities and engaged in watching the breath. That controls breath and in its turn mind. If unable to do rechaka and puraka, do not care. Breath may be retained a short while during meditation. Then too

(continued from the previous page) good results will accrue. Regulation of breath is gained by watching its movements. Similarly if the mind is watched the thoughts will cease too. That is what the mind-quest really is.

(31-1) Some meditation brings about suspension of the breath; while vice versa the mind ceases to be restless after some breath control. Control of mind spontaneously effects control of breath or kumbhaka.

(31-2) The persons to use breath-control are especially those who are practising by themselves without a Guru's presence. Then the mind becomes controlled as a result, but mind control spontaneously begins to arise in the presence of a superior power like a guru.

(31-3) When life is imperilled the whole interest begins to centre round its saving. Similarly, when the breath is held in pranayam, the mind cannot afford to jump at its accustomed external objects; thus there is rest for it, so long as the breath is held. All attention being turned on breath and its regulation, other interests are lost.

(31-4) Thought and respiration are both different aspects of the same individual life-current upon which they both depend. If respiration is forcibly repressed, thought follows suit and is fixed to the usual dominant thought. If thought is forcibly slowed down and pinned to a point, the vital activity of respiration is slowed down, made even and confined to the lowest level compatible with the continuance of life. Thus the mind grasps the subtle and merges into it.

(31-5) Control of breath calms the mind: then see who is aware of the calmness! Mechanical pranayama will not lead one to the goal. It is only an aid. While doing it mechanically take care to be alert in mind and remember the I-thought and seek its source. Then you will find that where prana sinks, there the "I-thought" arises.

(continued from the previous page) They sink and arise together. The "I thought" also will sink along with prana. Simultaneously, another luminous and infinite "I-I" will manifest and it will be continuous and unbroken. That is the goal. It goes by different names - God, Bhakti, Jnana²² etc. When the attempt is made it will of itself take you to the goal.

²¹ The original editor inserted "21" at the top of the page by hand.

²² "Gnana" in the original.

(32-1) Q: What is the difference and effect of the three methods, viz. Enquiry, bhakti and control of breath?

A: Kumbhaka is an aid to control of mind i.e. suppression or annihilation of thoughts. One may practice pranayama, Rechaka, puraka and Kumbhaka, or practice pranayama, Rechaka, puraka and Kumbhaka, or practice only Kumbhaka. Still another, a Jnani, on controlling the mind, controls the prana, and Kumbhaka automatically results. Watching the inspiration and expiration is also pranayama. These methods are threefold apparently only. They are in fact only one because they lead to the same goal. They are however differently adopted according to the stage of the aspirants and his antecedent vasanas or samskaras.

(32-2) Breath control is meant for one who cannot directly control his thoughts. It serves as a brake serves a car. But one should not stop with it but proceed to concentration and contemplation. The postures help breath control which helps contemplation; hence hatha yoga, which is also a cleansing process.

(32-3) Q: I hear the psychic sounds of Nada, bell, echoes?

A: If you look upon it objectively, you are likely to lose yourself in it: one sound after another would come and then these would be blank: but remember to look "who it is that hears these sounds." If you hold your inner Self firmly, it will be immaterial whether you hear them or not. Keep the Subject in view: nada-yoga is certainly one of the methods to concentration, but after you have obtained the concentration make it in the Self. But if the subject is lost sight of then you go to laya, blankness.

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(33-1) To one who fixed sight between eye-brows but felt no progress, Maharshi said that the sight is fixed but the seer is not kept in view. If the seer be always remembered that will be alright.

(33-2) Q: What is the difference between meditation and self enquiry.

A: Meditation can be only if the ego be kept up. There is the ego and the object meditated upon. This method is indirect. On the contrary, seeking the ego-source, the ego disappears. What is left over is Self. This method is the direct one.

(33-3) The obstacles of meditation overcome is laya (sleep). Hence the teacher who gave out the Gita said: Practice moderation in sleep. Fakirs who tried to cut out sleep altogether went to ascetic extremes which are unnecessary. This means 4 to 5 hours sleep. Excessive sleep may be caused by over-eating or over-exertion, so moderate these things too. Deep sleep is not possible in daytime, as sun's rays have peculiar effect preventing it; hence if you doze in daytime it is very easy to turn that

²³ The original editor inserted "23" at the top of the page by hand.

into meditation, as it is close to it. As regards sleep the moment you wake up, be alert, and begin to think of God (Self). Keep alert throughout the day, i.e. practise the presence of God. Second obstacle: is mind turning to external objects; when that is overcome the third obstacle is he forgets he is there to practice meditation. Then the fourth obstacle arises; mind working internally.

(33-4) It must clearly be understood that meditation is not prohibited to practise without

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(continued from the previous page) postures, fixed times or other accessories.

(34-1) Q: Any posture for Europeans?

A: It is according to the mental equipment of the individual. No fixed rule.

(34-2) Q: What about those not accustomed to vegetarian diet?

A: Habit is only adjustment to the environments. It is the mind that matters. The fact is that the mind has been trained to think certain foods tasty. Nourishment may be obtained from vegetarian food no less than from flesh. But the realised man's mind is not influenced by the food he takes. But do it gradually - this getting accustomed to vegetarianism.

(34-3) Q: But if it is a matter of non-killing, then even plants have life?

A: So too have the tiles upon which you are seated.

(34-4) Q: Why do you take milk and not eggs?

A: Domesticated cows yield more milk than their calves require, and they find it a pleasure to be relieved. Eggs contain potential lives.

(34-5) Q: I have practiced dhyana on "Aham Brahmasmi." In a few moments, a blank prevails, my brain gets heated and I get a fright of death. I want your guidance.

A: Who sees the blank? The consciousness overlooking the blank is the Self. The fight of death is only after the thought arises. Whose death do you fear? For whom is the fear? There is the identification of the Self with the body. So long as there is this, there will be fear.

(34-6) Spirit Heart is different from physical heart; beating is the phenomenon only of the latter. The former is the seat of experience. Just as a dynamo supplies motive power to the whole system of lights, fans, etc. so the beating sakti supplies energy to the beating of the heart, respiration etc.

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(35-1) Q: What of chakras?

A: Atma alsone is to be realised. Its realisation holds all else in its compass. Shakti, siddhis etc. are all included in it. Those who speak f these have not realised the atman. Atma is in the Heart and is the Heart itself. The manifestation is in the brain. The passage from heart to brain might be considered to be through sushumna. Yogis say the current rising up to sahasrara ends there. That experience is not complete. For Jnana²⁵ they must come to the heart. Hridaya is alpha and omega.

(35-2) Explanation of the experience of “Blazing Light” in the last chapter of “A Search in Secret India.” It is said that Yogis experience during the course of their yogic exercises several lights and colours, before they actually realise the self. Once upon a time Parvati (the Consort of Siva) did penance to attain to the Eternal. She saw certain lights. As they were all felt and seen by her senses, she concluded that those lights did not constitute the Eternal. After a long penance, she beheld a very powerful light. She came to the same conclusion that this light also did not represent the Eternal. Then after severe penance, she attained peace and then concluded that the Self is the Eternal. The existence of things is seen only through light. Then how can it be wrong to say that it is that light by which one realises one’s Self? The knowledge of realising one’s Self is that Light. During Nirvikalpa Samadhi it exists as the knowledge by which one is enabled both to see the light seen in Samadhi and also that which is beyond that light. It is not ignorance then can it be said that it is not light?

(35-3) Concentration is not thinking on more than one thing. It is putting off all other thoughts which abstract the vision of our true nature. Now it appears difficult to quell the thoughts, whereas in the regenerate state it will be found more

(continued from the previous page) difficult to call in thoughts! For are there then things to think of when there is the Self alone? Thoughts can function only if there are objects. How can thoughts arise at all? Thought makes us believe that it is difficult to cease thinking. If the error is found, one would not be fool enough to exert oneself unnecessarily by way of thinking.

(36-1) Q: What path do you advise? “We need your grace.”

A: “Be still, do not think, and know that I am.”

(36-2) When the news of a devotee’s marriage was conveyed to the Maharshi someone asked “Why has he done this? Surely he will now fall back?” The

²⁴ The original editor inserted “25” at the top of the page by hand.

²⁵ “Gnana” in the original.

Maharshi laughed and said "Why should marriage interfere with his spiritual progress?"

(36-3) Unless satisfaction of bodily wants, such as hunger, thirst and evacuation of excreta, etc. is done meditation cannot progress.

(36-4) The results of vichara meditation are will power, developed concentration, control of passions, developed concentration, control of passions, indifference to the worldly objects, virtue, and equality to all.

(36-5) Hypnotic methods are not advisable to induce yogic samadhi because light-gazing stupefies the mind and produces catalepsy of the will temporarily, and secures no permanent benefit.

(36-6) A deity may be used to meditate upon as a mental image until the meditator merges into the Self. Then the image will fall away of its own accord and the deity vanish as part of the world-illusion. Only the Supreme Self is to be the object of meditation.

(36-7) Meditation is truly speaking remaining rigid in Self. But when thoughts cross the mind and the effort is made to eliminate them, the effort is termed meditation. Remain as you are. That is the aim. Meditation is negative only insasmuch as thoughts are kept away.

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(37-1) Q: I have no peace of mind?

A: Peace is our real nature. It need not be attained. Our thoughts must be obliterated. Gita method is the one to do it. Whenever mind strays away, bring it back to bear on meditation.

(37-2) Q: I can't bring my mind to meditate?

A: An elephant when free puts its trunks here there and looks restless. If a chain is given to it the trunk holds it without being turned this was and that, as before. Just the same mind is restless without an aim: if an aim is fixed, it is restful. Concentration is impossible so long as there are samskaras. They obstruct bhakti also. Practice and Dispassion are necessary. Dispassion is the absence of diffused thoughts: Practice is concentration on one thought only. Firm perseverance also. The one is positive and other negative aspect of meditation. Yes, our minds are weak, the help called Grace is necessary. Service of guru is only to obtain that. In the presence of strong-minded soul (guru) the weak mind comes under control more easily. That which is - is Grace, there is nothing else.

²⁶ The original editor inserted "27" at the top of the page by hand.

(37-3) Q: Best way to get rid of thoughts?

A: Is it the mind that tries to kill itself? How can the thief catch himself? It can't be. So best way is to try to realize your real nature, what you really are. When we see ourselves then there are no thoughts to be got rid of.

(37-4) Q: How may mind be controlled?

A: There are two methods. One is to see what the mind is; then it subsides. The second is to hold something else and control the mind there-with.

(37-5) Yoga serves to concentrate the mind. The predominant idea keeps off all others. The object is according to the individual.

(37-6) Q: My mind is not steady in meditation?

A: Whenever it wanders, turn it inward again and again. The mind is too weak. Strengthen it by practice, by reducing the thoughts to a single one.

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(38-1) Q: How meditate? With eyes open or closed?

A: It may be done either way. The point is that the mind must be introverted and kept active in its pursuit. Sometimes when the eyes are closed, the latent thoughts rush forth with great vigour. It may also be difficult to introvert the mind with eyes open, as that requires strength of mind. When the mind takes in objects it is contaminated. The main factor is to keep off other thoughts and to keep the mind in its own pursuit, without taking in external impressions or thinking of other matters.

(38-2) Q: How control thoughts?

A: The wavering of mind is because of its weakness, due to dissipation of its energy. When one makes the mind stick to one thought, the energy is conserved and the mind becomes stronger. Strength of mind is gained by practice, as Gita points out. In the earlier stages mind reverts to the search only at long intervals, with continued practice it reverts at shorter intervals until finally it does not wander at all. It is then that the dormant shakti manifests and the mind resolves itself into the life-current.

(38-3) Q: How to get rid of the mind?

A: Is it the mind that wants to kill itself? The mind cannot kill itself. So your business is to find the real nature of the mind. Then you find there is no mind. When the Self is sought the mind is not. Abiding in the Self, one need not worry about the mind.

(38-4) The illumination is experienced in the right side of the chest, in the Heart, when Self is realized.

(38-5) Kundalini and chakras exist for beginners who practise that path of Yoga; but for the one who is practising Self-enquiry, they do not exist.

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(39-1) Aham Brahmasmi is only a thought. Who says it? Brahman does not say so. What need is there for him to say it? Nor can the real "Aham" say so. For Aham only abides as Brahman. Saying it, is only a thought. Whose thought is it? All thoughts are from the Unreal i.e. the ego. Remain without thinking. So long as there is thought, there will be fear. So long as there is thought, even of "Aham Brahmasmi" there will be forgetfulness. Aham Brahmasmi is only an aid to concentration. It keeps off other thoughts. That one thought alone persists. Wee whose it is that thought. It will be found to be from I. Wherefrom is the I-thought? Probe into it. "I-thought" will vanish. The supreme self will shine by itself. No effort is there. When the Real I remains alone, it will not be saying "I am Brahman." Does a man say "I am a man?" Unless he is challenged, why should he declare himself a man? Does any one mistake him for a brute that he should say, "No, I am not a brute, I am a man." Similarly, Brahman or I being alone, there is no one there to challenge it and so there is no need to be saying "I am Brahman."

(39-2) Q: Meditate on Heart?

A: Because you seek Consciousness. Where can you find it? Can you reach it externally? You have to find it internally. Therefore you are directed inward. Again "Heart" is only the seat of consciousness.

(39-3) Q: On what should we meditate?

A: Who is the meditator? Ask that question first. Remain as the meditator. There is then no need to meditate.

(39-4) It is the sense of doership that is the impediment to Dhyan.

(39-5) Q: Why does the mind not sink into the heart, when while meditating?

A: A floating body does not readily sink unless some means are adopted for doing so. Pranayama makes the mind quiescent. The mind must be

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(continued from the previous page) alive and meditation pursued unremittingly even when it is at peace. It sinks into the heart. Or, the floating body might be loaded with weights and made to sink. So also Satsanga will make the mind sink

²⁷ The original editor inserted "29" at the top of the page by hand.

into the heart. Satsanga is both out and in. The externally visible guru pushes the mind inward. He is also in the hearts of the seekers and so he draws the inward bent mind into the heart. This question is asked only when the man begins to meditate and finds the difficult. Let him practice Pranayama just a little; the mind will be purified. It does not now sink into the heart. But it is restrictive and moves about due to Samskaras. When the samskaras are made ineffective, it will be restful and at peace. By pranayama, the mind will be quiescent only temporarily, because the samskaras are still there. If the mind is made Atmakara, it will no longer give trouble. That is done by meditation. It is necessary to be aware while controlling thoughts. Otherwise it will lead to sleep. Awareness is the chief factor, is indicated by the fact of emphasising Pratyahar, Dharan, Dhyan, Samadhi, even after Pranayama. Pranayam makes the mind steady and suppresses thoughts. Why is this not enough? Because awareness then is the one necessary factor. Such states are imitated by taking morphia, chloroform, etc. but they do not lead to liberation.

(40-1) Meditation is one form of approach that will drive away other thoughts. The one thought of God will dominate over others. That is concentration. The object of meditation is thus the same as that of vichara.

(40-2) Q: What is the Heart?

A: It is the Seat (if such may be said) of the Self. It is not the physical heart.

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(41-1) Q: How to overcome discomforts of the body when sitting for meditation, such as mosquito nuisance?

A: You wish to gain concentration? Then whatever happens to the body, never mind. Keep up the same strain of thought, effort. The bodily discomfort will pass away: so do not think of the discomfort but keep mind firm on your meditation. If you are not strong enough to resist the attacks of mosquitoes, then how can you hope to gain realization. It is like waiting for the waves of the ocean to subside before you enter to bathe. Be strong and keep up constant effort.

(41-2) A devotee who asked for Maharshi's grace was told "You have it" felt a throb in the centre of his chest, like a slight pressure; he felt happy and extraordinarily peaceful. He asked Maharshi about it later and Maharshi said "Hold that sensation firmly whenever the mind is distracted. Your mantra-saying is no more necessary." It is called Sphurana. It is felt on several occasions such as fear excitement etc. It is really always there, felt at the heart centre. It is associated with antecedent causes and usually confounded with the body. Really it is alone and pure; it is the self. If the mind be fixed on it and the man senses it continuously and automatically, it is the realisation. It is now a foretaste of realisation.

²⁸ The original editor inserted "31" at the top of the page by hand.

(41-3) Q: How does a householder fare on the path?

A: Why do you think you are a householder? If you go out as a sanyasi, similar thoughts will haunt you that you are a Sanyassi. Whether you continue in the house or go into the forest, your mind haunts you. The ego is the source of thoughts. It creates the body and world and makes you think you are a householder. If you renounce, it will only substitute the thought Sanyassi for householder and environments of the forest for the home. But the mental obstacles are always there. Not in charge of

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(continued from the previous page) environment is help, for the mind must be got over in both places. If you can do it in the forest, why not in the home? Why change environment? Your efforts can be made even now wherever you are. The environments never abandon you. Look at me. I left home. What do you find here now? Is it different from your home? That is the reason to emphasis Sahaja Samadhi. One should be in spontaneous samadhi i.e. in his primal state, even in the midst of environments.

(42-1) Yoga is but a means to concentrate.

(42-2) Q: I find concentration difficult?

A: Go on practicing. Your concentration must come as easy as breathing. Fix yourself to some one thing and try to hold on to it. All will come right.

(42-3) Q: The six chakras are mentioned. The Jiva is said to reside in the heart. Is that so?

A: The heart need not be taken to be the fleshly one. It does not matter. We are not concerned with anything less than the Self. About that we have certainty within ourselves; no doubts or discussions. The centres are for purposes of concentration. They are interpreted symbolically. The current of Kundalini is ourselves.

(42-4) Q: Worldly life is so distracting to aspirants?

A: Do not allow yourself to be distracted. Inquire for whom there is distraction. It will not afflict you after a little practice.

(42-5) Q: But even the attempt is possible.

A: Make it and it will be found not so difficult.

(42-6) Q: The Kundalini is said to rise from spinal base?

A: That current is ourselves.

(42-7) Meditation is sticking to one thought. That single thought keeps away other thoughts. The dissipated mind is a sign of its weakness. By constant mediation it gains strength i.e. gives up its weakness of fugitive thoughts.

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(43-1) Q: A form-object for meditation is duality. Can it be God?

A: One who questions like that, had better adopt the Vichara margam. Form is not for him.

(43-2) Q: In my meditation, a blank interposes; I see no figure.

A: Of course not. Who sees the blank? You must be there. There is no consciousness witnessing the blank.

(43-3) Q: Does it mean that I must go deeper and deeper?

A: Yes; there is no moment when you are not.

(43-4) When a devotee had been taking only one very light meal a day, whilst following Swami Sivananda's regime, Maharshi sarcastically remarked at breakfast, "Why don't you leave off taking coffee also?" His implication was to rebuke the over-importance placed on diet regulation by the devotee.

(43-5) Q: What is renunciation?

A: Giving up the ego.

Q: Is it not giving up possessions?

A: The possessor too.

(43-6) Q: How to root out the sex idea?

A: By rooting out the false idea of the body being the Self. There is no sex in Self. Be the real Self. Then no sex troubles.

(43-7) Q: Can fasting cure sex?

A: Yes. But it is temporary. Mental fast is the real aid. Fasting is not an end in itself. There must be spiritual development side by side. Complete fasting makes the mind too weak. You cannot derive sufficient strength for spiritual quest. The spiritual quest must be kept up right through a fast, if it is to benefit spiritually.

(43-8) Q: Which posture is best?

A: Any one - possibly Sukha Asana. But the posture is immaterial for the Jnana³⁰ path. Posture really means steadfast location in the Self. It is internal.

(43-9) Q: What time is most suitable for meditation?

²⁹ The original editor inserted "33" at the top of the page by hand.

³⁰ "Gnana" in the original.

(continued from the previous page) A: What is time? It is only an idea. Whatever you think of it, it looks like that. Time is immaterial for Jnana³¹ path. But some times are good for beginners.

(44-1) It is the attachments which are injurious: the actions are not bad in themselves. There is no harm in eating 3-4 times. But only do not say: "I want this kind of food and not that kind," and so on. Moreover, you take these means in 12 hours of wakeful state whereas you are not eating in 12 hours of sleep. Does sleep lead you to Mukti? It is wrong to suppose that simple inactivity leads one to mukti.

(44-2) So long as one thinks that he is a sanyasi, he is not one. So long as one does not think of world-illusion, he is not worldly, but he is a real sanyasi. The patient must himself take the medicine prescribed by the doctor in order that he might be cured of his illness. The guru thus prescribes the path too, but the aspirants must himself follow it.

(44-3) Q: Is it better for reaching salvation to be married or celibate?

A: Whatever you think better. There is no difference.

(44-4) Thoughts must cease and reason disappear. Feeling is the prime factor in meditation, not reason. It out to come in the right side of chest, not in the head, because the Heart is there. It must be held tight.

(44-5) Your present experience of thought-ceasing is due to the influence of the atmosphere you are now in. Can you find the same experience away from this atmosphere? It is spasmodic. Until it becomes permanent practice is necessary. After one gets established in Truth, practice drops away naturally.

(44-6) Is meditation analytical or synthetical?

A: Analysis and synthesis are in the region of intellect. The self transcends the intellect.

(45-1) What is meditation? It is to think about one thing. Therefore in meditation try to hold on to one thought, and all the other thoughts will gradually go away. They may be present for some time but if you resolutely hold to your single thought, they

³¹ "Gnana" in the original.

³² The original editor inserted "35" at the top of the page by hand.

will not trouble you. Our minds are weak through habit, unable to concentrate. We must make the mind strong so as to keep one thought.

(45-2) Absence of mental operations is Solitude.

(45-3) There are different postures according to the different grades. The best posture is to be in the Self! All these questions of posture and Hatha Yoga arise only to those who have the body consciousness, i.e. think "I am the body." However the yogis say "Adopt any posture in which by experience you find meditation easiest." But you may not necessarily have to adopt a yoga posture. (I told M that many of these are impossible for a European to adopt). If you find sitting in a chair, or walking, easiest for you to meditate, these are the right postures for you. Hatha Yoga is for beginners. Find the Self and remain in it, and you will not be concerned about postures."

(45-4) Q: Why is it so difficult to practice meditation and conquer the mind?

A: Because of the Past Vasanas which prevent us. But we must go on trying (tendencies etc. from former births is called vasanas)

(45-5) Those who take opium or alcoholic liquor are unconsciously seeking the blissful thoughtlessness of the real self. They get an initiation of that bliss by drugs but afterwards they must resume their normal state and the craving comes back stronger till they become chronic addicts and slaves. To all such artificial rises there must be a fall back.

(45-6) If the mind is subdued, everything is conquered.

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(46-1) Where is renunciation? It is not outside of us, it is here (pointing to the heart). Where is solitude? In the mind. Alexander Selkirk was alone on the island but he wanted to get away. So that was not solitude for him. We must achieve these things within ourselves. The kingdom of Heaven is to be found within us.

(46-2) Q: If the efforts at meditation are hindered through past karma what remedy can there be?

A: It is self-stultifying to drown oneself in such fanciful fears. Fate and past karma relate to the external world. Dive boldly within you. These will not hinder you. It is the thinking of hindrances that forms a serious hindrance.

(46-3) We have all to return to our source. Every human being is seeking its source and must one day come to it. We came from the Within; we have gone outward; now we must turn inward. What is meditation? It is our natural self. We have covered ourself over with thoughts and passions. To throw them off we must concentrate on one thought – the Self.

(46-4) When is Mowna (silence) necessary? It is but one of the aids used to attain realisation. Once realisation is complete, it can be cast aside for it will be of no further use. Realisation is itself Mowna. Speech is regarded by mownies as a waste of energy, which latter they are directing inwards towards the Self.

(46-5) One method of securing the temporary cessation of mental activities (manolaya) is association with sages. They are adepts in samadhi and it has become easy, natural and perpetual with them. Those moving with them closely, and in sympathetic contact, gradually absorb the samadhi habit from them.

(46-6) What is mental conception except it be, meditation? Vocal japa becomes mental which the same as meditation.

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[37]³³

(47-1) Maharshi remarked sarcastically to a yogi who sat with eyes closed as steady as a rock for a couple hours at a time "Do you really want to learn meditation? Mere posture is not enough; it is where your mind is. So learn from that young man over there" and pointed to a young graduate who had left Annamalai University with a degree but had been unemployed for nearly a year. He was now haunting the Ashram constantly. Maharshi continued, "He sits there with his eyes closed too but his whole mind is centred on finding employment. He prays continually in the silence to me to give him a job. But where can I give people jobs?" Maharshi's point was that the mind's own posture was all-important.

(47-2) Q: How can you say that the Heart is on the right when anatomists find it on the left?

A: It is not denied that the physical organ is on the left; quite correct. But the Heart of which I speak is on the right only. It is my experience. No authority is required. Still you can find confirmation in the Sita Upanishad. There is a mantra in the latter saying so.

(47-3) The whole cosmos is combined in one pinhole in the Heart. A tiny hole in the heart remains always closed and is opened by Vichara (investigation into the Self). The result is "I-I" consciousness, the same as Samadhi.

(47-4) Q: How can the all immanent God reside in the Heart?

A: Do we not reside in one place? Do you not say you are in your body? Similarly, God is said to reside in the Heart. The Heart is not a place. Some name is mentioned for the place of God because we think we are in the body. This kind of instruction is meant for those who can appreciate only relative knowledge. Being

³³ The original editor inserted "37" at the top of the page by hand.

immanent everywhere, there is no place for God. Because we think we are in the body, we also believe that we are born. However we do not think

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THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

(48-1) of the body, of God, or of method of realisation in our deep slumber. Yet in our waking state, we hold on to the body and think we are in it. Paramatma is that from which the body is born, in which it lives and into which it resolves. We however think that we reside within the body. Hence such instruction is given. The instruction means: "Look Within." The Heart is not physical. Meditation should not be on the right or the left. Meditation should be on the Self. Everyone knows "I am." Who is the I? It will be neither within or without, neither on the right nor the left. "I am" that is all. Heart is the centre from which everything springs. Because you now see the world, the body, etc. it is said that there is a centre for them called Heart. But when actually in it, Heart is neither centre nor circumference for there is nothing else then.

(48-2) One day a group of musicians came to play to Maharshi. The instruments included flute, violin and harmonium. Afterwards there was a discussion as to the merits of the various instruments, which was most pleasing etc. and the Maharshi said that he himself listened to nothing but the harmonium as its steady, monotonous, one-pointed rhythm helped to keep one centred in the Self.

(48-3) What are you? Are you the body? No. You are pure consciousness. Retirement means abidance in the self, nothing more. It is not leaving one set of surroundings to become entangled in another nor even leaving the concrete world and wallowing in the mental world. The birth of the son, his death etc. are also in the Self. The question of compatibility does not arise.

(48-4) The pet squirrel was awaiting an opportunity to run out. Maharshi said: "All wish to rush out. There is no limit to going out. Happiness lies within and not without."

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THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

[39]³⁴

(49-1) LIGHT: Q: What is the significance of the spot between the eye-brows?

A: That is mentioned as if to say: "Do not see with your eyes." The mind functions both as light and objects if divested of things the light alone will remain over.

Q: But must you know there is such light?

³⁴ The original editor inserted "39" at the top of the page by hand.

A: Sight or cognition pertains to the present state because there is light. Light is the essential requisite for sight. It is plain in our daily life. Among the lights, the sunlight is the most important. Hence they speak of the glory of millions of suns.

Q: How does it affect the subject whether the objects are seen or not?

A: If the light i.e. the cogniser or the consciousness is seen, there will be no object to be seen. Pure light, i.e. consciousness, will alone remain over. It is not enough that light is seen: it is also necessary to have the mind engaged in a single activity, e.g. the elephant trunk and chain.

(49-2) Q: Why is regulation of breath necessary?

A: Concentration of breath or its regulation is only for controlling the mind so that the mind may not wander about.

(49-3) Q: Is there a difference between internal and external samadhis?

A: Yes, there is. External samadhi is stillness while witnessing the world, without reacting to it from within. The external samadhi is like a still sea, and the internal samadhi is like a steady flame. Sahaja samadhi is the identity of the flame with the ocean.

(49-4) Q: Does not one lose his body consciousness in samadhi? If so how can there be a difference?

A: What is body-consciousness? Analyse it. There must be a body and consciousness limited to it which together make up the body consciousness. These must lie in another consciousness which is absolute and unaffected. Hold to it. That is

(continued from the previous page) samadhi. It exists when there is no body-consciousness because it transcends the latter; it also exists when there is the body consciousness. So it is always there. What does it matter whether the body is lost or retained? When lost, it is internal samadhi. When retained it is external samadhi. That is all.

(50-1) Q: But the mind does not sink into Samadhi even for a second?

A: Strong conviction is necessary that "I am the Self," transcending the mind and the phenomena.

(50-2) Q: Nevertheless, the mind proves a cork at attempts to sink it.

A: What does it matter if the mind is active? It is so, after all, on the substratum of the Self. Hold to the Self even during the mental activities.

(50-3) Q: I cannot go within sufficiently deep?

A: It is wrong to say so. Where are you now, if not in the Self? Where should you go? All that is necessary is the stern belief that you are the Self. Say rather that the other activities throw a veil on you.

(50-4) Q: Is there any harm in my continuing Japa in this manner or is it essential that I should only put the bare "Who am I" enquiry?

A: No, you can trace the root of any thought or Japa or mantra and continue to do so until you have an answer to your query. That is in itself meditation in the right direction leading you to the same goal as the "Who am I" enquiry.

(50-5) Man only requires one solid meal daily at mid-day, with light liquid refreshment morning and evening.

(50-6) The best posture is to plant to Guru firmly in your heart.

(50-7) Q: How is the mind to be stilled?

A: Vichara alone will do.

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THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

[41]³⁵

(51-1) You see the body in the Heart, you see the world in it, there is nothing separate from it, so all kinds of effort are located there only.

(51-2) There are different routes to Tiruvannamalai but Tiruvannamalai is the same by whatever route it is reached. Similarly the approach to the Self varies according to the personality. Yet the Self is the same.

(51-3) Q: Why did you run away from home as a youth when you do no yourself tell people to renounce?

A: Some power took me away.

(51-4) It won't do to give up work. It is only when a man has realized that the world ceases to exist for him. It does not mean that we out to give up our work.

(51-5) Q: Why the mind cannot be turned in spite of repeated attempts?

A: It is done by Abhyas (practice) and Vairagya (determination) and that succeeds only slowly. The mind having been so long used to go outwards, is not easily turned inwards. A cow accustomed to graze thievishly on others' estates, is not easily confined to its shed. However its keeper tempts it with luscious grass and fine fodder. It refuses the first time; then takes a bit, but its innate tendency to stray asserts itself and it slips away. On being repeatedly tempted by the owner, it

³⁵ The original editor inserted "41" at the top of the page by hand.

accustoms itself to the stall; finally even if let loose, it would not stray. Similarly with the mind. If once it finds its happiness within, it will not dwell outward.

(51-6) Q: How do all thoughts cease, when mind is in the Heart?

A: By force of will, with strong faith in the Master's teaching to that effect.

(51-7) Thought life is centred round the brain, whither we may trace it and hence the ego. There it is fed by blood from the heart, hence thoughts ultimately issue from the heart. In self-enquiry

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(continued from the previous page) meditation is a neutral ground of sleep, coma, faint, etc. in which the mental operations do not exist, while consciousness of self does not prevail. The mind is to be liberated from its restlessness first. It must be pacified and freed from distractions; trained to look inward habitually. The first step is hence indifference to external world; next a habit of introspection. Realization of the ephemeral nature of external phenomena leads us to this indifference. Contempt is thus bred for wealth, fame, pleasure etc. Then the I-thought must be inspected for enquiry and its source in the Heart traced.

(52-1) Q: Is there thought in Samadhi?

A: There is only the feeling that 'I AM' and no other thoughts.

Q: Is not 'I am' a thought?

A: The ego-less 'I am' is not thought, it is realization.

(52-2) A man who can remain still for a number of years in one place, mastering the out-going impulses of nature, can become a true adept sage, for it is a Herculean feat, and brings the rewards of Nature's conquering.

(52-3) Q: Should I get away from my wife and family?

A: What harm do they do? First find out what you are.

Q: Should one give up home, wife wealth etc; all being samsara?

A: First learn what samsara is. Is all that samsara? Are then people who live in their midst not to get realisation?

Q: Is not Brahmacharya necessary?

A: Brahmacharya means 'living in Brahman.' It has no connection with celibacy as commonly understood. A real Brahmachari finds bliss in Brahman, the same as Self.

Q: But celibacy is a sine-qua-non for Yoga?

A: So it is. It is an aid to realisation among so many other aids.

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(53-1) Q: Is not Brahmacharya indispensable? Can a married man realise the Self?

A: Certainly, married or unmarried, a man can realize the Self, because it is here and now. It is a matter of the fitness of the mind. Have there not been men living among wife and family and yet getting realisation?

(53-2) Q: Do you have nocturnal emissions?

A: Yes. It is due to food.

(53-3) "Be still and know that I am God." As soon as you try to obey this counsel, there will start a regular war with your tendencies, with ingrained natural habits.

(53-4) Q: Do you approve of continence?

A: A Brahmachari is he who dwells in Brahma. Then there is no question of desires any more.

(53-5) Q: At Sri Aurobindo's Ashram there is a rigid rule that married couples are permitted to live there on the condition that they have no sex intercourse.

A: What use is that? If it does exist in the mind, what use to force people to abstain?

Q: Is marriage a bar to spiritual progress?

A: Householder's life is not a bar, but the householder must do his utmost to practice self-control. If a man has a strong desire for higher than then the sex tendency will fall off. When the mind is destroyed the other desires are destroyed also.

(53-6) Abidance in God is the only true Asana.

(53-7) When we make Tapas our mind is fixed on what we utter. What is Tapas for? It is for Self Realisation. One requires a form to contemplate. But it is not enough for can any one keep looking at an image always? So the image must be implemented by Japa. Japa helps fixing the mind on the image, when added to gazing on it. The results of these efforts is the concentration of mind finally reaching the goal. Some are satisfied with the name of the image. Ever form

(54-1) Must have a name. That name denotes all the qualities of God. Constant Japan puts off all other thoughts and fixes the mind. That is the Tapas wanted. The question what Tapas is, was asked in order to know what purpose to serve. It will take the form required for the purpose. Are not physical austerities also Tapas?

³⁶ The original editor inserted "43" at the top of the page by hand.

They are due to vairagya. I have seen a man with his arm lifted all the time of his life.

(54-2) Q: Why should one afflict his body in such a way?

A: You think it is affliction whereas it is a vow for other man to whom it is an achievement and a pleasure. Japa must be done until it becomes natural. It starts with effort and is continued until it proceeds of itself. When natural it is realisation. Japa may be done even while engaged in other work. Bakti, Vichara, Japa, all of them finally resolve themselves into that one single Reality. They are only different shapes of an effort to keep out the unreality. Unreality is an obsession at present. Reality is our true nature. We are wrongly persisting in the unreality, namely, thought and worldly activities. Cessation of these will reveal the truth. Our attempts are directed towards keeping them out. Although it looks as if we are thinking of the Reality, what we do really amounts to the removal of the obstacles for the revelation of our true Being. Meditation is thus a path to our true nature.

(54-3) Q: How can the rebellious mind be brought under control?

A: Either seek its source so that it may disappear or surrender, that it may be struck down.

(54-4) Abidance in God is the only true asana.

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THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

[45]³⁷

(55-1) SAVIKALPA SAMADHI EXPLAINED

External:

The mind jumps from one object to another. Keep it steady, fixed on the reality behind them.

Internal:

The mind is afflicted by desire, lust, anger, etc. See where-from they arise and how they have their being. Hold on to their source.

External:

There are external phenomena which are said to have their origin from the single Reality. Search for It and hold on to it. Merging in the one Reality underlying all the phenomena and remaining unaware of the transitory manifestations.

This state is compared to waveless ocean whose matters are still and placid.

Internal:

There are manners of thoughts which rise up from the reality within and manifest themselves. Hold on to that Reality. Merging in the Inmost being which is the One Reality giving rise to all thoughts etc. and remaining unaware of anything else.

³⁷ The original editor inserted "45" at the top of the page by hand.

This state is compared to a flame unagitated by current of air but burning quiet and steady.

(55-2) Q: It is said that one remaining in Nirvikalpa

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THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

(continued from the previous page) samadhi 21 days must necessarily give up the physical body?

A: Samadhi means passing beyond the non-identification of the body with the Self is a foregone conclusion. There are said to be persons who have been immersed in Nirvikalpa Samadhi for a thousand years or more.

(i) Holding on to Reality is Samadhi.

(ii) Holding on to Reality with effort is Savikalpa Samadhi

(iii) Merging on to Reality and remaining unaware of the world is Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

(iv) Merging in Ignorance and remaining unaware of the world is sleep (Head bends but not in Samadhi).

(v) Remaining in the primal, pure, natural state without effort is Sahaja Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

(56-1) Q: People practising meditation etc. are said to get new diseases, at any rate, I feel some pain. This is stated to be the tests of God. Is this true?

A: There is no Bhagavan outside of you and no test is therefore instituted. What you believe as a test or as a new disease is a result of spiritual practices is really the strain that is now put upon your nerves, etc. of the five senses. The mind which was hitherto operating through the nadis to sense external objects and had thus maintained a link between itself and the organs of perception etc. is now required to withdraw from the link and this action of withdrawal may naturally cause strain, a strain attendant with pain. If you will continue your meditation, bestowing your sole thought on understanding yourself or self-realisation, all these will go. There is no greater remedy than this continuous yoga or union with God, or Atman.

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THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

[47]³⁸

(57-1) Q: Is solitude necessary for a Jnani?³⁹

A: One might be in the midst of the world and maintain serenity, such a one is in solitude. Another may stay in lonely forests and be unable to control his mind; he can't be said to be in solitude. A man attached to desire cannot get solitude, wherever he may be; a detached man is always in solitude. Even one who is

³⁸ The original editor inserted "47" at the top of the page by hand.

³⁹ "Gnani" in the original.

working with detachment is working in solitude, and his work does not affect him. When work is performed with attachment it is a shackle. Solitude is not in forests only. It can be had in the midst of worldly occupations.

(57-2) Once Maharshi noticed Mr. G. Sitting in his rocking chair and remarked: "What cause for anxiety in such luxuries! If another will take that seat, the owner would not relish it. Is rocking really so pleasant? It is simply a wasteful thought of pleasure. Siva made over all His own possessions to Vishnu and wandered away in forests and wilderness and cemeteries and lived on food begged by Him. In His view, non-possession is higher in the scale of happiness than possession of things. The higher happiness is to be free from anxieties. Possessions create anxieties, such as their safeguarding, their utilisation. Non-possession does not bring anxieties in its train. Therefore Siva resigned everything to Vishnu and He Himself went away happy. Divestment of possessions is the highest happiness.

(57-3) The pet squirrel was awaiting an opportunity to run out. Maharshi said: "All wish to rush out. There is no limit to going out. Happiness lies within and not without."

(57-4) During my trance related in "Self Realisation," a light came from one side erasing the world-vision in its course until it spread all round, then the vision of the world was completely gone. I felt the muscular organ of the heart had

(continued from the previous page) stopped work. I could understand that the body was like a corpse, that the circulation of blood has stopped and the body became blue and motionless Vasudeva Sastri embraced me (the body), wept over my death, but I could not speak. All the time I was feeling that the Heart Centre on the right was working as well as ever. This state continued 20 minutes. Then suddenly something shot out from the right to the left resembling a rocket bursting in the air. The blood circulation recommenced and normal condition was restored. The Heart is thus the centre of the body. It can be felt in the absence of the body, but it is said to be a centre because we have been accustomed to think that we remain in the body. In real fact, the body and all else are in that centre only. In this experience I was not, as stated in the book, unconscious but was all along aware. I could feel the action of the physical heart stop and equally the action of the Heart centre unimpaired.

(58-1) Q: The Heart is said to be on the right, on the left, or in the centre. With such differences of opinion, how are we to meditate on Hridaya?

A: You know that you are! And it is a fact Dhyana is by you, or you and in you. It must go on where you are. It cannot be outside of you. So you are the centre of Dhyana and that is the Heart. A location is however given to it, only with reference to the body. Where are you? You are in the body and not out of it. Yet not the whole body. Though you pervade the whole body, still you admit a centre

where from all your thoughts start and wherein they subside. Even when the limbs are amputated, you are still there; and with defective senses, you are still there. So a centre of consciousness must be admitted. That is called the Heart. Heart is only another name for the Self. The doubts arise only when you identify it with something tangible and physical. Heart is no conception, no object for meditation. But it is as the seat of meditation, the Self and is alone.

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THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

[49]⁴⁰

(59-1) Q: Is concentration one of the Sadhanas?

A: Concentration is not thinking of one thing. It is on the other hand putting off all other thoughts which obstruct the vision of our true nature. All our efforts are only directed to lifting the veil of ignorance. Now it appears difficult to quell the thoughts, but in the regenerate state, it will be found more difficult to call in thoughts. Why should we think of these things? There is the self alone. Thoughts can function only if there are objects. But there are no objects. How can thoughts arise at all? Habit makes us believe that it is difficult to cease thinking. If the error is found, one would not be a fool enough to exert oneself unnecessarily.

(59-2) Q: But the mind slips away from our control?

A: Be it so. Do not think of it. When you de-collect, bring it back and turn it inward. That is enough. No one succeeds without efforts. Mind control is not one's birth-right. The successful few owe their success to their perseverance.

(59-3) [M Said to a bookworm: That which you seek is inside yourself. The books themselves are outside. Then why look in the wrong direction by studying them?] ⁴¹

(59-4) [Q: What does yoga mean?

A: You are the seeker. Is the 'something' with which union is sought apart from you? You are already aware of Self. Be that. Seek it out and it will expand to infinity.] ⁴²

(59-5) [Q: Is there any drug to promote meditation?

A: No, because afterwards the taker of it would be unable to meditate without using it habitually.] ⁴³

⁴⁰ The original editor inserted "49" at the top of the page by hand.

⁴¹ The original editor inserted "M Said to a bookworm: That which you seek is inside yourself. The books themselves are outside. Then why look in the wrong direction by studying them?" by hand

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⁴³ The original editor inserted "Q: Is there any drug to promote meditation?

A: No, because afterwards the taker of it would be unable to meditate without using it habitually." by hand

(59-6) [Q: How to meditate?

A: All you need learn is to just close your eyes and turn inwards.]⁴⁴

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THE MEANING OF MYSTICISM

Chapter 5: The Meaning of Philosophy

61

THE MEANING OF PHILOSOPHY

[51]⁴⁵

(61-1) Do not tell this Path to all. Only the few who manifest an anxiety to know Truth and an eagerness to find it, should be told. With all others be silent and keep it secret.

(61-2) Q: Why are there so many methods mentioned? For instances, Sri Ramakrishna says that Bhakti is the best means for Mukti.

A: It is according to the standpoint of the aspirant. Krishna begins saying (ch.2.12) Never was there a time when I did not exist nor though nor these kings of men. Never will there be a time hereafter when any of us shall cease to be. Because that which is unreal never exists. The unreal never is, the Real never is not. All that ever was, even now is and will ever be. Later on Krishna continued: I taught this truth to Vivasvat, he taught it to Manu etc. (ch.4.1). Arjuna asked how can it be, your birth was later than theirs. Then Krishna answered (ch.4.4) Many a birth have I passed through, O Arjuna and so hast thou. I know them all, but thou knowest not hine. I tell you what happened in those past births. Look, that Krishna who began by saying there was not I, nor wert thou, nor these kings, says now that he had several births before. Krishna does not contradict himself, though it looks so. He conforms to the outlook of Arjuna and speaks to him from his level. There is a parallel passage in the Bible where Jesus says that he had taught the truth to Abraham and Abraham to Moses and so on. The teachings of the sages are suited to the time, place and other surroundings.

(61-3) When a man surrenders himself as a slave to the Divine Lord he realizes at the end that all his actions are the actions of God. He loses his mine-ness. This is what is meant by "doing the will of God." When a man realizes that he has lost his ahamkara (I-ness) and that he is not different from Iswara, he is a Jnani.⁴⁶ This

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THE MEANING OF PHILOSOPHY

⁴⁴ The original editor inserted "Q: How to meditate?"

A: All you need learn is to just close your eyes and turn inwards." by hand

⁴⁵ The original editor inserted "51" at the top of the page by hand.

⁴⁶ "Gnani" in the original.

(continued from the previous page) is Vedanta; the former is Siddhanta. But see! The goal is the same.

(62-1) There are two ways open to one: Bhakti and Jnana.⁴⁷ A bhakta surrenders to God and rests secure in His protection. A Jnani⁴⁸ knows that there is nothing beside the Self and so remains happy. One must adhere firmly to either of these courses.

(62-2) This path is the highest of all and suited only for advanced aspirants. Those who follow the other paths are not ripe for this until they become advanced on their own paths. Thus it is really by the Grace, whether Guru, Self, etc. that they are brought to this highest path. Of course, they might have practised the other paths in former existences and thus were born ripe for this one; others try the other ways and after progressing finally turn to Self enquiry. But the last laps of all paths are the same – surrender of the ego.

(62-3) This is the only direct method. The other methods will also ultimately lead everyone to this method of the investigation of the Self.

(62-4) The other methods are meant for those who cannot take to the investigation of the Self.

(62-5) Q: What kind of teaching is suitable to young men? They would not understand the naked truth?

A: Their attention might be drawn to the Truth from time to time in an appropriate manner.

(62-6) Q: What does Maharshi say about Hatha yoga or Tantric practices?

A: Maharshi does not criticise any of the extant methods. All are good for purification of the mind, because the purified mind alone is capable of grasping his method and stick to its practice.

Q: Which is the best of the different yogas?

A: See stanza 10 of the Upadesa Saram. To remain in the Self is all these in their highest sense.

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THE MEANING OF PHILOSOPHY

[53]⁴⁹

(63-1) The other yogas are inferior paths: this is the superior and direct path.

(63-2) All other paths are for those who are incapable of self-enquiry. They also lead you ultimately to Vichara.

⁴⁷ "Gnana" in the original.

⁴⁸ "Gnani" in the original.

⁴⁹ The original editor inserted "53" at the top of the page by hand.

(63-3) Q: Why is Atmavichara necessary?

A: If you do not make Atmavichara, then Lokavichara creeps in. That which is not seen is sought but not that which is obvious. When once you have found what you seek for, enquiry also ceases and you rest in it.

(63-4) Q: What mediation will help me?

A: No meditation on an object is helpful, for this reason. You must learn to realise the subject and object as one, and in the meditating on an object, whether concrete or abstract, you are destroying that sense of oneness, and creating duality. Meditate only on the Self. Try to realise that the body is not you, the emotions are not you, the intellect is not you. When all these are stilled, you will find – Something else is there; hold that and it will reveal itself.

Q: But when I have stilled all I almost fall asleep?

A: That does not matter. Put yourself into the condition as deep as sleep, and then watch: be asleep consciously: then there is only the one Consciousness.

Q: Is Yoga a good method of approach?

A: In the end there was only one approach to the Goal, and that was through the realisation of the Self, so why waste time on other roads which at the best will only lead on to the final path; better to be on the final path itself all the time, than on an auxiliary road. Meditate on what the Self is – that is all, there is nothing else but to find the answer to that. See the Self in all; act automatically, so to speak and let 'it' and it always will. Do not look to results do the right and leave it.

Chapter 6: Unlisted

64

CHAPTER 6

(64-1) Doubt or uncertainty is for the mind or intellect, and has no place in that perfection of Realisation.

(64-2) Pride of learning and desire for appreciation are condemned, not the learning itself. Education and learning leading to search for Truth and humility is good.

(64-3) Q: When is all our intellectual progress worth noting?

A: Whose intellect is progressing? Find out.

Q: What are the hindrances to the realisation of reality?

A: Memory chiefly, habits of thought and accumulated tendencies.

Q: How to get rid of these hindrances?

A: Find out the Self through meditation in this manner. Trace every thought back to its origin, which is the mind; never allow thought to go on, if it does, it will be unending; take it back to its source which is mind, and they (thoughts and mind) will die of inaction, for the mind exists only by thought, take away thought and there is no mind. As each doubt and depression arises ask yourself, "Who is it that doubts? Who is it that is depressed?" Tear everything away until there is nothing but the source left. Live only in the present.

Q: How can I develop?

A: "Why go on pruning the ego? That is just what it wants - to be the centre of attraction!"

Chapter 7: Characteristics of Philosophic Discipline

65

PHILOSOPHIC DISCIPLINE

[55]⁵⁰

(65-1) Q: Why is it sometimes I find concentration on the Self so easy, and at other times hopelessly difficult?

A: Because of Vasanas. But really it is easy, since we are the Self. All we have to do is to remember that. We keep on forgetting it, and thus think we are this body, or this ego. If the will and desire to remember Self are strong enough, they will eventually overcome Vasanas. There must be a great battle going on inwardly all the time until Self is realised. This battle is symbolically spoken of in scriptural writings as the fight between God and Satan. In our Sruti, it is the Mahabharata, where the "asuras" represent our bad thoughts and the "devas" our elevating ones.

(65-2) Q: How can one quicken this coming of Realisation?

A: As one strives to know the true 'I' the attachment to objects, the bad and degrading thoughts gradually drop off. The more one does not forget the self, the more do elevating qualities become ours. Realisation will come eventually.

(65-3) Q: Why does the Upanishad say "He whom the Atman chooses, to him alone does It reveal Itself, not to others?" Does not this seem arbitrary?

A: No. It is correct. It chooses those only who devote themselves to it, who become its devotees. Such it draws inwards to itself. One must turn inward to find the Atman. He who thinks of It, It will draw to itself.

(65-4) All such thoughts as "Attainment is hard" or "Self realisation is far from me," or "I have got many difficulties to overcome to know the Reality." should be given up, as they are obstacles: they are created by this false self, ego. They are untrue. Do not doubt that you are the Reality; live in that understanding. Never question it by referring your realisation of it to

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PHILOSOPHIC DISCIPLINE

(continued from the previous page) some future time. It is because people are victimised and hypnotised by such false thoughts that the Gita says that few out of millions realise the Self.

(66-1) The order of Asramas was established as a general principle, i.e. to regulate the gradual development of the ordinary run of humanity. But in the case of one

⁵⁰ The original editor inserted "55" at the top of the page by hand.

highly mature and fully ripe for Atman Vichara there is no graduated development. In this case Jnana Vichara, i.e. the Self inquiry and the blooming of Jnana are immediate and quick.

(66-2) Q: Am I worthy to be a devotee?

A: Everyone can be a devotee. Spiritual food is common to all and never denied to anyone.

(66-3) To a despondent devotee: The quest must be made "Who is despondent?" It is the phantom of the ego which falls prey to such thoughts. In sleep the person is not afflicted. Sleep state is the normal one. Quest and find out. Does one not find some kind of peace in meditation? That is the sign of progress, that peace will be deeper and more prolonged with continued practice. It will also lead to the goal.

(66-4) In-as-much as you say that you are ignorant, you are wise and it makes your way easier for the removal of ignorance. Is he a mad man who says that he is mad?

(66-5) Control of desire and meditation are interdependent. They must go side by side. Abhyas and Vairagya bring about the result. Vairagya is to check the mind being projected out: Abhyas is to keep it turned inward. There is the struggle between control and meditation. It is going on constantly within. Meditation will in due course be successful.

(66-6) If you seek God with your whole heart, then you may be assured that grace of God is also seeking you.

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PHILOSOPHIC DISCIPLINE

[57]⁵¹

(67-1) Q: When we fall from the path what is to be done?

A: It will come all right in the end. There is the steady determination that gets you on your feet again after a downfall or break. Gradually the obstacles get weaker and your current stronger. Every thing comes right in the end. Steady determination is the thing required.

(67-2) Q: The tendencies distract me. Can they be cast off?

A: Yes. Others have done so. Therefore believe it. They did so because they believed they could. It can be done by concentration on That which is free from predispositions and yet is their core.

(67-3) If the longing is there, Realisation will be forced even if you do not want it.

(67-4) Q: Is it necessary to develop qualities?

⁵¹ The original editor inserted "57" at the top of the page by hand.

A: It is only for beginners that they are told to develop different qualities. For the advanced it is enough to look into their nature. This is the direct method. All other paths there is the ego involved. This alone answers the question of what the ego is. Yoga Vasistha says that the quest Who Am I is the axe which laid to the roots of the ego, destroys it.

(67-5) Q: I fear that it is no easy thing to reach that ultimate goal?

A: Why stultify yourself by fearing or concerning of the success or failure of your course. Push on.

(67-6) Give yourself up to deep meditation. Throw away all other considerations of life. The calculative life will not be the crowned with spiritual success.

(67-7) Yes, complete surrender is impossible in the beginning. Partial surrender is certainly possible for all; in course of time that will lead to complete surrender. Well, if partial surrender be impossible what can be done? There is then no

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PHILOSOPHIC DISCIPLINE

(continued from the previous page) peace of mind. You are helpless to bring it about. It can be done only by surrender.

(68-1) In fact there may not be found any single individual in the world possessing all the qualities in perfection necessary for a Mumukshu as mentioned in Yoga Sutras etc. Still pursuit of Atmagnana should not be abandoned. Everyone is the Self by Aparoksha, although he is not aware, but identifies the Self with the body and feels miserable.

(68-2) Whenever you get that thought of difficulty, dispose of it altogether by trying to find out whence it arises.

(68-3) Q: Can I realise the Self? It looks so difficult.

A: You already are the Self. Therefore realisation is for everyone. Realisation knows no difference in the aspirants. This very doubt if I can realise or the feeling I have not realised, are the obstacles. Be free from these also.

Q: Nevertheless, unless I have the experience how can I be free from these conflicting thoughts?

A: These are also in the mind. They are there because you have identified yourself with the body. If this false identity drops away, ignorance will vanish and truth be revealed.

(68-4) Q: Do you accept the parable of Jesus where the woman seeks for lost coin till it is found?

A: Why not? In that parable we know God seeks after souls. His grace is always available for human soul. Only man must accept it. You know the sun

shines. If you shut the eyes and say there is no sun, that is your fault, not the sun's. If grace of God is not realized by you, it does not mean that God is unwilling but that you have not surrendered yourself completely to Him. God is Grace.

(68-5) According to Pakkuvam (state of development, preparedness) you will realize grace.

Chapter 10: Physiology of Sensation and Perception

69

PHYSIOLOGY OF SENSATION AND PERCEPTION
[59]⁵²

(69-1) Maharshi said to me: "What is it that sees? The physical eyes? No. It is the Mind. When the mind looks through the eyes, then it sees; when it withdraws, it sees nothing.

(69-2) [Q: Has the body any use for the Self?

A: Yes, it is through the body's help that Self is realised.]⁵³

Q: What about diet?

A: Food affects the mind, makes it more satvic (alive, vibrant, rhythmic), for the practice of any kind of Yoga, Vegetarianism is absolutely necessary.

Q: Could one receive Spiritual Illumination whilst eating flesh foods?

A: 'Yes,' but abandon them gradually and accustom yourself to satvic foods. However, once you have attained illumination it will make less difference what you eat, as, on a great fire it is immaterial what fuel is added.

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PHYSIOLOGY OF SENSATION AND PERCEPTION

Chapter 11: Illusions of Space Time and Externality

71

ILLUSIONS OF SPACE TIME AND EXTERNALITY
[61]⁵⁵

(71-1) On being presented with some new Calendars, Maharshi said: You bring a new calendar to help me remember the days, when I often have serious doubts as to what year it is. Time is all one to me.

(71-2) I said to Maharshi that a certain appointment I had was a waste of time. He smiled: "There is no time. How can you waste it?"

⁵² The original editor inserted "59" at the top of the page by hand.

⁵³ The original editor inserted "Q: Has the body any use for the Self?

A: Yes, it is through the body's help that Self is realised." By hand

⁵⁴ Blank page

⁵⁵ The original editor inserted "61" at the top of the page by hand.

(71-3) Q: Does distance have any effect on guru's grace?

A: Time and space are within us.

(71-4) Time is only an idea. There is only the Reality. Whatever you think of it, it looks like that. If you call it time, it is time. If you call it existence, it is existence, and some after calling it time divide it into days, months and years. The Reality cannot be new. It must exist even now; and it does exist. There is in that state, no present, nor past, nor future. It is beyond time. It is ever there.

(71-5) Sri Krishna says "I am Time." Can Time have a shape? Even the universal vision shown by Krishna to Arjuna on the Physical plane is absurd. The seer is also in the seen. Even a mesmerist [can]⁵⁶ make one see strange scenes. You call this a trick but the other divine. Why is this difference? Anything seen cannot be real. That is the truth.

(71-6) [Q: A new arrival (PB) said: "I am going to stay in the East 3 or 4 years this time."

A: Don't think of the morrow, was Jesus' saying.]⁵⁷

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ILLUSIONS OF SPACE TIME AND EXTERNALITY

Chapter 12: Doctrine of Mentalism

73

DOCTRINE OF MENTALISM

[63]⁵⁹

(73-1) The Universe is only an idea. It is the heart that takes all these forms. That is walled the Witness wherein no ego or sense of personality remains.

(73-2) Appar (a saint) was decrepit and old, yet began to travel to Kailas. Another old man appeared on the way and tried to dissuade him from the attempt saying that it was difficult to reach there. Appar was obstinate. The stranger then asked him to dip in a tank close by. Appar did so and Kailas then and there. Where did this happen? In Tiruvayyar, a place 9 miles from Tanjore. If Tiruvayyar be truly Kailas it must appear so to others also. But Appar alone found it so. Similarly other places of pilgrimage in the South are said to be the abodes of Siva. Devotees found them so. True from their standpoints. Everything is within. There is nothing without.

⁵⁶ The original editor changed "cannot" to "can" by hand.

⁵⁷ The original editor inserted "Q: A new arrival (PB) said: "I am going to stay in the East 3 or 4 years this time."

A: Don't think of the morrow, was Jesus' saying." By hand

⁵⁸ Blank page

⁵⁹ The original editor inserted "63" at the top of the page by hand.

(73-3) The spirit is wrongly identifying itself with the gross body. The body has been projected by the mind; the mind itself has originated from the spirit. If the wrong identification ceases, there will be peace and permanent unbroken bliss. Life is existence which is your Self. That is life eternal. Otherwise, can you imagine a time when you are not? That life is not conditioned by the body and you wrongly identify your existence with that of the body. You are life unconditioned. These bodies attach themselves to you as mental projections and you are afflicted by the 'I-am-the-body' idea. If this idea ceases, you are your self.

(73-4) You exist in sleep even without the body. Then ego arises, and then the mind which projects the body exists, you say that it was born and that it will die and thus transfer it to the Self saying that you are born and that you will die. In fact you exist without the body, in sleep; as you exist now along with the body also. The Self can exist apart from the body. "I-am-the-body"

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DOCTRINE OF MENTALISM

(continued from the previous page) thought is ignorance; that the body is not apart from the Self, is therefore knowledge and ignorance. The body is a mental projection.

(74-1) The body thought is distracting from the Self. For whom is the body or birth? It is not for the Self, the spirit. It is for the non-self which imagines itself separate.

(74-2) Just as a miser keeps his treasures always with himself and never parts with them, so the Self safeguards the vasanas in that which is closest to itself, i.e. within the Heart. The heart radiates vitality to the brain and thus causes its function. The Vasanas are enclosed in the heart in their subtlest form, and later projected on the brain, which reflects them with high magnification. This is how the world is made to go on and this is why the world is nothing more than a cinema show.

(74-3) The world is not external. The sense impressions cannot have an outer origin, because the world can be cognised only by consciousness. The world does not say it exists; it is you who say it exists; it is your impression. Yet this impression is not unbroken. In sleep the world is not cognised; it exists not for a sleeping man. Therefore the world is the result of the ego. Find out the ego. Its source is the final goal.

(74-4) The world is a result of your mind. Know your mind.

(74-5) The world is only phenomena appearing on that pure consciousness. Pure Consciousness is itself unaffected.

(74-6) Universe is like a painting on a screen. That which rises and sinks is made up of what it rises from. The finality of the universe is the Self.

(74-7) The finer transformation of universal electric force is into thought-force, thought used creatively; the divine "I shall do this" willing creatively, ideation, Sankalpa.

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DOCTRINE OF MENTALISM

(75-1) Q: Does the Realised Sage see the world?

A: Yes. But his outlook differs. Cinema pictures move, but go and hold them. What do you hold? Only the screen. Let the pictures disappear. What remains over. The screen again. So also here. Even when world appears the Jnani⁶⁰ sees it only as a manifestation of the Self.

(75-2) There is only one mind functioning through the five senses. There is a power working through the senses. The work of the senses begins and ends. There must be a substratum on which their activities depend, a single substratum.

(75-3) The gross body is only the concrete form of the subtle stuff: – mind!

(75-4) Q: I may not be able to return here and request Bahagavan's grace.

A: Where are you going? You are not going anywhere. Even supposing you are the body, has your body come from Lucknow to Tiruvannamalai? You had simply sat in the car or one conveyance or another and it had moved and finally you say that you have come here. The fact is that you are not the body. The Self does not move but the world moves in it. You are only what you are. There is no change in you. So even after what looks like departure from here, you are here and there and everywhere. The scenes alone change.

(75-5) All scriptures are only for the purpose of investigating if there are two consciousnesses. Everyone's experience proves the existence of only one consciousness. There is only one consciousness. But we speak of several kinds of consciousness, as body-consciousness, self-consciousness, etc. Without consciousness, time and space do not exist. They appear in consciousness. It is like a screen on which these are cast as pictures and move as in a cinema show. The absolute consciousness is our real nature.

(75-6) Q: From where do these objects arise?

A: Just where from you rise. The subject comprehends the object also. That one aspect is an

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DOCTRINE OF MENTALISM

⁶⁰ "Gnani" in the original.

(continued from the previous page) all-comprehensive aspect. See yourself first; and then see the objects. What is not in you, cannot appear outside.

(76-1)⁶¹ The Cinema illustration: You are the screen, the Self has created the ego, the ego has its thoughts which are displayed to the world like cinema-pictures. Those thoughts are the world. But in reality there is nothing but Self. These are all projections of the ego.

(76-2) "What is real can never become unreal and vice versa. The world becomes unreal in sleep, hence it never did possess reality. But being, the 'I,' always exists, hence is always real."⁶²

(76-3) [LL. KAMESVARA]⁶³ SARMA's [query]⁶⁴ to SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI: "You endorse the Maya teaching. But I cannot reconcile my feeling of this chair's reality with your assertion of its unreality." M answered: "The root of your difficulty lies in the [confused]⁶⁵ [comingling]⁶⁶ of two separate ideas into one: The 'I' and the 'body.' When you are aware of the chair, it is the thought subsequent to the primal one, "I am the body." The latter is the substratum of all your thoughts of world experience. It arises first; then only can they come. Hence when it fails to arise – as in deep sleep – the world experience also fails to enter your consciousness. Now of these two ideas, the 'I'-thought is the enduring one whereas the body-thought is a transient one. This is shown by dreams, where you still have the sense of 'I' but not the awareness of physical body. Thus all your bodily experiences and the world experiences which are linked up with them, are nothing else than that enters your mind. This is what I mean when I say that the mind is nothing but thoughts. The 'I' is the only real thing being because the only durable one. Find it after stopping the thoughts."

Chapter 13: The Illusion of World Experience

77

THE ILLUSION OF WORLD EXPERIENCE

[67]⁶⁷

(77-1) Q: Are the stones etc. destined to be as they are always?

A: Who sees stones? They are perceived by your mind. So they are in your mind. Whose mind is it? The questioner must find himself. If the self be found, this question would not arise. The Self is more intimate than objects. Find the subject and the objects will take care of themselves. The objects are seen by different persons, according to their outlook and theories are evolved. But who is the seer?,

⁶¹ Paras 76-2 and 76-3 were typed on separate sheets of paper and pasted here by hand.

⁶² The original editor inserted quotation marks by hand.

⁶³ The word is cut off by the left margin. Only "--LL.KAMESVARA" is visible in the original.

⁶⁴ "query" was typed below the line and inserted with an arrow.

⁶⁵ The original editor changed "confusion" to "confused" by hand

⁶⁶ "comingling" was typed below the line and inserted with an arrow.

⁶⁷ The original editor inserted "67" at the top of the page by hand.

the recogniser of these theories? It is you. Find your self. Then there is an end of these vagaries of the mind.

(77-2) When news of the death of King George V was brought to the Ashram, Chadwick's eyes filled with tears, and the other disciples commiserated half-weepingly with him in sympathy. Maharshi at last broke in, having remained silent throughout: "You unwise persons!" He exclaimed: "You may even die to find out your real Self, and then may live without death. Why then do you care for the death of a third person? The Self does not perish, only the body, anyway. Be rid of your materialistic outlooks.

(77-3) When PB's pet rabbit was killed by a wild cat the Maharshi said in response to someone's expression of regret, "the rabbit's spirit is still near to Brunton; it has not gone away; do not worry about it any more; it is dead, so be quiet.

(77-4) Maharshi told once how he got realisation. On the day his father died he felt puzzled by death and pondered over it, whilst his mother and brothers wept. He thought for hours and after the corpse was cremated he got by analysis to the point of perceiving that it was the 'I' which makes the body to see, to run, to walk and to eat. "I now know this 'I' but my father's 'I' has left the body." That day he got Jnana.⁶⁸

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(78-1) We read a newspaper and all the articles therein, but do not care to know anything about the paper itself. We take the chaff but not the substance. The substratum on which all this is printed is the paper and if we know the substratum all else will be known. The ONE only is the Sat, the existence, it is the paper whereas the world, the things that we see and we ourselves are the printed words.

(78-2) There is an end for what you observe: that which is created has a destruction or end. That which is not created had no end. That which exists cannot be observed. It is unobservable. We must find out what it is that appears, the destruction of that which appears is the end. That which exists, exists for ever: that which appears is lost when realized.

What is it that had birth? Whom do you call a man? If instead of seeking explanations for birth, death and after-death, if the question is raised as to who and how you are now, these questions will not arise. You are the same while deeply asleep, in dream and in waking state etc. Is the 'I'-thought Jivan, or the body Jivan? Is this thought our nature?

(78-3) It is the body that feels pain; there is no pain in the Self.

⁶⁸ "Gnana" in the original.

THE ILLUSION OF WORLD EXPERIENCE
[69]⁶⁹

(79-1) This external universe is a cinema show to the realised Man. It is free and the performance goes on day and night! He lives and works in it knowing that its objects and bodies (persons) are illusionary appearances just as an ordinary man knows the scenes and characters on the cinema screen at a theatre are illusions, and do not exist in real life. But the ordinary man takes the external objects of daily life as real, whereas the Realised One sees them only as illusionary cinema pictures.

(79-2) The universe does not exist apart from Self. All “evolution” all external objects are spun out from the self and disappear into It. Where does the world disappear when we enter in deep sleep? Then we exist but the world no longer exists. Self is hence the substratum which gives reality to the universe. If our Self did not exist, there would be no universe for us. The Reality is in the Self, therefore, Not in the universe. Realisation of this comes to the Realised man.

(79-3) This Self is the screen; the universe and its events are the cinema pictures shown thereon. The screen does not change, but the pictures are transient and are changing.

(79-4) The sage experiences that he is the body as does the ignorant man but whereas the latter believes that the self is confined to the body, the wise man believes that the body cannot remain apart from the Self. The Self is infinite for him and includes the body also.

(79-5) Q: What are the first steps to spiritual practice?

A: In the beginning, one has to be told that he is not the body, because he thinks that he is the body only, whereas he is the body and all else. The body is only a part. Let him know it firmly. He must first discern Chit from Jad, and be the Chit only. (He must discern the sentient from the insentient – Translated: Gopal)

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(continued from the previous page) Later let him realise that Jad is none else than Chit. This is discrimination. The initial viveka must persist to the end. Its fructification is Moksha.

(80-1)⁷⁰ Q: Are stones etc. destined to remain so forever?

A: Who sees stones? They are perceived by your sense which are in turn actuated by your mind. So they are in your mind. Whose mind is it? If the self be

⁶⁹ The original editor inserted “69” at the top of the page by hand.

⁷⁰ Para 80-1 is a near-repeat of para 77-1.

found, this question would not arise. The self is more intimate than objects. Find the subject and the object will take care of themselves.

(80-2) Q: Do heaven worlds really exist?

A: So long as you consider this world real, those also are real. Why should they not exist?

Q: But are those worlds mere ideas?

A: Everything is really an idea to you. Nothing appears to you except through the mind and as its idea.

Q: Then where are these worlds?

A: They are in you.

(80-5) Humans can be reborn as animals, dependent on the last train of thought or mood prior to death. (This again is produced by predominant thoughts during life).

(80-6) Q: There is a religion called Christian Science, which has a similar doctrine. Is it correct?

A: Yes, but don't think of the results.

(80-7) Q: What of tooth ache?

A: The pain is in the mind, what happens to the tooth-ache during sleep. Do you feel the pain then? No. Well, in the Self you are in happiness always.

(80-8) Q: The Christian Science healings are on the same principle?

A: Yes, and also similar results are obtained by will-power. Will and the Self are the same. Think of the Self despite the mosquitoes or tooth-ache. It needs strength but one must be a hero to gain realisation.

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THE ILLUSION OF WORLD EXPERIENCE

[71]⁷¹

(81-1) What is death?

A: It is in the mind that birth and death, pleasure and pain, in short, the world and ego exist. If the mind is destroyed, all these are destroyed too. Note that it should be annihilated and not made quiescent. For, the mind is quiescent in sleep. It does not know anything. Still, on waking up, you are as you were before. There is no end of grief. But if the mind be destroyed, the grief will have no background and will disappear along with the mind.

(81-2) Q: Is there rebirth of man as a lower animal?

A: Yes; it is possible, as illustrated by Jada Baratha anecdote.

(81-3) Q: Is the Jiva capable of spiritual progress in the animal body?

⁷¹ The original editor inserted "71" at the top of the page by hand.

A: Death is intervening sleep between two successive births while sleep intervenes between two jagratis and both are transient. According to the Sanskrit saying: "A wife is half the body of the husband," no doubt it is a very sad thing for the husband if his wife dies. If one begins to think in terms of his Atma, there is no sorrow at all. According to the Scriptures, a wife is dear because she pleases her husband by acting up to his wishes. Then if all this is for the pleasure of the Atman, where is the sorrow? In spite of this, even persons who have got a glimpse of the Real Knowledge, lose their mental equipoise when such calamities occur. During sleep one is happy. The Self remains happy in sleep and did not see the wife. But now in the waking state, the same self which was happy in sleep, enjoys happiness or misery owing to the presence of worldly things. Why should not the happiness enjoyed in sleep by the Self be enjoyed in the waking state also? The knowledge of the identity of body with Atman is the obstruction for enjoying Bliss.

That which existed is always present; and that

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(continued from the previous page) which never existed cannot exist. What is born? What is it that dies? Waking is birth and sleeping is death. Did your wife accompany you whenever you attended to your duties and during your sleep? She was staying separately somewhere, but you were then thinking that she was living. Now after her death you think that she does not exist. Therefore the difference about your wife is in the kind of thoughts that constitutes your sorrow that she does not exist. The whole thing is a creation of your mind. It is that which is known as sorrow owing to the thought of non-existence (of the wife). The whole is mental imagination. In his own self which is by nature full of happiness or creates sorrow. Why should there be grief for the sake of those who are dead and since they have been freed from bondage. The self creates grief by entering into the thought about the dead person. Why should there be any concern if a person is dead or exists? You must destroy your personal ego. There is no sorrow at all if one's ego is dead. Leaving off the feeling of 'I' while the body lasts is what is called the annihilation of the ego. If the ego is not annihilated, the person will certainly feel sorry for death. One cries for persons who are dead, but if the 'I' had been annihilated before they died, then there is no necessity for his crying for them. Our experience or happiness is only during profound sleep when we have ceased to think of our bodies. Even wise men, a Jnani speaks of disembodied liberation. Therefore a wise man, i.e. a Jnani⁷² looks for when he shall cast off his body. Just as a cook who carries a load in his head feels relieved soon after he reaches his destination and places it on the ground from off his head, so a Jnani⁷³ abides his time to cast off this load of his embodiment in flesh and blood. Therefore the death of the wife who is termed half the body of the husband should relieve the husband

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⁷² "Gnani" in the original.

⁷³ "Gnani" in the original.

(continued from the previous page) of half his load and therefore should make him feel happy, but it is not so considered since we perceive these things through our physical senses. Even jnanis, wise men though they be, are perfectly aware of the need of being disembodied for final liberation, yet talk of liberation in the body thus implying that the body may be made to be eternal.

(83-1) Q: What is the sate just before death?

A: When a person gasps for breath, it indicates that the person is unconscious of this body; while gasping the person is in something like a dream, and not aware of present environment.

(83-2) Q: Does the new body involved in that state represent the next re-incarnation of the person?

A: Yes, in this case, but there is also in other cases a period between births. Some are born immediately after; others only after the lapse of some time; a few are not reborn on this earth but get salvation from the higher regions and a very few get absorbed here and now.

(83-3) To be a Buddhist: The idea of diversity comes with body consciousness, which arose at some moment; it has origin and end. What originates must be something. What is that something. It is I-consciousness. On finding its source you realise Absolute Consciousness.

(83-4) Can the world exist without one to cognise it? Which is prior – the being-consciousness or the rising-consciousness? The former is always there and eternal; the latter rises and disappears. It is transient.

(83-5) Q: What is illusion?

A: Find out to whom is the illusion and it will vanish. It is foolish to talk about it, for it is outside us and unknown whereas the seeker is inside and to be known. Find out the immediate and intimate instead of what is distant and unknown.

(83-6) Q: "Brahma is real, world is illusion." Is Sankara's stock phrase. Others say the world is

(continued from the previous page) real. Which is true?

⁷⁴ The original editor inserted "73" at the top of the page by hand.

A: Both. They refer to different stages of development. The aspirant starts with the definition that the Real exists always, then he eliminates world as unreal because it is changing, and hence cannot be the Real. Ultimately he reaches the Self and there finds unity. Then that which was originally rejected as being unreal, is found to be part of the unity. Being absorbed in the reality, the world is also real. There is only existence in Realisation – an nothing but that.

(84-1) Vedantins say Maya's manifestation is the display of cosmos on pure consciousness like images in a mirror. The images cannot remain in the absence of a mirror. So also the world cannot have an independent existence. Sri Sankara says that the Absolute is attributeless. What is the difference? Both agree that the display is unreal. The unreality of world is implied by Sankara whereas it is explicit in Vedanta.

(84-2) There is no difference between matter and spirit. Modern science admits that all matter is energy. Energy is Sakti. Therefore all are resolved into Siva and Sakti, i.e. Self and Mind. The bodies are mere appearances. There is no reality in them as such.

(84-3) Q: Why does Maya become active?

A: How can this question arise? You are yourself within its fold. Are you standing apart from that universal activity in order to ask this question? The same power is raising this doubt in order that all doubts may finally cease.

(84-4) Maya is only Iswara-Sakti or the activity of reality.

(84-5) Q: What is existence?

A: It is subject to birth and decay in order to remind us that it is not our true state.

Chapter 14: The Illusion of Ego Experience

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THE ILLUSION OF EGO EXPERIENCE

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(85-1) Q: How to control the mind?

A: Mind is⁷⁶ intangible. In fact, it does not exist. The surest way of control, is to seek it. Then its activities cease.

(85-2) Seek the mind. On being sought⁷⁷, it will disappear. The mind is only a bundle of thoughts. The thoughts arise because there is the thinker. The thinker is the ego. The ego, if sought, will vanish automatically. The ego and the mind are the same. The ego is the root-thought from which all other thoughts arise. Dive within.

⁷⁵ The original editor inserted "75" at the top of the page by hand.

⁷⁶ The original editor corrected the spelling of "is" by hand.

⁷⁷ The original editor corrected the spelling of "sought" by hand.

You are now aware that the mind rises from within. So sink within and seek. You need not eliminate the wrong I! How can 'I' eliminate itself? All that you need do is to find out its origin and abide there. Your efforts can extend only thus far. Then the Beyond will take care of itself. You are helpless there. No effort can realize⁷⁸ it.

(85-3) The individual cannot exist without the mind, but the Self can exist without the individual.

(85-4) Our analyses are ended, that is, so far as the intellect goes. But they are not enough. Eliminating the 'not I' is not enough. The process is only intellectual. The Truth cannot be directly pointed out. Hence the process. Now begins the real inner quest. The 'I' thought is the root now to be sought at its source. Find out who it is and abide there.

(85-5) Q: Is the analytic process merely intellectual or does it exhibit feeling predominantly?

A: The latter.

(85-6) The personal I is a reflection of the real self in the mind.

(85-7) Ask yourself the question Who am I? The body and its functions are not I. Enquire further. The senses and their functions are not I. Going deeper, the mind and its functions are not I. The next step is the question "Whence do these thoughts arise?" Thoughts are spontaneous, superficial or analytical. Who is aware of them?

(continued from the previous page) Their existence and operations become evident to the individual. Analysis leads to conclusion that individuality is operative as the awareness of existence of the thoughts. This is ego. Enquire further; Who is this I and whence? Do sleep analysis. "I am" underlies the three states - sleep waking and dream. After discarding all not-self, we find the residue - the Self Absolute. Both world and ego are objective and must be eliminated in the analysis. To accomplish this, eliminate the mind, which is the creator of the dualistic idea and of ego. Mind is one form of life-manifestation.

(86-1) Q: Is this method quicker than developing qualities thought to be necessary for salvation?

A: All bad qualities are tied round the ego. When the ego is gone, realisation is self-evident. There are neither good nor bad qualities in the Self. Self is free from all qualities. Qualities pertain to the mind only.

⁷⁸ The original editor corrected the spelling of "realize" by hand

(86-2) The enquiry should be where the 'I' is. After the rise of the I-thought, there is false identification of the I with the body, the sense, the mind etc. Self is wrongly associated with them; the true self is lost sight of. In order to sift the pure I from the contaminated I, this discarding (of the sheaths mentioned in the Shastras) is mentioned. But it means not exactly discarding of the non-self but the finding of the real self. The real Self is the infinite 'I-I' in perfection. It is eternal. It has no origina and no end. The other 'I' is born and dies. It is impermanent. See to whom the changing thoughts occur. They will be found to arise after the I-thought. Hold the I-thought; they subside. Trace the source of the 'I'-thought. The Self alone remains.

(86-3) [The sure way to destroy the ego is to seek it out, when you will find that it does not exist.]⁷⁹

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(87-1) The root of thoughts is ego, Ahankara.

(87-2) To say "I am not the body" but "I am the Self" is still not correct. No thought of 'I' in true being.

(87-3) Let us discover if all thoughts can be traced to some one thought as their base of operations. Do you not see that the thought or idea 'I' – the idea of personality is such a root thought?

(87-4) The personality antakarana is a medium. It is what we call Sukshma (astral body) and acts as a medium between the body and the Self. It can turn to the body or to the Self, merging itself in either.

(87-5) The I-thought is not pure; it is contaminated with association with the body and senses. See to whom the trouble is. It is the I-thought. Hold it, then the other thoughts will cease.

(87-6) Q: Yes, but how to do it, that is the whole trouble.

A: Think I-I-I and hold to that one thought to the exclusion of all others.

(87-7) Q: What is self surrender?

A: It is the same as self control. Control is effected by the removal of Samskaras. The ego submits only when it recognizes the Higher Power. Such recognition is surrender; submission is to it Self-Control. Otherwise the ego remains stuck up like the image carved on a tower making it appear by its strained look that it supporting the tower on its shoulders. The ego cannot exist without the power but

⁷⁹ The original editor inserted "The sure way to destroy the ego is to seek it out, when you will find that it does not exist." By hand

⁸⁰ The original editor inserted "77" at the top of the page by hand.

thinks that it acts of its own accord. A passenger in a railway train keeps his load on the head by his own folly. Let him drop it down; he will find the load reaching his destination all the same. Similarly let us not pose as the doers, but resign ourselves to the guiding power.

(87-8) Desire of sleep or fear of death exist when the mind is active and not in the respective states themselves. The minds knows that the body

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(continued from the previous page) entity persists and reappears after sleep. Therefore sleep is not attended with fear but the pleasure of non-body. No existence is sought. On the other hand the mind is not sure of reappearance after so-called death and therefore dreads it.

(88-1) The ego has its source from the Self and is not separate from it. Hence, the ego must only be retraced in order that it might merge in its source. The core of the ego is called the Heart.

(88-2) Q: What is death? Is it not the folly of the body?

A: Do you not desire it in sleep? What goes wrong then?

Q: But I know I shall wake up?

A: Yes, thought again. There is the preceding thought. I shall wake up. Thoughts rule the life. Freedom from thoughts is one's true nature – Bliss. Death is a thought and nothing else. He who thinks raises troubles. Let the thinker say what happens to him in death. The real 'I' is silent. One should not think "I am this" – "I am that." To say "this" or "that" is wrong. They are also limitations. "I am" alone is true. Silence is 'I.'

(88-3) Q: If a person whom we love, dies, grief results. Shall we avoid such grief by either loving all alike or by not loving at all?

A: If one dies, there is grief for the other who lives. The way to get rid of grief is not to live. Kill the one who grieves. Who will then remain to suffer? The ego must die. That is the only way. The two alternatives amount to the same state. When all is the Self, who is there to be loved or hated?

(88-4) There is a class of people who want to know all about their future and past births. They ignore the present. The load from the past is the present misery. Why recall the past? It is a waste of time.

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⁸¹ The original editor inserted "79" at the top of the page by hand.

(89-1) The Self is the Electricity, Dynamo, the mind is the contact switch board while the body is the lamp, when the karma-hour comes to give death, the mind switches off the current and withdraws the light-life from the body. Both mind and vitality are manifestations of the Supreme Life Force, the Self.

(89-2) Q: Can the yogis show the dead to us?

A: They may, but do not ask me to show them for I cannot. Did we know our relatives before their births that we should know them after their deaths?

(89-3) Q: What happens to a man after death?

A: Engage yourself in the living present. The future will take care of itself. Do not worry about the future. The state before creation and the process of creation are dealt with in the scriptures in order that you may know the present. Because you say you are born, therefore they say it. What is birth? Is it of the I-thought or of the body? Is 'I' separate from the body or identical? How did this I-thought arise? Is the I-thought your nature? Or, is anything else your nature?

(89-4) The Jnani's⁸² 'I' includes but does not identify himself with the body. For there cannot be anything apart from 'I' for him. If the body falls, there is no loss for the 'I.' 'I' remains the same. If the body feels dead, let it raise the question. Being inert it cannot. 'I' never dies and does not ask. Who then dies? Who asks?

(89-5) Q: Do you see the dead?

A: Yes, in dreams.

(89-6) Q: Wherefrom does the ego rise?

A: Soul, mind, ego are mere words. There are no true entities of the kind. Consciousness is the only truth.

(89-7) Forgetfulness of your real nature is the real death; remembrance of it is the true birth. It puts an end to successive births. Yours is then eternal life. How does the desire for

(continued from the previous page) eternal life arise? Because the present state is unbearable. Why? Because, it is not your true nature. Had it been your real nature, there would be no desire to agitate you. How does the present state differ from your real nature? You are spirit in truth.

(90-1) Man considers himself limited; there arises the trouble. The idea is wrong. In sleep there was no world, no ego and no trouble. Something wakes up from that

⁸² "Gnani's" in the original.

happy state and says 'I.' To that ego the world appears. It is the rise of the ego that is the cause of the trouble. Let him trace the ego to its source and he will reach that undifferentiated happy source, a state which is sleepless sleep. The Self is ever there; wisdom only appears to dawn, though it is natural.

(90-2) Q: Are ego and the Self the same?

A: Self can be without the ego, but the ego cannot be without the Self. Egos are like bubbles in the ocean.

(90-3) Impurities and worldly attachments affect only the ego; the Self remains pure and unaffected.

(90-4) All these are only mental concepts. You are now identifying yourself with a wrong 'I' which is the 'I' thought. This I-thought rises and sinks whereas the true significance of 'I' cannot do so. There cannot be a break in your being.

(90-5) The father of your personal 'I' is the real I-God. Try to find out the source of the individual I and then you will reach the other 'I.'

(90-6) When the individual goes, the desires also go.

(90-7) Q: Once I was very self-reliant. I fear in my old age. People laugh at me.

A: Even when you said you were self-reliant, it was not so – you were ego-reliant. In place of that if you let ego go, you will get real self-reliance. Your pride was merely pride of ego. So

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(continued from the previous page) long as you identify yourself with the ego, then you will recognise others as individuals too, then there is room for pride. Let drop that and you drop others' ego too and so there is no more room for pride.

(91-1) So long as there is the sense of separation, there will be afflicting thoughts. If the original source is regained and the sense of separation is put an end to, there is peace. Consider what happens when a stone is thrown up. It leaves its source, is projected up, tries to come down and is always in motion until it regains its source where it is at rest. So also the waters of the ocean evaporate, form clouds which are moved by winds, condense into water, and fall as rain and the waters roll down the hill tops in streams and rivers until they reach their original source, the ocean reaching which they are at peace. Thus you see where there is a sense of separateness from the source, there is agitation and movement until the sense of separateness is lost. So it is with yourself. Now that you identify yourself with the

⁸³ The original editor inserted "81" at the top of the page by hand.

body, you think that you are separate. You must regain your source before this false identity ceases and you are happy. Gold is not an ornament but the ornament is nothing but gold. Whatever shape the ornament may assume and however different the shapes of the ornaments are, there is only one reality, i.e. gold. So also with the bodies and the Self. The reality is the self. To identify oneself with the body and yet to seek happiness, is like attempting to ford a lake on the back of an alligator. The body identity is due to extroversion and the wandering of the mind. To continue in that state will only keep one in an endless tangle and there will be no peace. Seek your source, merge in the Self and remain all one. Rebirth really means discontent with the present state and desire to be born where there will be no discontent. Birth being of the body, cannot

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(continued from the previous page) affect the Self. The Self remains ever, even after the body perishes. The discontent is due to the wrong identity of the Eternal Self with the perishable body. The body is a necessary adjunct of the ego. If the ego is killed the eternal Self is revealed in all its glory. The body is the cross Jesus the Son of Man, is the ego or "I-am-the-body" idea. When he is crucified he is resurrected, a Glorious Self, Jesus, the Son of God! "Give up this life if thou wouldest live."

(92-2) A Jnani⁸⁴ crushes the ego at its source. It rises up again and again, for him too as for the ignorant, impelled by nature i.e. prarabdha. Both in the ignorant and the Jnani⁸⁵ ego sprouts up but with this difference; the former's ego when it rises up is quite ignorant of its source, or is not aware of its deep sleep in the dream and wakeful states, whereas a Jnani,⁸⁶ when his ego rises up, enjoys his transcendental experience with his ego, keeping his lakshya always on its source. His ego is not dangerous, it is only the ash-skeleton of a burnt rope; although it possesses a form it is ineffective. By constantly keeping our lakshya on our source our ego is dissolved.

(92-3) Q: How is realisation made possible?

A: There is the absolute Self from which a spark proceeds as from fire. The spark is called EGO. In the case of the ignorant it identifies itself with some object simultaneously with its rise. It cannot remain independent of such association. This association is ignorance whose destruction is the object of our efforts. If ego's objectifying tendency is killed it remains pure and also merges in its source. We can separate ourselves from that which is external but not from that which is one with us. Hence ego is not one with body. This must be realised in the waking state.

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⁸⁴ "Gnani" in the original.

⁸⁵ "Gnani" in the original.

⁸⁶ "Gnani" in the original.

(93-1) The quest "Who am I" is the axe to cut off the ego.

(93-2) The intellect always seeks to have external knowledge, leaving knowledge of its own origin. The mind is only identity of the Self with the body. It is a false ego that is created; it creates false phenomena in its turn and appears to move in them. If the false identity vanishes the Reality becomes apparent. This does not mean that Reality is not even now. It is always there and eternally the same.

(93-3) The mind rises after the rise of the I-thought or the Ego.

(93-4) Q: How to get rid of egoism?

A: If you see what the ego really is, that is enough to get rid of itself which is enough to get rid of it. It is the ego itself which makes efforts to get rid of itself, so how can it die? If ego is to go, then something else must slay it. Will it ever consent to commit suicide? So first realise what is the true nature of the ego and it will go of its own accord. Examine the nature of the ego, that is the process of realisation. If one sees what one's real nature is, then one will get rid of ego. Until then our efforts are just like chasing one's own shadow: the more one advanced the more distant was the shadow. If we leave our own self, then the ego will manifest itself. If we seek our true nature, then ego dies. If we are in our own reality, then we need not trouble about the ego.

(93-5) Seek your source. Find out whence the 'I' thought springs. What object can we be surer of and know more certainly than our Self? This is direct experience and cannot further be described.

(93-6) If the present 'I' goes, it, the mind, is known for what it is – a myth. What remains over is the pure Self. In deep sleep the Self exists without perception of body and world; then happiness reigns.

(94-1) Q: You say that we shall find the divine centre inside us. If each individual has a centre are there then millions of divine centres?

A: There is only one Centre to which there is no circumference. Dive deep within and find it

(94-2) Meditating on Him or on the Seer, the Self, there is a mental vibration 'I' to which all are reduced. Tracing the source of 'I,' the primal 'I-I' alone remains over; and it is inexpressible.

⁸⁷ The original editor inserted "83" at the top of the page by hand.

(94-3) Q: Is there not an unchanging self and a changing self?

A: The changefulness is mere thought. All thoughts arise after the arising of the I-thought. See to whom these thoughts arise. Then you transcend them and they subside. That is to say, tracing the source of the 'I' thought, you realise the perfect I-I. I is the name of the Self.

(94-4) Q: Is there not an unchanging self and a changing self?

A: The changefulness is mere thought. All thoughts arise after the arising of the I-thought. See to whom these thoughts arise. Then you transcend them and they subside. That is to say, tracing the source of the 'I' thought, you realise the perfect I-I. I is the name of the Self.

(94-5) Q: Memory, sleep and death affect the I?

A: It is confusion due to non-differentiation between false and real I. These three attributes and modes pertain to the false ego.

(94-6) Vivekachudamani makes it clear that the artificial 'I' of the Vijnana Kosha is a projection and through it one must look to find the true principle of 'I.'

(94-7) Q: What is the ego-self?

A: The ego appears and disappears; it is transitory whereas the real Self always abides permanently.

(94-8) Q: What is prostrating?

A: It means subsidence of ego. What is subsidence? To merge into the Source. God cannot be deceived by outward genuflexions and bowings. He sees if the ego is there or not.

(94-9) I AM is the ocean and the individual egos are bubbles in it. Bubbles pass away.

(94-10) Q: What of evil conditions, birth and death for instance?

A: First the ego comes in, its sprouting as our birth, but really we do not die?

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(95-1) It is wrong to say "we see" for if you try to find out who sees, that seer disappears. 'I' is the subject and all other thoughts comprise the object - mind.

(95-2) Were you aware, when you were fast asleep last night? No! What is it that now exists and troubles you? It is the 'I.' Get rid of it and be happy.

⁸⁸ The original editor inserted "85" at the top of the page by hand.

(95-3) The ego-ridden mind has its strength sapped and is too weak to resist the torturing thoughts. The egoless mind is happy in deep, dreamless sleep. Clearly, therefore bliss and misery are only modes of mind but the weak mode is not easily interchangeable with the strong mode. Activity is weakness and consequently miserable: passivity is strength and therefore blissful. The dormant strength is not apparent and therefore not availed of.

(95-4) Creation is to be considered in two aspects: Creator and Individual Soul. It is the latter which causes pain and pleasure irrespective of former. Pain and pleasure has no reference in fact but to mental conceptions. Kill the personality and there is no pain or pleasure but the natural bliss which persists eternally.

(95-5) Conscious death is the purpose of evolution, and conscious immortality whilst still in the flesh.

(95-6) Q: How to know the Self?

A: See what the self is. What you consider as the self is really either the mind, intellect, or the 'I' thought. So hold on to it. The others will vanish, leaving the Self.

Are there two "I"s? How do you know your own existence? Do you see yourself with these eyes? Question yourself. How does this question arise? Do I remain to ask it or not? Can I find myself as in a mirror? Because your outlook has been outward bent, it has lost sight of the self and your vision is external. The

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(continued from the previous page) Self is not found in the external objects. Turn your look within and plunge down. You will be the Self.

(96-1) Q: What is to be done to kill the ego?

A: See for whom the doubts are. Who is the doubter? Who is the thinker? That is the ego, hold it. The other thoughts will die away. The ego is pure. See wherefrom the ego arises. That is pure consciousness.

(96-2) Q: I begin to ask myself "Who am I," eliminate the body as not 'I,' the prana as not 'I,' the mind as not 'I' and I am not able to proceed further.

A: Well, that is so far as the intellect goes. Your process is only intellectual. Indeed all the scriptures mention the process only to guide the seeker to know the Truth. The truth cannot be directly pointed out. Hence this intellectual process. You see, the one who eliminates all the "not-I" cannot eliminate the 'I.' To say "I am not this," or "I am that" there must be the 'I.' This 'I' is only the ego or the 'I-thought.' After the rising up of this 'I-thought' all other thoughts arise. The 'I-thought' is therefore the root-thought. If the root is eliminated all others are uprooted. Therefore seek the root 'I,' question yourself "who am I?;" find out its source. Then all these will vanish and the pure self will remain over. The 'I' is

always there – in Sushupti, in dream and in wakefulness. The one in sleep is the same as the one who now speaks. There is always the feeling of ‘I;’ otherwise, do you deny your existence? You do not say “I am;” find out who it is.

(96-3) The reality of yourself cannot be questioned. The self is the primal reality. The ordinary man takes as reality unconsciously his true inner reality plus all things which have come into his consciousness as pertaining to himself, body, etc. He has to unlearn.

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(97-1) Q: Is it possible to know after-death state of a person?

A: It is possible. But why try to know it?

Q: Because I consider my own son’s death to be real from my level of understanding.

A: The birth of the I-thought is one’s son’s birth; its death is the person’s death. After the I-thought has arisen the wrong identity with the body arises. Thinking yourself as the body, you give false values to others and identify them with bodies. Did you think of your son before his birth? Only as you are thinking of him, he is your son. Where has he gone? He has gone to the source from which he sprang. He is one with you. So long as you are, he is there too. See the real self and this confusion with body will vanish. You are eternal. The others will be found to be eternal. Until this truth is realised there will always be this grief due to wrong identity. Birth and death and rebirth should only make you investigate the question and find out that there are no births or rebirths: they relate to the body and not to the Self.

(97-2) Q: What happens to the created ego after body dies?

A: Ego is I-thought. In its subtle form, it remains a thought whereas in its gross aspect it embraces mind, senses and body. They disappear in deep slumber along with the ego. Still the self is there. Similarly it will be in death. Ego is not an entity independent of the Self in order that it might be created or destroyed by itself. It functions as an instrument of the Self and periodically ceases to function; i.e. it appears and disappears as birth and death.

(97-3) Q: I want to find the real I and always be effortlessly in touch.

A: It is enough that you give up the individual I and no effort will be needed to gain the real I. Do not think that there is any such difference

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⁸⁹ The original editor inserted “87” at the top of the page by hand.

(continued from the previous page) between you and the Self; then surrender yourself to him, merge yourself in him. There should be no reservations, as you cannot cheat God

(98-1) Q: What about after death?

A: Enquire first who or what is it that is born. It is the body, not you. Why trouble about things beyond you, like death when your Self is here and present?

(98-2) Q: How long does one stay in other worlds between births and deaths? (reincarnation)

A: The sense of time is relative. In a dream you may live a whole day's events in a couple of hours. In the subtle body of the death-world you may do the same and live what seems a 1,000 years, although by our time it may be only 100 years.

(98-3) When news of someone's death was reported to Maharshi he replied: "Good! The dead ones are indeed happy. They have got rid of the troublesome overgrowth, the body! Do men fear sleep? Sleep is temporary death. Death is longer sleep. Why should one desire continuance of the bodily shackles? Let the man find out his undying self and be immortal.

(98-4) So long as one identifies himself with his gross body, the thoughts materialised as gross manifestations must be real to him. Having existed here it certainly survives death. Hence under these circumstances the other world exists. On the other hand consider that the One Reality is the Self from whom has sprung the ego. The ego loses sight of the Self and identifies itself with body, with the result of ignorance and misery. The life-current has passed through innumerable incarnations, births and deaths, but is still unaffected. There is no reason to mourn.

(98-5) The mind is of the ego; and the ego rises from the Self.

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(99-1) The sacred bull (Nandi in India) represents the ego jiva. It is always shown in our temples facing the God, and with a flat circular stone in front of it. This stone altar is where sacrifices are offered and it all symbolises that the ego must be sacrificed and must always be turned towards the inner God.

(99-2) Learn what Jivan is. What is the difference between Jivan and Atma? Is Jiva itself Atma or is there any separate thing as Atma?

(99-3) Q: What is the object of one's life?

⁹⁰ The original editor inserted "89" at the top of the page by hand.

A: The object is to understand who is that I contained in your my.

Q: I realise intellectually I am part of the great I, the Universe.

A: Then are there two I's? Realise that you are not part, but the whole.

Q: What is the reason of this apparent duality of selves which exists?

A: In your sound sleep do you think of duality, part or whole? Duality is only when you awake. What became of the world when you were asleep? That 'I' existed in all three states, and it is that which you want to know. The thoughts of life's purpose or purposelessness do not arise to trouble you during sleep.

(99-4) An elephant used to be often teased by its keeper. He once had an accident and fell. The elephant could have killed him on the spot, but it did not do so. Later however, the keeper dug a big pit in the forest and killed the elephant. Chudala illustrated Sikaidhaja's error in this story. He had vairagya even while ruling his kingdom and could have realised the Self if only he had pushed his vairagya to the point of the sacrifice of the ego. He did not do so, but went to the forest had a timetable of tapas⁹¹ and yet did not improve even after 18 years of effort. He had made himself a victim of his own creation. Chudala advised him to give up the ego and realise the self

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(continued from the previous page) which he did and was emancipated. It is clear from Chudala's story that vairagya accompanied by the ego is of no value, whereas having possessions in the absence of ego does not matter.

Chapter 15: Avastatraya

(100-1) In sleep, in trance, in absent-mindedness there is no differentiation. Is that which then was absent now? The difference is due to mind. The mind is sometimes present and at other times absent; there is no change in the Reality. The same person who was in sleep is now too, in waking. The Self is the same all through.

(100-2) Limitation is only in the mind. The same self is here and now, in the wakeful state, as in deep sleep when no limitation is felt. There was no mind in sleep whereas it is now active. The Self exists in the absence of mind also.

(100-3) Q: Why is there no meditation during dream? Is it possible?

A: Ask it in dream. You are told to meditate now and ask who you are. Instead of doing it you ask such question. Dream and sleep are for the same person as waking. You are the witness of both - they pass before you. Because you are out of meditation now, such questions arise.

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⁹¹ Presumably this sentence reflects a series of errors in the original, but... that's what it says.

(101-1) What happens to the consciousness of a Realised one in sleep? Such a question arises only in the minds of unrealised beholders. He has but One state, which is unbroken throughout the 24 hours, whether in what you call sleeping or waking. As a matter of fact the majority of people are all asleep, because they are not awake to the Self.

(101-2) In the deep sleep state we lay down our ego (Ahankara), our thoughts and our desires. If we could only do all this while we are conscious, we would realise the Self.

(101-3) The best form of Dhyana or Meditation is when it continues not merely in waking but extends to dream and deep sleep states. The meditation must be so intense as not even to give room for the consciousness of the idea "I am meditating." As waking and dreaming are fully occupied by the Dhyana of such a person deep sleep may be considered to be part of the Dhyana.

(101-4) Sanyasa is the giving up of the ego; even though a person may be living as a householder in the family circle, the various occurrences of the world will not affect him if his ego is surrendered. Thus dream experiences do not really affect us. The dreamer as he quietly lies in his bed, dreams he is in water, but his bed is not really wet. On the other hand, a person though remaining in a Sanyasa ashrama who has still attachment to the body, is a karmi, (man of action, not renunciation).

(101-5) Q: In the West people cannot see how sages in solitude can be helpful?

A: Never mind Europe and America. Where are they except in your mind? If you wake up from a dream, do you try to ascertain if the persons of your dream creation are also awake?

(101-6) Q: If sleep be such a good state, why does not one like to be always in it?

A: One is always in sleep only. The present waking

(continued from the previous page) state is no more than a dream. Dream can take place only in sleep. Sleep is underlying these three states. The display as those three states is again a dream which is in its turn, in another sleep. In this way, these states of dream and sleep are endless. Similar to these states, birth and death are also dreams in a sleep. There are really speaking no birth and death.

⁹² The original editor inserted "101" at the top of the page by hand.

(102-1) After sleep ego rises up and there is wakefulness. Simultaneously thoughts arise. Wherfrom? They must spring from the conscious Self. Apprehending it even vaguely helps the extinction of ego after which is realisation of the ONE INFINITE EXISTENCE. In that state there are no individuals other than the Eternal Existence. Abide in the ever-inherent Self and be free from the idea of birth or fear of death.

(102-2) Q: We do not know we are dreaming, whereas in waking we do?

A: The dream is a combination of waking with deep sleep. It is due to the samskaras of the waking state. Hence we remember dreams. Samskaras are not formed contrawise; hence we are not aware of the dream world simultaneously. Still every one recollects strange perplexities in dreams, when one wonders if he is awake or dreaming. When really awake, he finds all was only a dream.

(102-3) Q: How remove the ignorance.

A: You dream of finding yourself in another town. Can another town enter your room? Could you have left and gone there. Both are impossible. Both are unreal. They appear real to the mind. The 'I' of the dream has vanished. But the substratum of the mind continues all along. Find that and you will be happy.

(102-4) Q: I consider sleep a worse state than waking.

A: If it were so, why do all desire sleep?

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(103-1) There are different methods of approach to prove the unreality of the universe. The example of the dream is one among them. Jagrat, Swapna and Sushupti are all treated elaborately in the scriptures in order that the reality underlying them might be revealed. It is not meant to accentuate differences among the three states. Their purpose must be kept clearly in view. They say that the world is unreal. Of what degree of unreality? Is it like that of a son of a barren mother or a flower in the sky? These are mere words without any reference to facts, whereas the world is a fact and not a mere word. The answer is that it is a superimposition on the One reality like the appearance of a snake on a coiled rope in dim light. Here too the wrong identity ceases as soon as the friend points out that it is a rope, whereas in the matter of the world, it persists even after I have heard it said to be unreal. How is that? The appearance of water in a mirage persists after the knowledge of mirage has dawned. So it is with the world. Though knowing it to be unreal, it continues to manifest. May be, but the water of mirage is not sought to satisfy one's thirst. As soon as one knows that it is a mirage, he gives it up as useless and does not run after it for procuring water.

⁹³ The original editor inserted "93" at the top of the page by hand.

[It]⁹⁴ is not so with the appearance of the world. Even after it is repeatedly declared to be false one cannot avoid satisfying his wants from the world. How can the world be false?

[It]⁹⁵ is like one satisfying his dream wants by dream creations. There are objects, there are wants and there are mutual satisfactions. The dream creations are as purposeful as the jagrat world and yet is not considered real. Thus we see that all these illustrations serve a purpose in establishing the stages of unreality. The realised sage finally declares that in the regenerate state, the jagrat state is. Each illustration

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(continued from the previous page) should be understood in the proper context; it should not be studied as an isolated statement. It is a link in a chain. The purpose of all these illustrations is to direct the seeker's mind towards the One⁹⁶ reality underlying them all.

(104-1) Q: The dream world is note purposeful as the waking world because we do not feel wants to be satisfied.

A: You are right. There are thirst and hunger in dream also. You might have had your fill and kept over the remaining food. Nevertheless you feel hungry in your dream. This food does not help you and your dream hunger can be satisfied only by eating the dream creations.

Q: We recollect our dreams in our jagrat but not vice versa.

A: You are [yourself]⁹⁷ in the dream and identify yourself as the same as the one now speaking.

Q: But we do not know that we are dreaming as apart from waking as we do now?

A: The dream is the combination of the jagrat with sushupti. It is due to the samskaras of the jagrat state. Hence we remember dreams at present. Samskaras are not found contrariwise; therefore also we are aware of dream and jagrat simultaneously. Still every one will recollect strange perplexities in the dream. One wonders if he dreams or is awake. He argues and determines that he is only awake. When really awake he finds that all was only a dream.

(104-2) Q: Is there any real distinction between dream and waking?

A: Only apparent, not real. The dream is for one who says that he is awake. Both are unreal from absolute viewpoint.

(104-3) Realisation is possible in faint and impossible in sleep.

⁹⁴ The original editor deleted "Q:" before "It" by hand.

⁹⁵ The original editor deleted "A:" before "It" by hand.

⁹⁶ The original editor corrected the spelling of "one" by hand.

⁹⁷ The original editor inserted "yourself" by hand.

(105-1) The ego arises when you wake up from sleep. In sleep you do not say that you are sleeping; you say it only when you wake up. But still you are there. You were not concerned with the body when asleep; so can you always remain unconcerned.

(105-2) In waking state, ego identifies itself with physical body; in dream with the subtle mind. Then perceptions are subtle also.

(105-3) Q: Is it possible to be conscious without thought?

A: Yes. There is only one consciousness. In sleep there is no I. I-thought arises with waking and then the world disappears. Where was this I in sleep? Was it there or not? It must have been there, yet now in the way you feel now. The present is only the I-thought, whereas the sleeping I is the real I. That subsists all through. That is consciousness. If that is known you will see that it is beyond thoughts. Thoughts may be like other activities, not disturbing the supreme consciousness.

(105-4) Q: The dream world is not useful like the waking man because we do not feel wants to be satisfied.

A: You are not right. There are thirst and hunger in dream also. You might have had your fill and kept over the remaining food, nevertheless you feel hungry in dreams.

(105-5) Q: I do not understand your reference to dream and mental illusion.

A: Our experience of the world is evoked and dissolved by the mind. When you travel from India to London does your body really move? No! It is the conveyance which moves and your body remains inside it without itself travelling. It is the ship and the train which travels. Just as these movements are superimposed upon your body, so are visions, dream-states and even re-incarnations superimposed upon your real Self. The latter does not move and is not affected by all

(continued from the previous page) these outward changes, remaining still in its own place even as the body remains still in the ship's cabin. You are always the same and hence beyond time and beyond space. In deep sleep you have no sense of time. The concept of time and space arises only when there is the limitation of 'I.' Even now the 'I' thought is both limitless and limited. So long as you think it to be the body, it is limited. At the time of waking up and before one actually becomes

fully aware of the external world, that interval, timeless, spaceless, is the state of the true I.

(106-1) Why do not your questions arise in deep sleep? The fact is you have no limitations in sleep and no question arises. Whereas now, you put on identification with the body and questions of this kind arise.

(106-2) Deep sleep is always present even in the waking state. What we have to do is to bring deep sleep into the waking state, to get "conscious sleep." Realisation can only take place in the waking state. Deep sleep is relative to the waking state.

(106-3) Can that one consciousness divide itself into two? Is the division of the Self felt? Awaking from sleep, one finds oneself the same in the wakeful as well as in the sleep states. That is the experience of each one. The difference lies in seeing, in the outlook. Imagining that you are the seer as separate from experience, this difference arises. Experience says that your real is the same all through. Do you feel the difference of external and internal – in your sleep? This difference is only with reference to the body and arises with body-Consciousness (I-thought). The so-called Jagrat is itself an illusion. Turn your vision inward and then the whole Jagrat is Maya. Maya is really Satya. Even the material sciences trace the origin of

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(continued from the previous page) the universe to some one primordial matter – very subtle. God is the same both to those who say the Jagrat is real and their opponents. Their outlooks are different. You need not enmesh yourself in such disputations. The goal is one and the same for all. Look to it.

(107-1) The states of deep sleep, waking and dream are accretions on the ego; the Self is the witness of all. The Self transcends them all. This Witness-Consciousness should be found. In the Self there are not the three states, no waking sleeping or deep sleep; it is ever there.

(107-2) Q: On enquiry into the origin of thoughts, there is a perception of 'I.' But it does not satisfy one.

A: Quite right. The perception of 'I' is associated with a form, may be the body. There should be nothing associated with the pure Self. The Self is the un-associated, pure Reality in whose light, the body, the ego etc. shine. One stilling all thoughts, the pure consciousness remains over. Just awaking from sleep and before becoming aware of the world, there is that pure 'I'-I.' Hold to it without sleeping or without allowing thoughts to possess you. If that is held firm it does not matter even though the world is seen. The seer remains unaffected by the phenomena.

⁹⁸ The original editor inserted "97" at the top of the page by hand.

(107-3) If there were no such activities as waking-thoughts and dream-thoughts, there would not be the corresponding worlds, i.e. no perception of them. In deep sleep there are no such activities, and the world does not then exist for us.

(107-4) In dreamless sleep there is no world, no ego and no unhappiness. But the Self remains. In the wakeful state there are all these; yet there is the Self. One has only to remove the transitory happenings in order to realise the everpresent beatitude of the Self. Your nature is bliss. Find that on which all the rest are superimposed and you then remain the pure Self.

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(108-1) Maharshi asked his attendant for a small notebook. The latter could not find a suitable one. In a couple of days Mr. Nambiar, local P.W.D. engineer visited ashram and produced a fine notebook saying "Maharshi appeared to me in a dream and asked for a notebook of that size. So I have brought it." Maharshi took it with a smile. Still stranger Maharshi used that book to write a Malayalam translation of Ramagita which was printed by Nambiar at his own cost.

(108-2) Q: Is there any genuine difference between dream experience and waking state?

A: Because you find the dream creations transitory in relation to the waking state, there is said to be a difference. The difference is only apparent and not real.

(108-3) Q: Why can we not always remain in and enter deep sleep at will?

A: Deep sleep exists also in the wakeful state. We are ever in deep sleep. That should consciously be understood and realised. There is really no going or coming from it. Becoming aware of the deep sleep state whilst in the world state is Samadhi. It is Nature i.e. prarabdha which forces you to emerge from it. Your ego is not dead and will rise again and again.

(108-4) Q: Why is it that we remember dreams when awake but not the reverse?

A: You are wrong. You are yourself in the dream [and]⁹⁹ identify yourself as the one now speaking.

(108-5) Q: Is waking state independent of existing objects?

A: Were it so, the objects must exist without the seer; that is the object must tell you that it exists. Does it do so? For example, does a cow moving in front of you tell you that she is moving, or do you say of your own accord "there is a cow moving." The objects exist because the seer is cognising them.

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⁹⁹ The original editor inserted "and" at the top of the page by hand.

(109-1) Recall the state of sleep. Were you aware of anything happening? If the sun or the world be real, should they not be present with you in sleep? You cannot deny your existence in sleep nor can you deny that you were happy there. Yet, you are the same person now speaking and raising doubts. You are not happy according to you. But you were happy in sleep. What has transpired in the meantime that the happiness of sleep has broken down? It is the ego. That is the new arrival in jagrat state. There was no ego in sleep. The birth of the ego is called the birth of the person. There is no other birth. Whatever is born, is bound to die. Kill the ego. There is no fear of death for that is dead. The Self remains after the death of the ego. That is Bliss – that is immortality.

(109-2) Because you desire to learn, discussion is unavoidable. Leave all this aside. Consider your sleep. Are you aware of bondage or do you seek means for release? Are you aware of the body itself? The sense of bondage is associated with the body. Otherwise there is no bondage, no material to bind with and no one to be bound. These appear however in your wakeful state. Consider to whom they appear.

(109-3) Was the world present in your sleep? Was there attachment to it? There was not. Were you there or not? I was. You are therefore the same one who was in sleep. What is it then that now raises the question of maya? (In this para question is by Maharshi and reply by enquirer). Mind was not in sleep. World then is only in the mind. That is so. The pure Self is simple being. It does not associate itself with objects and become unconscious as it is in the wakeful state. What you now call consciousness in the present is associated consciousness requiring brain, mind body etc. to depend upon. But in sleep the consciousness perishes without these.

(Enquirer): But

(continued from the previous page) I do not know the sleep consciousness?

(Maharshi): Who is not aware of it? You admit "I am." You admit "I was" in sleep. The state of being is yourself.

E: Do you mean to say that sleep is self-realisation?

M: It is Self. Why do you talk of realisation? Is there a moment when the self is not realised? Why pick out sleep for it? Even now you are self-realised.

Q: But I do not understand it.

A: Because you are identifying the self with body.

Q: Then how get rid of Maya?

A: This attachment to world is not found in sleep. It is perceived and felt now. It is not your real nature. To whom is this accretion? If the real nature is

¹⁰⁰ The original editor inserted "99" at the top of the page by hand.

known, they are not. If you realise self the possessions are not perceived. Maya is not objective that it can be got rid of in any other way.

Q: How do we sleep and awaken?

A: Just at nightfall the hen, crows and the chicks hide in its wings, the hen then roosts in the nest with the chicks under her protection. In the dawn the chicks come out and so does the hen. Just so, the mother symbolises the ego which collects all the thoughts and goes to sleep. At sunrise they emerge again. Thus when the ego displays itself it does so with all its components, when it sinks, everything disappears with it.

Q: What is deep sleep?

A: Just as on a dark cloudy night no individual identification is possible and there is only darkness although the seer has his eyes wide open, similarly in deep slumber the seer is only aware of simple nescience.

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(111-1) Q: Why should there be difference in the feelings or experiences of the two states?

A: Did you ask while asleep any question regarding your birth or where you go after death? Why think all these now in the wakeful state? Let what is born, think of its birth and remedy, its cause and ultimate fate. Why these questions relating to after death? Raise the questions now and answer them. Was I born? Am I reaping fruits of my past karma? And so on. They will not be raised sometime hence when you fall to sleep. Why? You are in sleep in dream and in wakeful state, just the same. Sleep is a natural state of happiness; there is no misery. The sense of want, of pain, etc. arises only in the wakeful state. What is the change that has taken place. You are the same in both, but there is a difference in happiness. Why? Because the mind has arisen now. This mind arises after the I-thought. The I-thought arises from the consciousness; if one abides in it, the person is always happy.

(111-2) Is it the body when tired that goes to sleep?

A: But does the body sleep or wake up? You yourself said before that the mind is quiet in sleep. The three states are to the mind. The self is always uncontaminated. It is the substance running through all these three states. The wakeful state passes off, I am; the dream-state passes off, I am; they repeat; still I am. They are like pictures moving on the screen in a cinema show. They do not affect the screen. Similarly also here. I am unaffected though these states pass off. If it is for the body, are you aware of the body in sleep? Without knowing the body to be there, how can that body be said to be in sleep? The sense of body is a thought; the thought is of the mind, the mind rises after the I-thought; the I-thought is the root-thought. If that is held the other

¹⁰¹ The original editor inserted "101" at the top of the page by hand.

(continued from the previous page) thoughts will disappear. There will then be no body, no mind, not even the ego, only the Self in its purity.

After the mind rises, the body thought rises and the body is seen. Then the thought of birth, the state before birth, death, the state after death – all these are only of the mind.

(112-1) You who slept, are also now awake. There was no unhappiness in your sleep, whereas it is present now. What is it that has happened now, so that this difference is experienced? There was no ‘I-thought’ in your sleep whereas it is present now. The true ‘I’ is not apparent and the false ‘I’ is parading. This false I is the obstacle to your right knowledge. Find out wherefrom this false ‘I’ arises. That will disappear. You will be only what you are – i.e. absolute Being. Search for the source of I-thought. That is all that one has to do. The Universe is on account of the I-thought. If that ends, there ends misery also. False ‘I’ will end only when its source is sought.

(112-2) Q: Can the soul remain without a body?

A: It will be so in a short time hence during deep slumber. The self is then bodiless. But even now it is so.

(112-3) In deep sleep you exist without an ego; then you are free of doubts. Only now, in waking state, ego rises and you have doubts. In deep sleep you are happy: in waking state you are unhappy. Find out that state of deep sleep, whence you have come.

(112-4) Q: What is Turiya?

A: Turiya is mind quiescence [and aware of Self,]¹⁰² with awareness that mind has merged [in its source]¹⁰³. Whether the senses are active or inactive is immaterial. In Nirvikalpa Samadhi the senses are inactive. To know implies the subject and object. To be aware means [to be thought-free]¹⁰⁴.

Chapter 16: The Ultimate as Truth

(113-1) The Self is like a powerful hidden magnet within us. It draws us gradually to itself, though we imagine we are going to it of our own accord: when we are near

¹⁰² The original editor inserted “and aware of Self,” by hand.

¹⁰³ The original editor inserted “in its source” by hand.

¹⁰⁴ The original editor changed “no object” to “to be thought-free” by hand.

¹⁰⁵ The original editor inserted “103” at the top of the page by hand.

enough, it puts an end to our other activities, makes us still, and then swallows up our personal current, thus killing our personality. It overwhelms the intellect and overflows the whole being. We think we are meditating upon it and developing towards it, whereas the truth is that we are as iron filings and it is the Atman-magnet that is pulling us towards itself. Thus the process of finding Self is a form of Divine Magnetism.

(113-2) It is necessary to practise meditation frequently and regularly until the condition induced becomes habitual and permanent throughout the day. Therefore meditate.

(113-3) You lost sight of the bliss because your meditative attitude had not become natural and because of the recurrence of vasanas. When you become habitually reflective, the enjoyment of spiritual beatitude becomes a matter of natural experience. It is not by a single realisation that "I am not the body but the Atman" that the goal is reached. Do we become high in position by once seeing a king? One must constantly enter into Samadhi and realise one's self, and completely blot out the old vasanas and the mind, before he becomes the Self.

(113-4) If you keep to the thought of the Self, and be intently watching for It then even that one thought which is used as a focus in concentration will disappear and you will BE, the true Self, no 'I,' (ego, ahankara).

(113-5) Meditation on Self is our natural state: Only because we find it hard do we imagine it to be arbitrary and extraordinary state. We are all unnatural. The mind resting in the Self is its natural condition, but instead of that our minds

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(continued from the previous page) are resting in outward objects.

(114-1) After expulsion of name and form composing the external world, and dwelling on Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, take care to prevent the re-entry into the mind of the expelled name and form.

(114-2) Q: How to find Self?

A: There can be no real investigation into the Atma. The investigation can only be made into the non-self. Elimination of the non-self is alone possible. The self being always self-evident will shine of itself.

(114-3) "Knowing" means "being." It is not the relative knowledge.

(114-4) Progress can be spoken of in reference to things to be attained. Whereas it is the removal of ignorance here, and not acquisition of knowledge.

(114-5) Q: What is the Jnana¹⁰⁶ path?

A: Yoga is similar because both help concentration of the mind. Yoga aims at union of the individual with the Universal Reality. Yoga is itself an aid to Self-realisation, the Goal of all. This Reality cannot be new. It must exist even now. Therefore Jnana¹⁰⁷ tries to find out how separation came about.

(114-6) Q: How did Avidya arise?

A: Avidya is like Maya, "that which is not." Therefore the question does not arise. Rather ask "whose is avidya?" Avidya is ignorance. It implies subject and object. Become the subject and there will be no object.

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(115-1) The statements of scriptures that the Self is perfect yet that removal of ignorance is necessary, appear contradictory, but they are for the guidance of earnest seekers, who cannot yet understand the plain truth. Krishna plainly said that people confound him with the body whereas he was not born nor will die. The Self is siple being. Be! – and there will be an end of ignorance. The I is always there. There is no knowing it. It is not a new knowledge to be acquired. There is an obstruction to its knowledge called ignorance. Remove it. But ignorance or knowledge is not for the Self. They are overgrowths to be cleared.

(115-2) Q: Why do I not realise the Self?

A: The fact is that all the while you are knowing the "Self." How can the self not know the self? Only you, the self have got into the habit of thinking that you are a third thing. What is to be done is to get rid of the wrong notion of the Self. In the case of the ever-present, inescapable 'I' how can you be ignorant? You have constantly to fight out and get rid of your false notions of 'I,' one after another. Do that. That then leads to self-realisation. Who is ignorant of which? Ask the question and pursue the inquiry as to who it is that is said to be ignorant. Once you put the question trying to probe into the 'I' the 'I' disappears. Then what remains is true Self-knowledge.

(115-3) Again, what is avidya? Ignorance of Self! But who is ignorant of Self? The Self must be ignorant of Self. Are there two selves?

(115-4) If you accept one philosophic system then you are forced to condemn the others. A child and a jnani¹⁰⁹ are similar. Incidents interest the child only so long as they last. It ceases to think of them after they have passed away. So then it is

¹⁰⁶ "Gnana" in the original.

¹⁰⁷ "Gnana" in the original.

¹⁰⁸ The original editor inserted "105" at the top of the page by hand.

¹⁰⁹ "gnani" in the original.

apparent they don't leave any imprint of impression on the child, and it is not affected by them mentally. So it is with

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(continued from the previous page) the sage too.

(116-1) Q: I understand this but do not realise it.

A: Because you are in variety, you say you have flashes of insight etc. You consider this variety to be real. But unity alone is real. This variety must go before unity reveals itself – its reality. It is always real. It does not send flashes of its being in the false variety. On the contrary, this variety obstructs the truth. Realisation is ever present, not absent at one time and present at another. For example the Sun does not see darkness. But others speak of darkness fleeing at his approach. Similarly ignorance is a phantom; when its unreal nature is found, it is said to be removed. Again the sun is there and you are surrounded by sunlight, but to know this you must turn your eyes in his direction and look at him. So also the Self is found by practice done, although it is here and now.

(116-2) Q: Is the thought "I am God" helpful?

A: I AM is God – not thinking. Realise I AM and do not think I am. Know – do not think. "I am that I am" means that one must abide as 'I.' He is always the I alone: nothing else.

(116-3) Q: How does the mistake of wrong identification come about?

A: See if it has come about! The ego self does not exist.

(116-4) Q: What shall I do to get into that state of Self?

A: No attempt is required to be in that state. What is required is to give up all the false ideas. Whenever the idea comes trace out to whom it occurs. When a new thought comes, trace it out by analysis. In course of time all thoughts are destroyed.

(116-5) Objects are many but the subject is one. Practice the same line – trace out to whom the desire comes.

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(117-1) Concentration all other practices are meant for recognising the absence, i.e. the non-existence of ignorance. No one can deny his existence. Existence is knowledge, i.e. awareness. That implies absence of ignorance. And yet, why do

¹¹⁰ The original editor inserted "107" at the top of the page by hand.

they suffer? Because man thinks he is this or that. That is wrong. "I AM" alone is and not "I am so and so." When existence is absolute is alright, when it is particularised, it is wrong. That is the whole truth. Does a man look into a mirror to know he exists? His awareness makes him admit it. But he confuses it with the body etc. In sleep he still exists, even without the body. Hold that awareness. You cannot see your own eyes, yet do you deny their existence? Similarly even though the Self is not objectified, you are aware of it. Who is to know the self? Can the body know it? Your duty is to be, not to be this or that. The method is summed up in "Be Still." It means destroy yourself, because any form is the cause of the trouble. When the 'I' is kept up as 'I' only, not 'I am this' or 'I and this,' it is the Self; when it flies off at a tangent, it is the ego. The Real Self will not and cannot ask these questions. All these discussions are a matter of competence, of ripeness.

(117-2) Q: From where did ignorance issue?

A: There is nothing like ignorance. It never arises. Everyone is Jnana Svarupi. Only Jnana¹¹¹ does not come easily. The dispelling of ignorance is Jnana which always exists e.g. necklace round the neck supposed to have been lost or ten fools failing to count oneself and counting all others. To whom is knowledge or ignorance.

(117-3) Your nature is Ananda. Ignorance is now hiding that Ananda. Remove the ignorance for Ananda to be freed.

(117-4) Q: How to get peace?

A: That is the natural state. The mind obstructs

(continued from the previous page) the innate peace. Our Vichara is only in the mind. Investigate the mind; it will disappear. It is eliminated and you remain. So the question is one of outlook. You perceive all. See yourself and all are understood. But you have now lost hold of yourself and go about doubting other things.

(118-1) Q: If 'I' am always here and now, why do I not feel so?

A: That is it. Who says that it is not felt? Does the real I say it or the false I? Examine it. You will find it is the wrong I. The wrong I is the obstruction. It has to be removed in order that the true I might not be hidden. The feeling that I have not realised is the obstruction to realisation. In fact, it is already realised; there is nothing realisable. If the latter, the realisation will be anew; it has not existed so far, it must take place hereafter. What has birth will also die. If realisation be not eternal it is not worth having. Therefore what we seek is not that which must happen afresh. It is only that which is eternal and which is not known, due to obstructions, it is that we seek. All that we need do is to remove the obstruction. That which is

¹¹¹ "Gnana" in the original.

eternal, is not known to be so, because of ignorance. Ignorance is the obstruction. Get over that ignorance and all will be well. The ignorance is identical with the I-thought. Find its source and it will vanish. The I-thought is like a spirit which is not palpable, rises up simultaneously with the body, flourishes on it and disappears with it. The body consciousness is the wrong I. Give up the body-consciousness. It is done by seeking the source of the I. The body does not say "I am." It is you who says: 'I am the body.' Find out who this 'I' is. Seeking its source, it will vanish.

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(119-1) Ego in its purity from objective identification is experienced in intervals between two states or two thoughts. Ego is like that caterpillar which leaves on hold only after catching another. Realise this interval with conviction gained by the study of the three states of consciousness. This study helps to gain this outlook.

(119-2) Q: Should one keep a goal before one's eyes?

A: What goal is there? The thing you conceive as being the goal, exists even prior to the ego's own existence. If we conceive ourselves as ego, or body or mind, then we are those things. But if we do not conceive ourselves as such then we are our real nature. It is the thinking which gives rise to such troubles. The very thought that there is such a thing as ego is wrong, because ego is I-thought and we are ourselves the real I. The thought-less state is itself realisation.

(119-3) The Veda's declaration "I am this or that" is only an aid. If there be a goal to be reached, it cannot be permanent. What is goal is already there. With what ego do we seek to reach the goal, the goal is existent before the ego. What is in the goal is even prior to our birth, i.e. to the birth of the ego. Because we exist, the ego appears to exist too. If we look on the Self as the ego, then we are the ego, if as the mind, we are the mind, if as the body, we are the body. It is the thought that works up in many ways. Looking at the shadow on the water it is found to be shaking. Can anyone stop the shaking of the shadow? If it should cease to shake, you should not look on the water. Look at your self. Therefore do not look to the ego. The ego is the I-thought. The true 'I' is the Self.

(119-4) Q: How can we get into touch with the Higher Self?

A: Is it something far away that you have to touch it? The Higher Self exists as one, but it

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¹¹² The original editor inserted "109" at the top of the page by hand.

(continued from the previous page) is only our thoughts which make us feel it is not. You can neither think about it or forget it. The Higher Self is always so whether you follow the path to it or not. Divine existence is our very nature.

(120-1) Q: How can we get rid of these false thoughts?

A: You have unnecessarily loaded yourself with so many thoughts; that is the trouble. Just exist as you really are and those thoughts will die away of themselves. To whom do those thoughts and emotions arise? As you have the habit of forming extraneous thoughts, it is difficult to change the habit.

(120-2) Q: Can I go on thinking "I am God?" Is that right practice?

A: Why think that? In fact you are God. But who goes on saying "I am a man," "I am a male." If any contrary thought for instance that one was a beast had to be put down, then, of course, you might say "I am a man." To the extent of crushing down the wrong notion that one is this or that, according to one's erroneous fancies, to that extent the idea that is not these but God or Self, may be indulged in as a matter of practice, but when practice is over, the result is not any thought at all (such as "I am God") but mere self-realisation. There is no need or meaning in thought at that stage, which is beyond conceptual thought.

(120-3) Q: If Self be itself conscious, why am I not aware even now?

A: Your present knowledge is due to ego and is only relative. Relative knowledge requires a subject and object, whereas the awareness of Self is absolute and requires no object. Remembrance similarly is relative. It requires an object to be remembered and another to remember. When there are no two things, who is to remember whom?

(120-4) That which is beyond knowledge and ignorance is the Atman.

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(121-1) Q: Up to what point is the enquiry itself to be carried out?

A: You must carry on this demolition of wrong ideas by enquiry till your last wrong notion is demolished. Till the self is realised.

(121-2) Q: How is the mind to dive into the heart?

A: The mind now sees itself diversified into the universe. If the diversity is not manifest, it remains in its own essence. That is the heart. The heart is the only truth. Mind is only a transient phase. To remain as one's Self is to enter the heart. Because a man identifies himself with the body, he sees the world separate from himself. This wrong identification arises because he has lost his moorings and has swerved from his original state. He is now advised to give up all these false ideas, to

¹¹³ The original editor inserted "111" at the top of the page by hand.

trace his source and remain as the Self. In that state, there are no differences, no questions will arise. All the sastras are meant only to make man retrace his steps to the original source. He need not gain anything. He must only give up the false ideas and useless accretions. He, instead of doing it, tries to catch hold of something strange and mysterious because he believes his happiness lies elsewhere. That is a mistake. If one remains as the Self, there is bliss. Probably he thinks that being quiet does not bring about the state of bliss. That is due to his ignorance. The only practice is to find out "to whom these questions arise."

(121-3) Q: What is to be our Sadhana?

A: The Sahaja of siddha! Sahaja is the oiringal state so that sadhana amounts to removal of obstacles for the realisation of this abiding truth.

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(123-1) Q: What is selfishness?

A: The world is not external. Because you identify yourself wrongly with the body, you see the world. Its pain becomes apparent to you. But they are not real. Seek the reality and get rid of this unreal feeling.

(123-2) A disciple was once excited because someone in the twon spoke depreciatingly of Sri Bhagavan. Maharshi said: "I permit him to do so. Let him say even more. Let others follow suit. Only let them leave me alone. If anyone cares to believe all these scandalous words, I shall consider it a great service done to me, because if he persuades people to think I am a false swami, they will no longer come to visit me and I shall be able to have a quiet life. I want to be left alone, therefore I welcome the libellous pamphlet. Patience, more patience - tolerance more tolerance."

(123-3) Satisfaction can be only when you reach the source. Otherwise restlessness is there.

(123-4) While reading a book while your eyes follow the lines, your heart should be in the One.

(123-5) Q: My friend has ardour for social service work even at the sacrifice of his own interests.

A: His selfless work is helpful; its utility cannot be denied. See how he works and remains there and how you sent him the extract from the conversations. There

¹¹⁴ Blank page.

¹¹⁵ The original editor inserted "113" at the top of the page by hand.

is a link between the two. The work had further purified the man's mind that he gained an insight into the wisdom of sages, rather readily. Social work has a place in the scheme of spiritual uplift. The work is social and not selfish. God is kept in view all along. The public good is identical with one's own good. Such activities of the body and mind purify the mind. Thus good social work is a way to render the mind purer.

Q: But social work does not give us leisure for meditation?

A: Of course, one's efforts cannot end with

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(continued from the previous page) social work. The outlook is always on the highest truth. Everything will come right in time.

(124-1) Q: How is Mouna possible while engaged in worldly transactions?

A: When women walk with waterpots on their heads, they are able to talk with their companions and all the while they are intent on the water above. Similarly when a sage engages in activities, they do not disturb him because his mind abides in Brahman.

(124-2) The difficult is that man thinks he is the doer; it is a mistake. It is the higher power which does everything and man is only a tool. If he accepts that position he is free from troubles, otherwise he courts them.

(124-3) I watched a visitor who was a famous public speaker for the Arya Samaj, a vigorous debater and fighter, known for his intolerance and disputatiousness enter the hall and begin to question Maharshi. Scarcely waiting for an answer he began to provide the answers for himself! He laid down the law in a loud voice: for instance, he said "I want to know the way to find Truth." A minute later he firmly said: "The service of humanity is the best way to find Truth." Maharshi replied: "You say so!" He began to argue with two others present, in an obnoxious manner and thereafter Maharshi kept quiet and did not say a single word until the man left. After that Maharshi said to us: "Silence is the greatest weapon wherewith to answer such persons."

(124-4) Once when Maharshi was abused in his own presence violently by an emissary of Perumal Swami, he listened silently to the whole harangue. At the end he said "One day I will get up and go away altogether."

(124-5) Do your work without anticipating fruits therof. That is all that you should do.

Chapter 17: Practical Philosophy

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(125-1) I asked Maharshi why his books are in poem and song. He said it is easier for people to learn and remember in this form.

(125-2) In the West it will only be those disgusted with material life who will turn to the Path.

(125-3) Joy and pain are the attributes of the Ahankara (Ego) when by Atma Vichara you realise that you are not the sheath, where is the pleasure or pain for you? Your real nature transcends all such feelings as pleasure and pain. So your benefit in Atmavichara is tangible in the shape of escape from all the ills and sorrows of life. What more can one desire?

(125-4) He who is always stationed in the Atman may be in the midst of a crowd and will yet continue undisturbed. He has no need or desire for solitude.

(125-5) What people call Satan, the Devil, the Black Forces, etc. is simply ignorance of this true Self.

(125-6) All aims, aspirations, desires to serve humanity, schemes to reform the world - cast them all upon the Universal Power (God) which sustains this universe. He is not a fool. He will do what is required. Do you lose the sense "I am doing this." Get rid of egoism. Do not think you are the person to effect any reform. Lease these aims latent. Let God attend to them. Then by getting rid of egoism, God may use you as an instrument to effect them, but the difference is that you will not be conscious of doing them; the Infinite will be working through you and there will be no self-worship to spoil the work. Otherwise there is desire for name or fame and one serves the personal self rather than humanity.

(125-7) Nearly all mankind are more or less unhappy because nearly all do not know the true Self. Real happiness abides in Self-knowledge alone. All else is fleeting. To know one's Self is to be blissful always.

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(126-1) Q: Is the world progressing now?

A: There is one who governs the world, and it is His look-out to look after the world. He who has given life to the world, knows how to look after it also.

If we progress, the world progresses. As you are, so is the world. Without understanding the Self, what is the use of understanding the world. Without Self-knowledge the knowledge of the world is of no use. See the world through the eyes of your supreme Self.

(126-2) Q: It is harder for Westerners to withdraw inwards?

A: Yes, they are rajasic, the energy going outwards. We must be inwardly quiet, not forgetting the Self. Then externally we can go on with our action. Does a man who is acting on the stage in a female part, forget that he is a man? Similarly we too must play our parts on the stage of life, but we must not identify ourselves with those parts.

(126-3) "You may carry on with your Government work; you may continue to live the married life in the world as before. You may assume the stage which transcends all stages, only do not forget the One. Keep your mind on that all the time, whatever you happen to be doing.

(126-4) Q: What is the best way of living?

A: It differs according to as one is a jnani¹¹⁶ or not. A Jnani¹¹⁷ does not find anything different or separate from the Self. All are in the Self. The universe and what is beyond are to be found in the Self.

(126-5) Q: How to remove spiritual sloth of others?

A: Have you removed your own? Turn your enquiries towards Self search. The force set up within you will operate on others also.

(126-6) Q: What about PB's idea of inspired action?

A: Let activities go on. They do not affect the pure Self.

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(127-1) The difficulty is that man thinks he is the doer. It is a mistake. It is the higher Power which does everything and man is only a tool. If he accepts that position he is free from troubles; otherwise he courts them. The sculptured figure on temple tower shows great strain but the tower rests on earth, and really supports the figure. So is the man who takes on himself the sense of doing.

(127-2) Q: How is work to be done by an aspirant?

A: Without identification as the actor¹¹⁸. For instance while in Paris you did not intend visiting this place. You see how you are acting without your own intention to do so. Chapter III verse 4 and [5]¹¹⁹ of Gita says that a man cannot remain without acting. The purpose of one's birth will be fulfilled by itself.

(127-3) Gradually concentration will become pleasant and easy and you will be in that state whether attending to business or whether you sit expressly for meditation.

¹¹⁶ "jnana" in the original.

¹¹⁷ "Gnani" in the original.

¹¹⁸ The original editor corrected the spelling of "actors" by hand.

¹¹⁹ There is a faint slash through the "5" in the original. The original editor may have intended to delete it.

Business will be all the easier for you, when your mind is steadied and strengthened by concentration.

(127-4) Q: I have no interest in business, fearing my yoga practice will be marred?

A: No, your viewpoint will change, as said in the Gita Chapter 2. You will regard business in the light of a mere dream but that will not affect it, for you will go on attending to it as if it were serious.

(127-5) Q: The difficulty is to be in the thoughtless state and attend to duties.

A: Let the thoughtless state be of itself. Do not think of it as pertaining to yourself. Just as when you walk, you take steps involuntarily, so do in your other actions.

(127-6) You now want to go elsewhere and from there you will desire to go to some other place. At this rate there could be no end to your travels. You do not realise that it is your mind that drives you in this manner. Control that first

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(continued from the previous page) and you will be happy wherever you are. It is my impression that Vivekananda has somewhere narrated the story of a man trying to bury his shadow and finding that over every sod of earth he had put in the grave dug for burying his shadow, the latter still appeared over the new earth; the shadow could never be buried! Similar is the case of one trying to bury his thoughts. One must therefore attempt to get at the very bottom from which thought springs and root out the thought, mind and desires.

(128-1) Q: The quest for Self is selfish in a world of misery. Selfless work is better.

A: The sea is not aware of its wave. Similarly the Self is not aware of its ego.

(128-2) Going down the hill, some sweepers were at their work. One of them stopped work and was about to prostrate himself before Maharshi. The latter said: "To engage in your duty is the true namaskar. To perform one's duty carefully is the greatest service to God."

(128-3) There has been evil and sorrow since the beginning of creation. You ask why the Rishees do not put matters right. The Vedas tell of the demons (asuras) who existed since earliest times. There is a force of opposition in the world which produces strife and suffering but it works to make man grow and evolve. It is a force in nature which co-exists along with the good.

(128-4) Q: How to correlate spiritual and worldly life?

A: There is only one experience. What are worldly experiences but those built up on false I?

(128-5) To one who said the Gita preached Karma Yoga, Maharshi replied No. Because it taught that one should act with selfless motive. This could only be achieved after knowing the illusoriness of self, i.e. Jnana.¹²⁰ Hence it really taught Jnana¹²¹ Yoga which Maharshi said is the highest. He said that Gita taught man should act by letting the Universal act through him.

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(129-1) Q: Why is the world in ignorance?

A: Let the world care for itself. If you are the body, there is the gross world. If you are the spirit, all is spirit only. Look for it – the ego vanishes. If you enquire, the ignorance will be found non-existent. It is the mind which feels misery, darkness etc. See the Self.

(129-2) Q: What is the purpose of all the suffering and evil in the world?

A: Your question is itself the outcome of the suffering. Had it not been for the suffering would you have put the question? Except for the jnanis,¹²³ every man, from king to peasant has a certain amount of sorrow. Even in cases where it seems absent it is only a time factor that makes you think so – sooner or later it comes. Also one man may not question sorrow or God at the first blow but he is likely to do so at the fifth blow. We have taken this vehicle in order to know our real state.

(129-3) Q: But why should imperfection come from perfection?

A: Had it not been for the manifestation of universe we would not have thought about the real state. The purpose of the manifestation is for you to know the cause why it is being done. There is no maya when you know your real state. It is your fault if you do not know yourself.

(129-4) Q: What is the difference between West and East?

A: All have to come to the same goal.

(129-5) Q: I am a doctor, how to heal?

A: The permanent cure is jnana,¹²⁴ the patient must realise for himself. According to his maturity he will realise it. Otherwise if one disease goes another comes in.

(129-6) To a young man who came and demanded to be given powers to stamp out the world's materialism: "People who are unable themselves ask for

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¹²⁰ "Gnana" in the original.

¹²¹ "Gnana" in the original.

¹²² The original editor inserted "119" at the top of the page by hand.

¹²³ "gnanis" in the original.

¹²⁴ "gnana" in the original.

(continued from the previous page) divine powers to be utilised for human welfare. This is like the lame man who said he would overpower the enemy if only he were helped on his feet! The intention is good but there is no sense of proportion.

(130-1) Q: Is the world plan really good?

A: It is indeed good. The error is on our part. When we correct that error, the whole scheme becomes good¹²⁵.

(130-2) Q: How change world suffering?

A: Realise the Self; that is all that is necessary.

(130-3) Q: The world is materialist. What is the remedy for it?

A: Material or spiritual, according to your outlook. Make your outlook right. The Creator knows how to take care of His creation.

(130-4) Q: How can I help others?

A: What other is there for you to help? Who is the 'I' that is to help others. First clear that point and then everything settles itself.

(130-5) Q: There are widespread disasters in the world, e.g. famine, pestilence, etc. What is the cause of this state of affairs?

A: To whom does all this appear. You were not aware of the world and its suffering in your sleep. You are conscious of them only in your wakeful state, Continue in the state in which you were not afflicted by these. That is to say, when you were not aware of the world, its sufferings did not affect you. When you remain as the self as in sleep, the world and its sufferings will not affect you. Therefore look within. Seek the Self. There will then be an end of the world and its miseries.

(130-6) Q: There are great men, public workers who cannot solve the problem of the misery in the world?

A: They are ego-centred and hence the inability. If they remain in the Self, they would be different.

(131-1) Q: How to reconcile work with meditation?

A: Who is the worker? Let him who works ask the question. You are always the Self, not the mind. It is the mind which raises these questions. Work always proceeds in the presence of the Self. It is no hindrance to realisation. It is the mistaken identity of the worker that troubles one. Get rid of the false identity.

¹²⁵ The original editor corrected the spelling of "good" by hand.

¹²⁶ The original editor inserted "121" at the top of the page by hand.

Every day activities go on automatically. Know that the mind prompting them is but a phantom proceeding from the Self. Why do you think that you are active? The activities are not your own; they God's.

(131-2) Q: They say that the efforts will lead to blankness of mind and work will not be possible?

A: Go first to that blankness and tell me afterwards.

(131-3) Q: If one holds such Self in remembrance, will one's action be always right?

A: They ought to be. However such a person is not concerned with the right or wrong of actions. His actions are God's and therefore right.

(131-4) Q: How can my mind be still if I have to use it more than other people? I want to go into solitude and renounce my headmaster's work.

A: No. You may remain where you are and go on with your work. What is the undercurrent which vivifies the mind, enables it to do all this work? Why, the Self. So, that is the real source of your activity. Simply become aware of it during your work and do not forget it. Contemplate in the background of your mind even whilst working. To do that, DO NOT HURRY. Take your own time; keep the remembrance or real nature alive, even whilst working, and avoid haste which causes you to forget. Be deliberate. Practice meditation to still the mind and cause it to become aware of its true relationship to the Self, which supports it. (He gave simile, spoke of a wheel, whether thin or thick, all within the same circle, so intellect-work is within the circle of Self). Do not imagine it is you who are doing the work.

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(continued from the previous page) Think that it is the underlying current which is doing it. Identify yourself with this current. If you work unhurriedly, recollectedly, your work or service need not be a hindrance.

(132-1) Krishna in Gita really told Arjuna to be fixed in Self and act according to nature, without the thought of doership. Then the results of actions would not affect him. Thus inherence in the Self is the sum of Gita teaching. Even if interpreted as duty and action, it means to act as tool of a Higher Power.

(132-2) Q: Is it useful to bring East and West closer?

A: Such events will take place automatically. There is a Power guiding the destinies of nations. These questions arise only when you have lost touch with reality.

(132-3) Q: How reconcile realisation with wage-earning activities?

A: Actions are no cause of bondage. Bondage is only the false notion that "I" am acting. Leave off such thoughts but let the body and senses play their roles unimpeded by your interference.

(132-4) Q: Is work an obstruction?

A: No. For the realised man there is to be sense of being an agent. Even for an aspirant he may practise Self-enquiry. While engaged in work it may be difficult for a beginner but after some practise it will be effective and the work will not be a hindrance to meditation.

(132-5) Q: How will transactions go on if one maintains mental silence?

A: When women walk with water pots on their heads and keep chatting with their companions they are very careful of the loads on their heads. Similarly when a jnani¹²⁷ engages in activities, they do not defile him because his mind is abiding in Brahman.

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(133-1) Q: We are men living in the world and have one kind of grief or another. We pray for help and still are not satisfied. What to do?

A: Trust God. If you surrender you must be able to abide by His will and not make a grievance of what may not please you. Things may turn out different from what they are in appearance. Distress often leads men to faith in God.

(133-2) Q: I am a sinful man!

A: Why think of yourself so? You have rightly thrown all responsibility on God in whom you have faith and He will look after that.

(133-3) [Have compassionate love for others but keep it secret: don't show it or talk of it.]¹³⁰

(133-4) [If desires are fulfilled, don't be elated; if frustrated, don't be disappointed. The elation may be deceptive; it should be checked; for initial joy may end in final grief. After all, whatever happens you are unaffected, still as you were.]¹³¹

(133-5) Q: But how can I help another with his problem, his troubles?

A: What is the talk of another - there is only the one. Try to realise there is no I, no you, no he, only the one Self which is all. If you believe in the problem of another, you are believing in something outside the Self. You will help him best by realising the oneness of everything rather than by outward activity.

¹²⁷ "gnani" in the original.

¹²⁸ Para 135-5 was typed on another page and pasted here by hand.

¹²⁹ The original editor inserted "123" at the top of the page by hand.

¹³⁰ The original editor inserted "Have compassionate love for others but keep it secret: don't show it or talk of it." by hand.

¹³¹ The original editor inserted "If desires are fulfilled, don't be elated; if frustrated, don't be disappointed. The elation may be deceptive; it should be checked; for initial joy may end in final grief. After all, whatever happens you are unaffected, still as you were." by hand.

The ego pertains to all the waking activities, – the consciousness, the intellect. In deep sleep where is the I? The intellect is still, the body is still and yet the Self is there. It is the waking activities that veil the real Self by making the Ego. The false self, appears as the real Self.

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(134-1) Maharshi told swami Dandapani, who complained about the materialistic behaviour of the manager of the ashram, that it often happened that an ashram began to lose sight of its original purpose, which was to gather people who wanted to retire from the world for spiritual development. It frequently happened that an Ashram became more concerned with the details of material organization and less concerned with its spiritual purpose, thus becoming deflected from its spiritual path. But in any case, Maharshi said that the material services and work and manual and office labour of an ashram were really intended for a lower order of minds, whilst those who were more advanced could [better]¹³³ do their meditations away from an ashram in their own solitude.

Maharshi even confessed that he was silent to most of the ashram people because in their heart of hearts they were not so much interested in spiritual self-realisation as in work and busying themselves in the material organisation of the ashram, so he thought to himself it would be of no use to talk of the higher things to them.

(134-2) When some disciples brought a complaint to Maharshi about another [(Niranjaninda's)]¹³⁴ disciple's oppressive conduct towards them, he replied: "Did you come here to reform others (in the ashram) or to reform yourselves?"

(134-3) Maharshi said when he abruptly [abandoned]¹³⁵ Skandasram to Perumal Swami, "I came here, leaving father, mother, home and comforts, to kill the ego. You are full of 'I:' (Perumal Swami had claimed: "This is My building, I put it up"). "We are completely opposite, so I shall leave you." Maharshi went to foot of hill and stayed in hut near his mother's tomb until the present hall was constructed.

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(135-1) Everything in this universe is run by One Supreme Power but if a man will not keep to the destined path appointed for him, but strays beyond its limits then God punishes him and through that suffering he turns towards the Self. But when the punishment goes he ceases to worship and again sins, thereby inviting an

¹³² The paras on this page were typed on another sheet of paper and pasted here by hand.

¹³³ The original editor inserted "better" by hand.

¹³⁴ The original editor inserted "(Niranjaninda's)" by hand.

¹³⁵ The original editor changed "left" to "abandoned" by hand.

¹³⁶ The original editor inserted "125" at the top of the page by hand.

increased punishment. When he gets excited or anxious he may know that he is not on the destined path but is straying, for on the appointed path he will be peaceful and content. He should abide in the Self and not seek to stray into desires, ambitions, etc. beyond what God gives him, but be egoless.

(135-2) Whose freewill is it? You believe it is yours. You are beyond will and fate. Abide as that and you transcend them both. That is the meaning of conquering destiny by will. Fate can be conquered. Fate is the result of Karma. But by Satsanga the bad vasanās are conquered. His experiences are viewed in proper perspective. I am now enjoyer of Karma's fruits. I was in the past and shall be in the future. Who is this 'I?' Finding this I t be pure consciousness beyond Karma and enjoyment, freedom and happiness are gained. There is then no effort, for the Self is perfect and there is nothing to gain. So long as there is individuality, one is enjoyer and doer. But if it is lost the divine will acts and guides the course of events. Restrictions and discipline are for Jivas and not for Muktas. Freewill is implied in the scriptural injunctions to be good. It implies overcoming fate. It is done by Jnana¹³⁷ (See IV 37 of Gita) "As the fire which is kindled reduces all fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all works to ashes."

(135-3) When anything happens, we are prone to attribute the same to something or someone else. However

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(continued from the previous page) The fact is that our [experiences]¹³⁸ have already been created by ourselves and nothing happens which is more or less than what we deserve. What can others do to [us]?¹³⁹ Others are not responsible for what happens to us. They are only instruments for what would happen to us some way or another. Let us be strong in fath and not succumb to fear. Whatever happens, happens according to our prarabdha. Let it exhaust itself. Evil intentions and evil actions are natural to the evil minded. But their evil will react on themselves, and not affect us simply because they desire it. One is required not to think of oneself, so why should there be anxiety regarding others?

(136-1) Q: If a soul dies in babyhood or childhood, it does not seem fair because it has not had enough experience of life to win realisation?

A: You do not know the child's viewpoint! Yours is simply of the intellect. [We and our children are all from God and in God. God takes care of us and our children.]¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ "Gnana" in the original.

¹³⁸ The original editor inserted "experiences" by hand

¹³⁹ The original editor deleted "See what Lakshman said to Guha when the latter was sorry at the sight of Rama lying with Sita on a bed of Kusa grass." after "us?" by hand.

¹⁴⁰ The original editor moved "We and our children are all from God and in God. God takes care of us and our children." From after "regarding others?" to after "intellect." by hand.

(136-2) Animals can think like human beings. We must not imagine they are senseless creatures. Some, who have associated in contact with people can understand words and conversation. He pointed to cow and said she could think intelligently.

(136-3) Individual human beings have to suffer their karmas but Isvara manages to make the best of their karmas for His purpose. God manipulates the fruits of karma; He does not add or take away from it. The subconsciousness of man is a warehouse of good and bad karma. Iswara chooses from this warehouse what He sees will best suit the spiritual evolution at the time of each man whether pleasant or painful. Thus there is nothing arbitrary.

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(137-1) The Realised Man knows neither past present or future. He is above time for he lives in the timeless Self.

(137-2) What is it that is born? Not the true Self. Once we are born into that it is final; that is the true and only birth – the spiritual birth. The others are but fleeting incarnations of the vasanas. If it were not for the body, we would not talk of the spirit being within us; we would be the true Self.

(137-3) The illumined man will just watch and wait and see what happens. He lets things take their course. He resigns all to that Absolute Power, which you can call God, Karma or what you like. There is no egoism in him. So be quiet.

(137-4) There is a sloka in Gita which says that he who acts without attachment to the sense and without egoism (the sense 'I' am doing this) though he kill an enemy, does not make any Karma. Similarly such an illumined one is free from all past karma and from all past vasanas. How can there be Karma or vasanas when the 'I' the ego which caused or causes them has been destroyed?

(137-5) The illumined man does not plan for the future and takes not a forethought. Why should he? There is no sense of 'I' in him any longer. The Infinite Power which is able to do things directs him.

(137-6) Q: I want to go to Kailas?

A: One can see these places only if destined, not otherwise. But after seeing all, there will still remain more places unvisited – if not in this hemisphere then in the other. Knowledge implies ignorance beyond what is known. Knowledge is always limited.

¹⁴¹ The original editor inserted "127" at the top of the page by hand.

(137-7) When Annamalai, who was working as a carpenter in the Asram for a number of years, was forced to resign as Sarvadhidhikari always overworked him physically with no time for meditation Maharshi said: "Your Karma is finished. Go away now for meditation."

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(138-1) If you compare the soul with a business man then the intellect is his office which he visits daily while the heart is his home. The various departments work even in his absence, because they feel his presence as always there and without such presence all would stop. But the records are kept by the man himself and take by him after incarnation ends, the Self withdraws with the records: if it did not do so it would never be able to remember former births, and the cases of remembrance proves that the Self carries its impressions with it, and does not leave them behind in the brain.

(138-2) What is the use of wanting to know who you were in past births when you do not know who you are in the present one?

(138-3) Q: Can we know past lives?

A: Do you know the present life? Find the present, then the past follows. Even now we suffer so much with our present limited knowledge; why burden yourself with more knowledge and suffer more?

(138-4) Freewill is the present appearance to a limited faculty of sight. The ego sees its past activity as falling under a law, its own freewill being one of the links in that chain of law. Omnipotence of God are later seen by ego to have acted through the appearance of his own freewill. He understands that natural laws are manifestations of God's will.

(138-5) Destiny is connected with the physical body. Let the body act. Why do you mind it. So long as the body exists, both destiny and freewill function. But knowledge transcends these two.

(138-6) Q: Why is there misery on earth?

A: Due to Karma.

(138-7) Q: Does Karma really exist?

A: Yes, so long as there is a doer, there is karma. When doership vanishes, karma vanishes.

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(139-1) Those who painfully toil to acquire the virtues one by one would be better employed trying to acquire Jnanam.¹⁴³ To the Jnani¹⁴⁴ all virtues comes naturally and he uses them quite unconsciously since they are naturally his, belonging to his state of being. The Gita speaks of all rivers flowing into the ocean, so all virtues flow into the illumined man. He does not have to strive for them. They are the fruits of illumination. Similarly rather than trying to get rid of faults, try to get rid of egoism which is their cause. Destroy the root of Ahankara and you destroy all faults thereby.

(139-2) He who surrenders himself completely is the best devotee. God bears all our burdens. The Divine Power is moving the entire world. Why should we always think of doing things in this way or that instead of surrendering ourselves to that Power?

(139-3) Q: What is sin?

A: Sin is that which makes a man say, "I" and "Mine." When all belongs to God, if you say this is I or Mine, that is sin.

(139-4) Q: The world will change if people will give up their possessions for the benefit of others.

A: First give up yourself and then think of the rich.

(139-5) Q: Is grace found by surrender?

A: Surrender once and for all and be done with the desire. So long as the sense of doership is retained there is desire; that is also personality. The sense of doership is the bondage, and not the actions themselves. "Be still and know etc." Here stillness is total surrender without vestige of individuality. Agitation of mind is cause of desire and sense of doership. If that is stopped, there is quiet.

(140-1) Surrender and all will be well. Throw all the responsibility on God. Do not bear the burden. What can destiny then do? If one surrenders to God, there will be no cause for anxiety. Nothing will affect you, if protected by God. The sense of relief is depended upon and proportionate to reliance on God or on Self.

(140-2) Q: My work hinders me?

A: If you have the right attitude, the kind of life you lead does not matter very much.

¹⁴² The original editor inserted "129" at the top of the page by hand.

¹⁴³ "Gnanam" in the original.

¹⁴⁴ "Gnani" in the original.

(140-3) Q: In this pure atmosphere the Path is easy but in towns it is difficult?

A: When you see the true self is it not a pure atmosphere? Let the body think what it wishes, but why should you think so? Only if you can keep quiet without engaging in any other pursuits also, it is very good. If that cannot be done, what is the use of being quiet? So long as one is obliged to be active, let him not give up attempts to realise the Self.

(140-4) Even if a Realised man were to destroy many lives in war, no sin can touch his pure soul. So too says the Gita.

(140-5) You are yourself the source of all your happiness, whatsoever it be, and not external things. Even when you imagine that some external object has given you the happiness, you are mistaken. What happened really is that unconsciously the object brought you back for a flash to your self, borrowed the happiness and thus presented it to you. The happiness came as a shadow to you, why not look to the source, to the Self, and realise it?

(140-6) Q: I am possessed by fears of disease and death?

A: Who gets disease. Do you get it? If you analyse what you are, you see that disease cannot affect you. What are you? Do you die? Can you die? Think of Atma; realise that.

Q: I try but it does not remain in the mind long.

A: Practice makes perfect.

Q: Meanwhile?

A: Meanwhile there need not be suffering.

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(141-1) Q: Would the use of birth control appliances lead to immorality?

A: You must go to the root of things. Find out the true cause of birth and then stifle that. Let that which is born control itself. I or whom is this birth? There is an ancient verse which says "Desires go on increasing and burning more fiercely as they are fed." So the only effective control is to check the causes within the to check desires and thus become moral.

(141-2) Q: Is continence the only method to control the size of a family?

A: Yes. The other methods give only temporary relief and treat symptoms only.

(141-3) Q: Where there is a conflict of desires, one for a child and the other for sex union which should be chosen?

¹⁴⁵ The original editor inserted "131" at the top of the page by hand.

A: Why should you not stifle both, if you are able to stifle one of these desires. Why should you interfere with the laws of Nature. Let him who made the laws of nature operate them. The sex impulse is strong enough already; why should you strengthen it further? If you understand the truth in nature the sex desires will not arise at all. If you remove the sense of diversity, what gave the sex its power will be removed also. In fun Maharshi added "If we could all remain children and not grow up at all, it would be such a happy world!" Nature makes some people barren or deprives others of their children, whereas she gives many children to others. Thus if you attempt to control birth attempt also to control death.

(141-4) We feel that there is a lot of misery in the world through overpopulation, but if we did not exist, the misery would disappear too. We can find out the cause of this misery by finding out the cause of our birth. If that which is born (the ego) is known the evils will disappear.

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(142-1) Q: How to control lust, anger, etc.?

A: Whose are these passions? Find out if you remain as the Self, there will be found to be nothing apart from the Self. Then there will be no need to control, etc.

(142-2) Q: I have committed sexual sin.

A: Even if you have, it does not matter so long as you do not think afterwards that you have done so. The Self is not aware of any sin and renunciation of sex is internal, not merely of the body alone.

(142-3) Q: I have wanted to commit adultery although I am married.

A: It is better to stick to your wife.

(142-4) If a man's happiness is due to outer causes and external possessions, then a man devoid of possession should have no happiness whatever. Does real experience show this? No. For in deep sleep man is then devoid of all possessions including his body; yet instead of being unhappy he enjoys blissful release. Does not everyone desire to sleep soundly? Hence happiness is not due to external causes, but to returning into the Self. When the pure I, the Reality, is forgotten, all miseries crop up; when that is held fast, the miseries do not affect the person. Emergence from Self has been the cause of all misery.

(142-5) Q: I am carried away by the sight of the breasts of a young woman neighbour and often tempted to commit adultery with her. What to do?

A: You are always pure. It is your senses and body which tempt you and which you confused with your real self. So first know who is tempted and who is there to tempt. But even if you do commit adultery, do not think about it afterwards, because you are yourself always pure. You are not the sinner.

(143-1) A snake in asram hall fell down from the roof at night when sleeping. Maharshi ordered the men to take a lantern to light its path to door and not to harm it saying regarding the snakes which infested the place: "We have come to their abode as guests and so we have no business to molest them; let us leave them in peace."

(144-1) [Q:]¹⁴⁸ What is your opinion about social reform?

A: Self reform automatically brings about social reform. Confine yourself to self-reform. Social reform will take care of itself.

(144-2) PERSONAL: In 1938 Maharshi said to Dr Nambian who spoke to him about his maladies (Maharshi had bleeding piles then): "I am tired of this body."

(144-3) Q: Is a teacher needed?

A: As in all physical and mental training a competent teacher is sought, so in matters spiritual the same rule applies.

Chapter 18: Sagehood as an Ideal

(145-1) The realised man finds himself in others - they are not different from himself. With wise men he is wise, but with ignorant men he becomes ignorant; with children he will play and with the learned he will be scholarly.

(145-2) The meditation on the Guru's face or form is only for beginners. The advanced disciples should concentrate inwards on the Self - this is equal to meditating on the guru, for he is one with the Self.

(145-3) The Self-realised one is not to be regarded as an idler or lazy drone. His powers develop incessantly and in course of time, he may develop and manifest

¹⁴⁶ The original editor inserted "133" at the top of the page by hand.

¹⁴⁷ Para 144-3 was typed on a separate sheet of paper and pasted here by hand.

¹⁴⁸ The original editor deleted the para before this para by hand. It read: "My writings often came unexpectedly to me and also disjointedly. Often a paragraph or sentence belonging to the end or middle of a writing would come to me before the earlier parts." in the original.

¹⁴⁹ The original editor inserted "138" at the top of the page by hand.

occult powers, if that is his Karma. This will be merely a sort of sport for the jnani¹⁵⁰ in the objective world, as he has no interest or particular purpose to serve. But if his Prarabdha is otherwise the siddhis do not manifest, and the wise man, who habitually and by nature rests in the Atman, does not seek any other path.

(143-4) When one has realised, a universal life current takes possession of him and uses him henceforth. His own separate will is gone. He becomes but an instrument in Its hands. This is the real Self-surrender. This is the highest Kundalini, this is real Bhakti, this is Jnanam.¹⁵¹

(143-5) A Realised one sends out waves of spiritual influence in his aura which draw many people towards him. Yet he may sit in a cave and maintain complete silence. We may listen to lectures upon truth and come away with hardly any grasp of the subject, but to come into contact with a Realised One, though he speak nothing, will give much more grasp of the subject. He does not ever need to go out among the public. If necessary, he can use others as instruments.

(143-6) Is a Guru needed for spiritual progress? Yes, but the Guru is within you; he is one with your own Self.

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(146-1) All lectures and books do little good and are of use only for beginners, to point out the way. The real service is done in meditation. One sitting still and silent – as mentioned in the poem by the Tamil Saint Tayummanavar – can [influence]¹⁵² a whole country. The force of meditation is infinitely more powerful than speech or writings. One who sits in silence meditating on the Self, will draw a whole people to him without his going out to anyone.

Even books like the Bhagavad Gita, Light on the Path, must be given up to find the Self by looking within. Even the Gita says, "Meditate upon the Self." It does not say, "Meditate upon the book Gita."

(146-2) Q: Prajnananda has written me to ask you if he can become your disciple?

A: All these gurus and disciples exist only from the disciple's standpoint. To the Self Realised there is neither guru nor disciple – only one Self. The guru is the disciple. Only because you have the body consciousness do you regard him as separate.

Q: But a guru can give help?

A: Certainly – Yes, he can help.

Q: Well shall I say Faith and Love towards you are all he needs to show?

A: Yes.

¹⁵⁰ "gnani" in the original.

¹⁵¹ "Gnanam" in the original.

¹⁵² The original editor deleted "people" and inserted "influence" by hand.

(146-3) By repeated practice one can become accustomed to turning inward and finding the Self. One must make incessant effort always until one has permanently realised. After that all effort ceases, the state becomes natural, the Supreme takes possession of the man with unbroken current. Until it has become permanently natural you habitual state, know that you have not realised the self, only glimpsed it.

(146-4) The soul that realises the self may yet be connected with a working body sense and mind without however identifying itself with that body.

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(147-1) Q: Is there something to be transferred at initiation?

A: Transfer means eradication of the sense of being the disciple. Not that the man was something at one time and later metamorphosed into another. If the individual is sought he is nowhere to be found. Such is the guru. Such is a Dakshanamurthi. What did he do? He was silent; the disciples appeared before him; he maintained silence; the doubts of the disciples were dispelled which means that they lost their individual identities. Such is the true guru and such is true initiation. That is Jnana and not the verbiage usually associated with it. Silence is the most potent form of work. However vast and emphatic the sastras may be, they fail in their effect. The guru is quiet and peace prevails in all His silence and more vast and emphatic than all the Sastras put together. These questions arise because of that feeling that having been here so long, heard so much, exerted so hard, I have no gained anything. The work, proceeding within is not apparent. In fact, the guru is with one always.

Tayummanavar says: - O Lord, coming with me all along these births, never abandoning me and finally rescuing me, such is the experience of realisation. Srimad Bhagavad - Gita says the same thing in a different want: "We two are not only now but have ever been so."

(147-2) Q: Is not grace the gift of the Guru?

A: God, grace and guru, all are synonymous and also eternal and immanent. Is not the Self already within? Is it for the guru to bestow It by his look? If the guru thinks so he does not deserve the name. The books say that there are so many initiations: as hasta diksha, sparsa disksha, mental dikshas etc. They say that the guru makes some rites with fire, water, japa, mantras, etc. and call such fantastic performances, initiations as if the sishya becomes ripe only after such processes.

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¹⁵³ The original editor inserted "137" at the top of the page by hand.

(148-1) Guru's grace is worth more than study and meditation. It is primary; all others are secondary.

(148-2) The Guru's grace is like a hand extended to help you out of water.

(148-3) Q: Is Divine Grace really necessary? Cannot a man's honest efforts bring him to the goal?

A: Yes, it is so. But the gift of such grace is vouchsafed only to him who is a true devotee or to a yogin who has striven hard and ceaselessly on the path. The Guru's grace is the same as God's grace, because Guru is not different from Him.

(148-4) Q: I pray for your grace because human efforts are unavailing without grace.

A: Both are necessary. There is the sun shining but you must turn and look at it in order to get a glimpse of the sun. Similarly individual efforts are necessary as well as grace.

(148-5) Grace is within you; if it is external it is useless. Grace is the Self, you are never out of its operation. If you remember the Guru you are prompted to do so by the Self. Is it not the Grace already there? Is there a moment when grace is not operating in you? Your remembrance of guru is the forerunner of Grace. The latter is both the response and the stimulus. That is the Self and that is Grace. There is no cause for anxiety.

(148-6) Q: But is not a Guru's grace or God's grace necessary for one's progress in the vichara?

A: Yes, but the enquiry that you are making is itself Guru's grace or God's grace.

(148-7) Q: What is the Path?

A: The method may be anything. From whatever directions the pilgrims foregather, they must enter the Kaaba only by one passage.

(148-8) Q: People speak of different methods. Which method is the easiest?

A: The methods appear easy according to the nature of the individual. It depends upon what he has practised before.

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(149-1) Q: How long is a Guru necessary?

A: As long as there is ignorance. The guru, otherwise God manifesting, guides the devotee saying that God is in you and He is the Self. This leads to introversion of mind and finally to realisation. Effort is necessary until the state of

¹⁵⁴ The original editor inserted "139" at the top of the page by hand.

realisation. Even then the Self should spontaneously become evident. Till that state of spontaneity, effort in some form is required.

(149-2) Q: How to meet appointed guru?

A: Intense meditation brings about the consummation. The sage's glance has a purifying effect.

(149-3) If you understand your own reality, the Rishee's will be clear to you. There is only one Master and that is the Self.

(149-4) Sanat Kumara, the One Initiator works through all the gurus in the world. There is no difference between them and him. He bestows his teaching and initiation - which is the highest - in the Silence.

(149-5) Q: Does the Guru give help deliberately?

A: Guru's grace works automatically, spontaneously. The disciple gets precisely the help he requires.

(149-6) Q: You say that "association with the Wise and service of them is required of the disciple."

A: Yes, the first really means association with the unmanifest Sat, or Absolute Existence; but as very few can do that, they have to take the second best which is association with the manifest Sat, i.e. the Guru. Association with the Sages should be made because the thoughts are so persistent. The sage has already overcome the mind and remains in peace. His proximity helps to bring about such condition in others. Otherwise there is no meaning in seeking his company. The guru provides the needed strength unseen by others. Service is primarily to abide in the Self but it also includes to make the Guru's body comfortable, and to look after his place of abode. Also contact with the Guru is necessary,

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(continued from the previous page) but this means spiritual contact. If the disciple finds the guru internally, then it does not matter where he goes. Staying here or elsewhere must be understood to be the same and to have the same effect.

(150-1) A Jnani¹⁵⁵ does not feel oppressed by his body. Did those Jnanis who lived in bodies and wrote sacred books no longer remain Jnanis?

(150-2) Guru is the Self after all, but manifests as the external Guru at a lower stage of the mind's development. A spiritually minded man takes God for his Guru believing that God is everywhere. Later God brings in contact with a professional Guru whose grace enables him to feel that his Self is the Reality and Guru.

¹⁵⁵ "Gnani" in the original.

(150-3) Q: Cannot a Guru give us realisation as a gift?

A: Guru is a very powerful aid on path, but your effort also is required; it is essential it is you who should see the sun; can spectacles see the sun for you? You have to see your true nature.

(150-4) Q: Will not a competent Guru be a great help to me?

A: Yes. Go on working with the light you have now available and you will meet your Guru, as he will be seeking you himself.

(150-5) "Who wants physical immortality? We should want only one thing to realise and be in the Self, and to get off this body. Why then prolong life in it?"

(150-6) His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore visited Maharshi for 15 minutes, remaining silent almost the whole time. At lunch that day when the devotees were talking about the incident, M remarked: "He is a highly advanced soul. He is a Janaka. What need is there for talk when a knower meets another knower? It suffices for their eyes to meet in glance, when immediately they turn inwards in response and recognition. Vocal conversation is unnecessary."

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(151-1) What is this talk of Guru's grace? Does this guru hold you by the hand and whisper something in your ear? You may imagine him to be what you are yourself. Because you are with the body, you think that he is also a body, to do something tangible to you. But his work lies within. How is a guru gained? If a devotee prays to God unselfishly, God who is immanent, in his grace takes pity on the loving devotee and manifests himself as a being according to the devotee's standard. The devotee thinks that he is a man and expects relationship as between bodies but the guru, who is God of Self incarnate, works from within, helps the man to see the error of his ways, guides him in the right path until he realises the Self within. After such a realisation he feels "I was so worried before, I am after all the Self, the same as before, but not affected by anything, where is he who was miserable? He is not to be found." What should we do now? Only act up to the words of the master. Work within. The guru is both within and without. So he created conditions to drive you inward and prepares the interior to drag you to the centre. Thus he gives you a push from without and exerts a pull from within, so that you may be fixed at the centre. In sleep you are centred within; simultaneously with waking your mind rushes out, thinking this, that and all else. This must be checked. It is possible only for the agent who can work both within and without. Can he be identified with a body? We think that the world can be conquered with our efforts. When frustrated externally and driven internally we feel that there is a power higher than man. The

¹⁵⁶ The original editor inserted "141" at the top of the page by hand.

existence of the higher power must be admitted and recognised. The ego is a very powerful elephant and cannot be brought under control by any one less than a lion; who is no other than the guru in this instance, whose very look makes the elephant tremble and die. We will know in due

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(continued from the previous page) course that our glory lies where we cease to exist. In order to gain that state, one should surrender oneself saying: - "Lord, Thou are my refuge." The master then sees this man is in the fit state to receive guidance and so guides him.

(152-1) The best instruction is heart-to-heart speech in silence.

(152-2) Q: When after long struggles one attains, is the attachment his own act or action of the Spirit current?

A: It is the action of the current.

(152-3) Q: It is claimed that the grace of Iswara is necessary.

A: We are Iswara. By seeing ourselves as Him we are having his grace. His nature is grace.

(152-4) Personal example and personal instruction are the most helpful aids on the Path while practice is better than books.

(152-5) Q: Does Bhagavan make the way easy for aspirants by himself becoming a kind of "vicarious tapas," to that they need not to through actual hardships?

A: If that were so, every one will easily reach the goal. Each one must work for himself.

(152-6) A higher power is leading you; be led by the same. It knows what to do and how to do it. Trust to It.

(152-7) Q: Have I your grace and benediction?

A: "Why should you doubt it?"

(152-8) Jnana is acquired by Sat Sanga or rather its atmosphere.

(152-9) Leave it to Him. Surrender unreservedly either because you admit your inability and require a Higher power to help you, or investigate, go into the source and merge in Self. God never forsakes one who has surrendered.

(152-10) What is it? "I stepped unwittingly on the scorpion and hurt it, so it stung me in return to remind me of its existence."

(153-1) Q: Is grace necessary?

A: Certainly. But grace is all along there. It is the self is not to be acquired.

(153-2) Swami Siddeheswarananda of the R.K. Mission to me "One morning at 7 a.m. when I was sitting in the hall I asked Maharshi about a certain verse of the Namma Alwar embodying his cosmic consciousness vision. Maharshi replied I shall repeat some similar verses by another poet of the Tamil language, attend to my way of repeating the words and you will be able to understand although you are a Malayali from West Coast. The verse had reference to divine love. A shaft of sunlight fell through the window on to his face. Hardly had he read out two lines when I noticed beads of tears trickling down his face. Then he stopped repeating the words, as though he felt too keenly and emotionally the meaning of the words. There was an atmosphere of love around him. For two to three hours he remained silent, the rest of the poem unread, the book up on his knee, his eyes open, in a trance of divine emotion. The swami had formerly held the impression that Maharshi was dry, cold indifferent type. This experience showed how deeply Maharshi can feel."

(153-3) One who sees the Self has the power to help others, to see their selves. He is the real guru and that is the only initiation.

(153-4) Q: Can the guru make disciple realise Self by transmitting his own power to him?

A: Yes. Guru does not bring about realisation. He merely removes obstacles to it, for the self is always realised.

(153-5) MAHARSHI'S EVIDENCE taken from Commision in the Palani Swami lawsuit Dec. 36.

Q: To which of the four ashrams (stages) do you belong?

A: To one beyond the four commonly known.

Q: Are there others beside yourself?

A: There may be.

(continued from the previous page) Q: You renounce worldly life but here there is property (in your name) in the Ramanasram. Why?

A: I do not seek for it. Property is thrust on me. I do not love nor hate it.

Q: Is it given to you?

¹⁵⁷ The original editor inserted "143" at the top of the page by hand.

A: It is given to the Swami, whoever he may be. But the body is considered Swami in the world. That body is this. It reduces itself to myself.

Q: Do you give Upadesh?

A: Visitors ask questions and I answer them as I know.

Q: Is it Upadesh?

A: How can I say how others take it?

Q: Have you disciples?

A: I do not give Upadesh in the ceremonial manner. For instance, keeping a kumbha, making puja worship to it and whispering (mantra) to the person. He may call himself my disciple or devotee. I do not consider anyone to be my disciple. I had never sought Upadesh from anyone nor do I give ceremonial Upadesh. If people call themselves my disciples I do not approve or disapprove. In my view all are alike. What can I say to them? I do not call myself a disciple or a guru.

Q: Why did you approve the building of Skandasram on the hill, which was temple land, without previously obtaining permission from authorities.

A: Guided by the same Power which made me come here and reside on the hill.

Q: You renounced money. How is it donations are accepted by the ashram?

A: This practice grew up at a later stage because a few associates began to use my name to collect funds. I did not approve of their action nor check them. So it is going on. I do not desire that contributions should be accepted, but people do not heed that advice. I do

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(continued from the previous page) not want to give ineffective advice. I do not therefore check them.

Q: Why do you not sign your name?

A: By what name am I to be known? I myself do not know. People have given me several names from time to time, since my arrival here. But the author of "Self-Realisation" has given his answer to this question.

Q: You personally receive and touch one kind of offering (fruits), why should you not receive money also?

A: I cannot eat money. What shall I do with it?

Q: Have you no objection to the length of stay of any visitors?

A: No. If I do not find it agreeable I shall go away. That is all.

When after above cross-examination Maharshi was asked if he felt fatigued, he said "I did not use my mind and so there was no strain. Let them examine me for 1,000 days. I do not mind."

Q: There are gurus for each ashram (stage). Is there a guru for the stage which transcends the fourth?

A: Yes.

¹⁵⁸ The original editor inserted "145" at the top of the page by hand.

Q: But you do not admit one.

A: There is guru for every one. I admit guru for me also.

Q: Who?

A: The Self.

Q: For whom?

A: For myself. The guru may be internal or external. He may reveal himself internally or communicate externally.

Q: Can those in this transcendent stage own property?

A: There is no restriction for them. They may do what they please. Suka is said to have married and begotten children.

Q: Then he is like a grihasta?

A: I have already said he is above the four

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(continued from the previous page) recognised Ashrams.

Q: But if they can marry, own property, etc. they are only grihastas (householders).

A: That may be your view.

Q: Can they convey their property to others?

A: They may or may not. All depends on their prarabdha.

Q: Is there any karma for them?

A: Their conduct is not regulated according to any rules or codes.

Q: When visitors want to stay here do they take your permission?

A: Permission from the management is permission from me. The visitors come here for me; the management is for me. Wherever there is mutual agreement I do not interfere. When visitors come here and I admit them, will others dare to go against my wishes? My consent is implied.

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(157-1) When Maharshi is engaged in giving Tratkata to a devotee, sometimes he actually becomes cross-eyed, with this curious difference that the right eye remains looking steadily ahead, whilst the left eye gazes at an oblique angle and the effect is rather weird and mysterious. [First he lifts his gaze to the ceiling and then slowly drops it to level before conveying Tratak]¹⁶⁰

(157-2) The cosmic mind manifesting in some rare being, is unable to effect the linkage in others, of the individual (weak) mind with the universal (strong) mind of the inner recesses. Such a rare being is called the Guru or God in manifestation.

¹⁵⁹ The original editor inserted "147" at the top of the page by hand.

¹⁶⁰ The original editor inserted "First he lifts his gaze to the ceiling and then slowly drops it to level before conveying Tratkak" by hand.

(157-3) Q: Is a man to engage in teaching his knowledge, however imperfect?

A: If his parabdha karma be that way.

(157-4) The Jnani says 'I am the body,' and ajnani says 'I am the body.' What is the difference? "I am" is the truth. The body is the limitation. The Ajnani limits the 'I' with the body. 'I' in sleep is apart from body. The same 'I' is now too in the wakeful state. Though thought to be within the body, 'I' is without the body. The wrong notion is not 'I am the body.' 'I' says so. The body is insentient and cannot say so. The mistake lies in thinking that 'I' is what 'I' is not. 'I' is sentient. 'I' cannot be inert body. The body's movements are confounded with 'I's movements and misery is the result. Whether body works or not, 'I' remains free and happy. Ajnani's 'I' is body only. There is the whole error. The Jnani's 'I' includes the body and what is all. Some intermediate entity arises and gives rise to the confusion.

(157-5) Q: Is not Grace more effective than abhyasa?

A: The guru simply helps you in the eradication of ignorance.

(157-6) Q: "I am unable to make as many visits to you as I want?"

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(continued from the previous page) A: You need not come and you need not feel disheartened about it. Wherever you are, do not stray from yourself.

(158-1) Q: Do you have thoughts?

A: I usually have no thoughts.

Q: But when you are reading?

A: Then I have thoughts.

Q: And when someone asks you a question?

A: Then, too, I have thoughts when replying, not otherwise.

(158-2) Krishna's statement that he is reborn from time to time whenever world needs, is a sop to ignorance which mistakes him for the body. He is Reality, hence unborn.

(158-3) Once after I prostrated Maharshi said: "Why do you do this? It is only a formality. It is not necessary."

(158-4) I must answer any and every question, unless I do so I am not great. I am not endowed with television. God has not bestowed that gift on me. What shall I do? How can I answer all questions? People call me "Maharishi" and treat me like this. But I do not see myself as a Maharishi.

(158-5) In the Trinity, The Son of God is the Guru or God manifest who explains to devotee that the Holy Spirit is immanent everywhere.

(158-6) Q: How can I keep the idea of that real state always before me?

A: Because you are not able to keep that single idea, because you are not firm, because you think you are a body! The idea that you must go to Tiruvannamalai and see Maharshi is only a function of the intellect. No help is required. You are already in your original state; how can anyone help you to arrive where you already are? The help given is really to clear out your wrong notions. The great men, the gurus can help only by removing the obstacles in your way.

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(159-1) A child and a Jnani¹⁶² are in some ways similar. The child ceases to think of incidents after they have passed off. Thus it shows that they do not leave deep impressions on the child's mind. So too with a Jnani.¹⁶³

(159-2) Q: Are saints who live in remote forests and Tibetan mountains still helpful to the world?

A: Quite. Realisation of Self is the greatest help that can be rendered to humanity, no matter where the saints live.

(159-3) Q: Is it not necessary for the saints to mix with the people in order to help them?

A: The realised being does not see the world as different from himself. The help given by him is imperceptible but it is still there. A saint helps the whole of humanity unknown to it. Silence of a sage gives permanent benefit and instruction to humanity, whereas lectures entertain individuals for a few hours without improving them. Silence is eloquence unceasing. Dakshinamurti is the ideal; he taught his disciples by silence.

(159-4) Q: But would it not be more effective if he mixed with them?

A: There are no others to mix with, the Self is the only reality.

(159-5) Q: But now-a-days disciples must be created, sought after?

A: That is a sign of ignorance. The Power who created you created the world and can take care of both also.

(159-6) Q: Do I need a guide to see God?

A: Who was your guide to see Ramana Bagavan? With whose guidance do you see the world daily? Just as you are able to see the world yourself so also you

¹⁶¹ The original editor inserted "149" at the top of the page by hand.

¹⁶² "Gnani" in the original.

¹⁶³ "Gnani" in the original.

will be able to see your “Self” if you earnestly strive to do so, your “Self” alone being your guide in that quest also.

(159-7) Q: Is guru absolutely necessary?

A: Take guru to be Real Self, and your self

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(continued from the previous page) to be the individual self. So long as duality persists in you, guru is necessary. Because you identify yourself with body you think Guru to be somebody, and you are not body nor is guru. This knowledge that you are Self and so is guru is gained by what you call Realisation.

(160-1) Q: How can one know a competent guru?

A: By the peace of mind in his presence and by the sense of respect you feel for him.

(160-2) Q: What is the use of people like you who sit still doing nothing when the world is in great trouble?

A: A self-realised being cannot help benefiting the world. His very existence bestows the highest good to the world.

(160-3) You imagine the Guru to be what you are yourself. Because you are with the body, you imagine him to do something tangible to you. His work lies within. The devotee thinks the Guru is a man and expects relationship as between bodies. But the Guru who is Self-incarnate, works from within. The Guru creates conditions to drive you inward and prepares the interior to drag you to centre. Thus he gives a push and exerts a pull from within, so that you may be fixed at the centre. In sleep you are centred within, but on awakening your mind rushes out, thinking this and that. This must be checked.

(160-4) Vivekananda speaks of Guru transferring spirituality?

A: Is there a substance to be transferred? Transfer really means the eradication of the sense of being the disciple.

(160-5) Q: Must the guru have a human body?

A: Because you identify yourself with your body you raise the question. Find if you are the body. The Gita says that those who cannot understand the transcendental nature of Sri Krishna are fools, deluded by ignorance. The master appears in order to dispel that ignorance.

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(continued from the previous page) As Tayumanavar puts it, he appears to dispel the ignorance of a man, just as a deer is used as a decoy to capture the tiger in the jungle. He has to appear with a body in order to eradicate our ignorance the "I am the body" idea.

(161-1) Q: What is all this talk of "masters" etc. guiding the destinies of the world?

A: Had it not been said, "Would these people have diverted their outgoing minds from the world and turned inward to meditate?" That is the purpose of the mention of masters and their hierarchy by the theosophists.

(161-2) By a rishi sitting in one place, all things can be done by him, if he wills. He can bring on wars or end them. But he knows there is a cosmic and karmic process going on and he won't interfere unwisely.

(161-3) What does guru do? Does he hand over realisation to the disciple? Is not the Self always realised? By remaining in contact with realised Sages, the man gradually loses the ignorance until its removal is complete. The eternal Self is thus revealed. Realisation is eternal and is not newly brought about by the guru. He merely helps in the removal of ignorance.

(161-4) The disciple surrenders himself to the master. That means that there is no vestige of individuality retained by disciple, and thus no cause of misery. Without understanding it aright people think the guru teaches the disciple "Thou art That" as something to make him more powerful than anything else. The man is already vain: what will be the case if the same 'I' grows up enormously? He will be still more foolish and ignorant. This false 'I' must perish. Its annihilation is the fruit of "guru service."

(161-5) Q: How may I get nearer my master?

A: Are you the personality? Does the Self say the master is far away?

(161-6) Q: Does education make a sage more useful to the world?

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(continued from the previous page) A: Even a learned man must bow before an illiterate sage. Education is learned ignorance.

(162-1) Q: Is contact between spiritual leaders of East and West possible? Is India the spiritual world centre?

¹⁶⁴ The original editor inserted "151" at the top of the page by hand.

A: Spirit is unlimited and formless. Spiritual centre is the same. There is only one such centre. Whether in West or East the centre cannot differ. It has no locality. Whether in West or East the centre cannot differ. Being unlimited, it includes leaders, world, forces of destruction and construction. You speak of contact because you are thinking of embodied beings as leaders. The spiritual men are not bodies; they are not aware of their bodies. They are spirit, limitless and formless. There is always unity among them. These questions cannot arise if self is realised.

(162-2) Q: Theosophists meditated to seek Masters?

A: The master is within. Meditation is for removing the ignorance that he is without. If he be a stranger whose coming you await, he is bound to disappear also. Where is the use of a transient being like that? However so long as you think you are an individual or body, so long the master is necessary and will appear with a body. When this wrong identification ceases, the master will be found to be the Self.

(162-3) Q: Did you give your mother salvation at her death-bed?

A: Can anybody give liberation to another? No! One's own Jnana¹⁶⁵ alone can give one liberation.

(162-4) Silence is perpetual speaking. Ordinarily speech hinders the heart-to-heart talk between Guru and disciple. So long as you think you are the individual, you also believe in God. On worshipping God, God appears to you as Guru. Surrender your own self to the One from whom Grace is sought. On serving Guru, he manifests as the Self. This is the rationale for obtaining Grace.

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(163-1) There are methods of initiation (diksha) or baptism whereby the guru will help disciples. Yet the former does not consciously set about to do this, as he is one with the disciple from his viewpoint. He does it unconsciously. It may be will-power, by sight, by the Tejgo, by a touch on the head. But whichever way it is done there is a change in the disciple which is noticeable later.

(163-2) Q: Baba says he is the Avatar (Incarnation). Is that true?

A: What have I to say? This is a question that seekers after truth need not consider. People that are in the lower rungs of the ladder waste their energies over all such questions. Everyone is an Avatar of God. One who knows the truth sees everyone else as a manifestation of God. In every face he sees God.

(163-3) The Guru sees all people as the one Self. To him there are none who are ignorant; he finds no difference between them and himself.

¹⁶⁵ "Gnana" in the original.

¹⁶⁶ The original editor inserted "153" at the top of the page by hand.

(163-4) The realised one does not think or plan for the future. He lets the future take care of itself. For him the future is in the present.

(163-5) Yes, the guru is necessary. He shows the road to self and carries a light for you.

(163-6) A person of realisation will be looking at things but does not see them.

(163-7) Men like Buddha and Jesus were not ordinary self-realised individuals. They come from higher planes. But such Avatars come for the masses. The striving few do not need them.

(163-8) Q: How does Guru-kripa lead to self realisation?

A: An aspirant begins with dissatisfaction. Not content with the world, he seeks satisfaction of desires; prays to God, his mind is purified; he longs to know God more than to satisfy his carnal desires. Then God's grace begins to manifest. He takes the form of a Guru and appears to the

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(continued from the previous page) devotee; teaches him the truth; purifies the mind by his teachings and contact; the mind gains strength, is able to turn inward; with meditation, it is purified still further and remains still without the least ripple. That expanse is the Self. The Guru is both exterior and interior. From the exterior he gives a push to the mind to turn inward; from the interior, he pulls the mind towards the Self and helps the quietness of the mind. That is the Kripa. There is no difference between God, Guru and Self.

(164-1) A Guru's help is necessary and useful to start you on the enquiry. But you yourself must pursue the enquiry.

(164-2) Q: Why do not Mahatmas help?

A: How do you know they do not help? Public speeches, physical activity and material help are all outweighed by the silence of the Mahatmas. These accomplish more than others.

(164-3) Q: Is there a spiritual hierarchy of all the original propounders of religions watching the spiritual welfare of the humans?

A: Let them be or let them be not. It is only surmise at best. Know Atma and be done with speculations. One person might admit such a hierarchy, another may not. But no one can gainsay the Atma. The hierarchy cannot exist apart from the Self Realisation of the self which is the one goal.

(164-4) Q: Do you not feel a slap given to you? Is there not a differentiation there? Where then is Jnana?

A: A man under chloroform or drink does not feel a slap. Is he a jnani? Jnana is not inconsistent with the feeling of a slap.

(164-5) Q: I am reluctant to leave your presence and return to my distant home?

A: Think that you are always in my presence. That will make you feel right.

Chapter 19: Doctrine of Non-Causality

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DOCTRINE OF NON-CAUSALITY

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(165-1) These questions are to fate and free-will and which is stronger arise only to those who fail to look into the root of both. To know the cause is never to entertain thoughts of either fate or freewill.

(165-2) The body is born again and again. We wrongly identify ourselves with the body, and hence imagine we are re-incarnated constantly. No. We must identify ourselves with the true Self. The Realised One enjoys unbroken consciousness, never broken by death - how can he die? - or by birth. Only those who think "I am the body" talk of reincarnation. To those who know "I am the Self" there is no rebirth.

(165-3) Reincarnation exists only so long as there is ignorance. There is no incarnation, either now before or hereafter. This is the truth.

(165-4) Q: The Vedas contain cosmogony. The Absolute Brahman is said to have created Akasa which later became all the elements in the universe. How can something issue out of nothing? Again, Vivekananda was questioned about the beginning of time, he raised a counterquestion as a bar: How can you fix a point at which eternally running time can begin? and declared the question illogical. His answer may be logical but does not satisfy the mind.

A: The cosmogony you mention is not the essence of reality of the one Absolute and unreality of all else. What is taught about the world's origin is but a supplemental reason. These passages are for people who desire to get a fuller idea of the world and who inquire about its creation and destruction, but if there is a conflict between the essential teaching and them in your views, reject them and accept the latter. Scriptures arise to suit varying conditions, but their spirit is the same. Questions are asked from a certain standpoint and the answers are given from the same.

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¹⁶⁷ The original editor inserted "155" at the top of the page by hand.

(166-1) The scriptures are useful to indicate the existence of the Higher Power (the Self) and the way to gain it. Their essence is that alone, and when it is realised, they are useless. They are voluminous because adapted to the development of the seeker. As one rises in the scale he finds the portions he has transcended to be steps to the higher stage, etc. Because people could not understand the truth of their eternal selves, they are eager to know what lies beyond – heaven, hell, reincarnation etc. Yet after wandering everywhere else they must in the end return to the Self alone. Then why not now? After all, the other words require the Self as spectator. Their validity is only of the same degree as his.

(166-2) "There is no creation or destruction in the Absolute. Only when the mind appears, does the world appear. Both creation and destruction are movements, but not in the Absolute substratum: they are of Shakti, and eternal."

(166-3) Q: Being always Sat, Chit, Ananda why does God place us in difficulties? Why did He create?

A: Does God come and tell you that He has placed you in difficulties? It is you who say so. It is again wrong. If that disappears, there will be no one to say that God created. That which is, does not even say 'I am,' for does any doubt arise that "I am not." Only in such a case should one be reminding himself 'I am.' Otherwise not. For instance does a man say always "I am a man." He does not. On the other hand, if doubt arises if he is a cow or a buffalo, he has to remind himself that he is not a cow etc. but 'I am a man.' This would never happen. Similarly with one's own existence and realisation.

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(167-1) Q: Why did the Self manifest as this miserable world?

A: In order that you might seek it. Your eyes cannot see themselves. Place mirrors before them. Then only can they see themselves. Similarly with creation. See yourself first and then see the whole word as the Self.

(167-2)¹⁶⁹ The guru is both an internal and external signpost where books are only external signposts to the path. As an internal one he is an active force and in a sense your own higher self.

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Chapter 20: The Mind

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¹⁶⁸ The original editor inserted "157" at the top of the page by hand.

¹⁶⁹ This para was typed on a separate sheet of paper and pasted here by hand.

¹⁷⁰ Blank page.

(169-1) There is no entity by name of mind. Because of the emergence of thoughts, we surmise something from which they start. That we term "Mind." When we probe to see what it is, there is nothing like it. After it has vanished, peace will be found to remain eternal. Thinking or discriminating faculty are mere names. Be it ego, mind or intellect, it is the same. Whose mind? Whose intellect? Ego's. Is ego real? No. We confound the ego and call it intellect or mind.

(169-2) Utterance of words is not worship. Denudation of thoughts is Jnana.¹⁷² It is absolute existence.

(169-3) People insist on asking me questions and so I must reply. But the truth is beyond words.

(169-4) Q: How to check the mind?

A: Will a thief hand over a thief? Will the mind find itself? The mind cannot seek the mind. You have ignored what is real and are holding on to the mind which is unreal and also try to find what it is. Was there mind in your sleep? It was not. It is here now. It is therefore impermanent. Can the mind be found by you? Mind is not you. You think you are the mind, and therefore ask me how it is checked. If it is there, it can be checked. But it is not. Understand this truth by search. Search of unreality is useless. Therefore seek the reality, i.e. the Self. That is the way to rule over the mind. There is only one thing real. The others are only appearances. Diversity is not its nature. We are reading the printed characters on paper but ignore the paper which is the background. Similarly you are taken up by manifestations of mind and do not hold the background. Whose fault is it?

(169-5) The essence of the mind is only awareness or consciousness. When the ego, however, dominates it, it functions as the reasoning, thinking or sensing faculty. The cosmic mind being not limited by the ego, has nothing separate from itself and is therefore only aware. This is what the

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(continued from the previous page) Bible means by "I am that I AM."

(170-1) Q: Why do you not preach to set people on the right path?

A: You have already decided that I do not preach. Do you know that I am not doing it? Does preaching consist in mounting a platform and haranguing people around? Preaching is simply communication of knowledge. It may be done in silence too. What do you think of someone listening to a speech for an hour and going away unimpressed? Compare him with another who sits in the holy presence

¹⁷¹ The original editor inserted "159" at the top of the page by hand.

¹⁷² "Gnana" in the original.

and goes away after some time with his outlook on life totally changed. Which is better? To preach loudly without effect or to sit silently sending for intuitive forces to play on others? Again, how does speech arise? There is unmanifest abstract knowledge, from whence the ego gives rise to thoughts and then words. In this order of descent words are therefore the great grand-children of the Original Source. If the word can produce effect, how much more powerful should preaching through silence be? Judge for yourself.

(170-2) The true state is consciousness without content. The Western psychologists who deny this and say consciousness must have an object are quite correct, so far as the individual and mental consciousness is concerned (without mind it is no individuality as the body is something inert) but they are incorrect when they apply it to the Universal being.

(170-3) When someone asked him "I suppose you have realised God?" he remained silent, his eyes gazing into vacancy. When the baffled questioner departed, Maharshi explained to his disciples that the answering of such a question is useless and would lead to endless talk.

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(171-1) The meaning or significance of 'I' is God. The experience of "I am" is to be still. Mowna is not shutting up the mouth. It is eternal speech. That state which transcends speech and thoughts is mowna.

(171-2) Q: How to achieve it?

A: Hold something firmly and trace it back. By concentration mowna results. When practice becomes natural it will end in mowna. Meditation without mental activity is mowna. Subjugation of mind is meditation; deep meditation is eternal speech.

(171-3) Q: How to do all this?

A: The lack of feeling that we are the Self is the root cause of the trouble. Leave off thoughts and be, just be. It is the thoughts alone that create the hindrance; they are the trouble: Find out to whom the thoughts occur, so long as you think that a wrong self exists, it will appear to do so, but find out where it arises and it will go.

(171-4) Those who have discovered great Truths, have done in the still depth of the Self.

(171-5) Q: The difficulty is to keep the thoughtless state and yet do necessary thinking for duties?

¹⁷³ The original editor inserted "161: at the top of the page by hand.

A: He that thinks is yourself. Let action take place of its own accord. Why associate yourself with the difficulty? When you have to go outdoors you just lift your feet and go without thinking about it. So gradually the state becomes automatic, and thinking when necessary arises and disappears of its own accord. Intuition works when there is no thought and intuition will guide you. Those who have made big discoveries have made them, not when they were anxious about them, but in the stillness, by intuition rather than thinking.

(171-6) Mental activity ceases with answering self-enquiry. Even if you are thinking about God, it is still an activity and must be given up. The question of Vichara merges in God and then

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(continued from the previous page) ceases to think about Him.

(172-1) Self-realisation is the cessation of thoughts and all mental activity. Thoughts are like bubbles upon the surface of the sea (Self).

(172-2) The false ego is associated with objects; the subject is alone the Reality. The world is seen by the mind's reflected light. The moon shines by the reflected light of the Sun. When the sun has set, the moon is useful for displaying objects. But when the sun rises no one needs the moon, even though it is visible in the sky. So it is with mind and Heart. The mind is used for seeing objects.

(172-3) Intellect is a tool of the self, which uses it for measuring variety. It is not without Self. How could there be manifestations of intellect without its seed existing?

(172-4) Q: Where are memory and forgetfulness located?

A: In the chitta (intellect).

(172-5) People like inventors searching for new material inventions make their discoveries in a state of self-forgetfulness. It is in a condition of deep intellectual concentration that this forgetfulness of the ego arises and the invention is revealed. This is also a way of developing intuition. Hence a sharpened concentrated intellect is useful and even essential in material matters, but the revelation or intuition takes its own time to arise and one must await it.

(172-6) The most valuable thing in the ocean lies on its floor. The pearl is so small a thing yet so valuable and so difficult to procure. Similarly the Self is like the pearl, to find it you must dive deep down, into the silence, deeper and ever deeper, until it is reached.

(172-7) Q: Is the state of unconsciousness close to Infinite being?

A: Consciousness alone exists.

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(173-1) He who knows the Self has nothing more to do. Henceforth the Infinite Power will do all further actions that may be necessary through him. Nor has he any more thoughts.

(173-2) During meditation that is directed towards the Self, the thoughts actually die down of their own accord. Meditation can be directed to different objects, but when directed to the true Self, it is sent to the highest object, or rather the Subject.

(173-3) Thoughts are our enemy. When we are free of thoughts we are naturally blissful. The gap between two thoughts is our true state, it is the real Self. Get rid of thoughts, be empty of them be in a state of perpetual thoughtlessness. Then you are consciously Self-Existent. Thoughts, desires and all qualities are alien to our true nature. The West may praise a man as a great thinker. But what is that? True greatness is to be free of thoughts.

(173-4) The true answer to the question Who Am I does not even come in thoughts. All thoughts disappear – even the thinker himself disappears.

(173-5) Being is our nature. So what have we to find? When we know ourselves we are not troubled by thoughts or desires any longer. These are not our true state. We have not to find in our Selves, but simply to BE ourselves, to be what we truly are – free from thoughts an egoism.

(173-6) To attain this Self Realisation, the means are (a) The mind should be diverted from its objects, the objective vision of the world must cease (b) The minds internal operation also must be put an end to. (c) Thus the mind must be rendered and must continue characterless finally. (d) It must rest in pure Vichara.

(173-7) Silence is never-ending speech. Vocal speech obstructs silent speech.

(173-8) Q: I want to ask a question. May I do so?

A: Yes. What question? You said you had read

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(continued from the previous page) Paul Brunton's "Secret Path." Read it a thousand times. PB has expressed me correctly; then why do you not practice it. Turn to page 73 thereof and see if you do not find the answer in para 2 thereof to

¹⁷⁴ The original editor inserted "163" at the top of the page by hand.

your question. More things are achieved by silence and more thoughts are conveyed by silence to a wider world; all disturbances by oral questions and answers while apparently benefiting the questioner and a few listeners, in this hall, actually obstructs, retards and interrupts silent communication of thought-waves to the thousands of spiritual aspirants all over the world. Any sadakh therefore who come to me for enquiry and elucidation would amply benefit himself and others by sitting before me silently and absolutely speechless. Those forces are the greatest and most effective which are invisible, for instance, the ether, the electric current, etc. Any enquiry you desire to make, give it to your mind or thought, you will readily find the answer in your own mind.

(174-1) The most effective help is with Silence.

(174-2) Thoughts are predispositions accumulated in innumerable former births. Their annihilation must be the aim. To be free from them is Purity. Man is deluded by the intermingling of conscious self with insentient body; this delusion must cease. The ever-present Self needs no efforts for realisation but delusion alone is to be removed.

(174-3) Thoughts are not real then? Quite so.

(174-4) When camphor burns no residue is left. The mind is the camphor, when it has resolved itself into the Self without leaving the slightest trace it is realisation.

(174-5) Mind is a bundle of thoughts, having its origin in consciousness or Self. Thoughts are not real. The only reality is the Self. Mind in its purity is the Self.

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(175-1) What you call mind is an illusion. It starts after the 'I-thought.' Mind is only a bundle of thoughts. The thoughts have their root in the 'I-thought.' You cannot, without the gross or subtle senses, be aware of the body or the mind. Still you can be without these senses. In that state, you are either asleep or aware of the body or the mind. Still you can be without these senses. In that state, you are either asleep or aware of the Self only. That awareness of Self is ever there. Remain what you are and your question will not arise.

(175-2) That which is beyond the ego, is the Consciousness, the Self. In sleep mind is gone neutral, not destroyed. That which goes neutral (laya) re-appears. But the mind which is destroyed cannot reappear. The gois aim must be to destroy it and not sink in laya. In the peace of meditation laya happens, and it is not enough. The destruction is the non-recognition of the mind as being apart from Self.

¹⁷⁵ The original editor inserted "165" at the top of the page by hand.

(175-3) Q: There is nothing to be seen in the Real?

A: Because you are accustomed to identify yourself with the body and the sight with the eyes, therefore you say you do not see anything. What is there to be seen? Who is to see? How to see? There is only one consciousness which manifesting as "I-thought" identifies itself with the body, projects itself through the eyes and sees the objects around. The individual is limited in the waking state and expects to see something different. The evidence of his senses will be the seal of authority. But he would not admit that the seer, the seen and the sight are all manifestations of the same consciousness. i.e. "I-I." Dhyana helps one to remove the illusion that the Self must be visual. In truth, there is nothing visual. How do you feel the 'I' know? Do you hold a mirror before you to know your own being? The awareness is

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(continued from the previous page) the 'I.' Realise it and that is the truth.

(176-1) The feeling of 'I' is always present in knowledge. Its nature is knowledge. Knowledge presupposes some result of impressions on one's consciousness.

(176-2) Q: Should we think we are not the ego?

A: In deep sleep, we do not think whether we are; so in waking state we can live without thought - our reality - and our being in that state is the absolute happiness. It is the thinking that makes the ego. The ego is only a thought with us. We are without thoughts: the source of thoughts is within us: if we begin to examine ourselves, we discover our real nature. It is not by mere thought you get rid of ego: it is by experience. Do not conceive of the thought-less state as being deep sleep, trance, swoon etc. There is no such thing as realisation, there is only the warding off of thoughts. Be the reality and do not waste time keeping on repeating "I am Brahman" a thousand times vocally. Ego must go in trying to see the source of its own reality.

(176-3) Q: How can the mind be made to go?

A: No attempt is made to destroy it. To think or wish is in itself a thought. If the thinker is sought, the thoughts will disappear.

(176-4) Q: Will they disappear of themselves? It looks so difficult.

A: No attempt is made to destroy it. To think or wish is in itself a thought. If the thinker is sought, the thoughts will disappear.

(176-5) Q: Will they disappear of themselves? It looks so difficult?

A: They will disappear because they are unreal. The idea of difficulty is itself an obstacle to realisation. It must be overcome. To remain as the self is not difficult. This thought of difficulty is the chief obstacle. A little practice to find out the source

of I will make you think differently. Absolute freedom from thoughts is the state conducive to such recognition of the Self.

(176-6) Mind is but an aggregate of thoughts.

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(177-1) Some jnanis¹⁷⁷ may get invisibility and intangibility of body; they are known as siddhas. They are equal to Siva and can even grant boons. But no powers can equal Self-realisation. People are not content with their idea of jnana¹⁷⁸ and want siddhis with it. They look to the body only. They are likely to neglect the supreme happiness of jnana¹⁷⁹ and go through by-paths instead of the royal path and also be lost on the way. jnana¹⁸⁰ comprises all and a jnani¹⁸¹ will not waste a thought on the occult powers.

(177-2) Language is only a medium for communication of one's thoughts to another. It is called in after thoughts arise; they do so after the I-thought. The I-thought is the root of all conversation. One understands another when one remains without thinking by the universal language. Silence is ever-speaking; it is perennial; it is interrupted by speaking. These words obstruct that mute language. There is electricity flowing in a wire. When resistance occurs in its passage, it glows as a lamp or turns as a fan. In the wire, it remains full of electric energy. Similarly also, silence is eternal flow of language obstructed by words. What one fails to know by conversation extending to several years, can be known in a trice, in silence or before silence, e.g. Dakshinamurti and disciples. That is the highest language and most effective.

(177-3) Occult powers are in the realm of the mind only. Re. Telepathy, what is the difference between hearing from far or near? Telepathy cannot be without the receiver, nor clairvoyance without the seer. It is only those who matter. Without the receiver there cannot be telepathy, without the seer vision. Telepathy and radio enable one to see and hear from afar. They are all the same hearing and seeing. It does not make any difference in the function. Fundamental

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¹⁷⁶ The original editor inserted "167" at the top of the page by hand.

¹⁷⁷ "gnanis" in the original.

¹⁷⁸ "Gnana" in the original.

¹⁷⁹ "gnana" in the original.

¹⁸⁰ "Gnana" in the original.

¹⁸¹ "Gnani" in the original.

(continued from the previous page) factor is the hearer-subject. Without him there can be no hearing and no seeing. The latter are functions of mind. The powers are in mind only. They are not natural to the Self. That which is not natural, but acquired, cannot be eternal. They are not worth trying for. When one possessed of limited powers is miserable, he wants to expand his powers to be happy! But consider if it will be so. With limited perceptions he is miserable; the misery must increase proportionately with extended perceptions. Occult powers will not bring happiness. Moreover what are they for? To make other praise one's ego! God, Self, is the highest power and most worth seeking. That which results in Peace is the highest occult power.

(178-1) Q: The Self has forgotten its true nature?

A: Both oblivion and memory are only thought-forms. They will alternate so long as there are thoughts. Memory and oblivion depend on 'I' which, when one looks for it is not found because it is unreal. These truths are not realised because samskaras have not been destroyed. The roots of doubt and confusion are samskaras, which must be cut out. The latter is done by following the practice prescribed by guru. The guru leaves it to the seeker to do this part so that he might himself find out its truth. Practice renders the seeds of vasanas ineffective.

(178-2) Your explanation in The Secret Path that intellect is something added to the Self later, something superimposed by evolution is not strictly correct from the highest standpoint. It must always have existed in the Self in order to have manifested: hence latently it was co-eternal with self and did not come later. The tree must have been contained within the seed or could not have sprung out of it: so too intellect must have been contained in the Self from the beginning.

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(179-1) Q: Why should not the Maharshi help the masses by lecturing to them?

A: Is not God working? Is He making speeches? Can work be done only through speech? Do you know the amount of work that can be silently turned out without any speech?

(179-2) See the mind. You must stand aloof from it. You are not the mind and the Self will remain over.

(179-3) Maharshi told Dandapani, after the latter had related a vivid clairvoyant dream, wherein Maharshi appeared to him and answered certain questions for him: "You were very anxious to know these answers and it was your own self which supplied them to you. I have no knowledge of having visited you."

¹⁸² The original editor inserted "169" The original editor inserted

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(181-1) This path (Atma-vichara) is the direct path; all others are indirect ways. The first leads to the Self, the others elsewhere. And even if the latter do arrive at the Self, it is only because they lead at the end to the first path which ultimately carries them to the goal. So, in the end, the aspirants must adopt the first, why not do so now? Why waste time?

(181-2) Q: So it amounts to this: that I should always look within.

A: Yes.

Q: Should I not see the world at all?

A: You are not instructed to shut your eyes to the world. If you consider yourself as the body, the world appears as external. If you are the Self, the world appears as Brahman.

(181-3) Q: Gita says the worlds are like beads on a string. How?

A: Krishna means that they are not apart from ME. The differences are physically apparent and therefore Gita emphasises the unity.

(181-4) Q: But that unity is only after merging into the Lord?

A: Where are we now? The illusion and we are all in Him.

(181-5) Regarding Maya the idea that phenomena are unreal in all senses is to be repudiated, but that alone which is permanent and does not change is worth the name of reality. The world is not real, apart from the hidden reality. Hence it is really the spiritual reality itself in another way.

(181-6) Ananda lives in every being.

(181-7) Q: The difficulty lies in reaching it?

A: There is no reaching it, because it is eternal. If the self were to be gained anew, it will not be permanent.

(181-8) Q: How shall I reach the Self?

A: There is no reaching the Self. If Self were to be reached, it would mean that the Self is

¹⁸³ Blank page.

¹⁸⁴ The original editor inserted "171" at the top of the page by hand.

(continued from the previous page) not here and now, but that it should be got anew. What is got afresh, will also be lost. So it will be impermanent. What is not permanent is not worth striving for. So I say, Self is not reached. You are the Self. You are already that. The fact is that you are ignorant of your blissful state. Ignorance supervenes and draws a veil over the pure Bliss. Attempts are directed only towards removing the ignorance. This ignorance is only wrong knowledge. The wrong lies in the false identification of the Self with the body, mind etc. This false identity must go by enquiry into the Self, and there is the Self.

(182-1) It is beyond duality. If there is one there will be two also. Without one the other numbers are not. The truth is neither one nor the two. It is as it is.

(182-2) Be always reflecting and feeling the Real Being. Be That. Cling close to it. Let your quest be constant and sustained until you catch the Self and thereby find eternal happiness.

(182-3) Q: How to get rid of Maya?

A: Do not trouble to conquer Maya. Be in your real state and maya will go away of its own accord. If you attempt to conquer it, it will lead you through many difficulties.

(182-4) BE! If you get any other extraneous thoughts, find out who gets them. But whether you think that you are the Real Self or not, you are always that. For such a simple patent thing as Self-realisation there is so much worry, so many yogas! Why? You are the real Self: How can you be different from it?

(182-5) Q: We are ignorant. Tell us the way to cross the ocean of illusion?

Maharshi did not reply. One half hour later enquirer repeated his question. Maharshi said: You say that you know you are ignorant. Indeed you are knowers all! And yet you say that you do not know.

(183-1) By realising the One we know all the many Gods.

(183-2) The consciousness of the Self is the normal state; or present entanglement the abnormal state. We imagine that we have to develop towards a perfect state, when we are in it now, but have covered it with accretions of external things and thoughts. People talk of attaining the super-consciousness. This is wrong. This Self is our

¹⁸⁵ The original editor inserted "173" at the top of the page by hand.

normal consciousness; we imagine we have to develop and attain it but we are in it all the time, only our attention is diverted away from it to intellect and objects.

(183-3) Anything which has to be attained is not the Reality, not the Truth. We are already the Reality, the Truth.

(183-4) I came here not knowing why; I was literally “charmed” here. But when one realises the Seer there is nothing else to be seen, no other place one wishes to go to visit. Seer, the object seen, and the act of seeing all these now merge into One, the substratum of all.

(183-5) The state of Realisation is like a straight main road; the intellect and the sense are the jungle. We are all wandering about in the jungle. It is difficult to get to the main road, but once there the way is straight and easy. That is why I say this realisation of the Self is easy.

(183-6) Q: But as regards the sitting in silence in meditation on Self being so influential on others, would you say this Force is able to overcome the passions and excited thoughts of most people?

A: Yes, it is the highest power and overcomes all else.

(183-7) No time sequence in true spiritual development. You are spiritual here and now. Do not entrap yourself into mental cages of planes, degrees of growth, states of being etc. Do not

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(continued from the previous page) hug these false limitations. You are the spiritual Self. Be that.

(184-1) This idea that you have to FIND Yourself is a foolish one. What is there to find? According to that there are two persons – one is searching for the other. So you are the true Self, but you wrongly identify yourself with the ego (Ahamkara) and the body.

(184-2) We talk of attaining the Self, of reaching God with time. There is nothing to attain. We are already Self-Existent. Nor will there ever be a time when we shall be nearer God than now. We are now ever blissful, Self-Existent, the Infinite. Our consciousness is unbroken continuous and eternal. It is all maya, Self-hypnotism to imagine that now we are otherwise. De-hypnotise yourself. It is ego, ahankara, which deludes itself that there are two selves, one of which we are conscious now (the person) and one the higher, the Divine, of which we shall one day become conscious. This is false. There is only one Self and it is fully conscious now and ever. There is neither past present nor future for it, since it is out of Time.

(184-3) Without the Infinite Power, God, the true Self, this incense would not burn, this world would not exist. This Self is in all forms. It alone gives them reality. Hence the Illumined One finds himself in all others, for he has found Unity and no longer perceives multiplicity.

(184-4) The universe exists within the Self. Therefore it is real, but only because it obtains its reality from the Self. We call it unreal however, to indicate its changing appearances and transient forms, whereas we call the Self real because it is changeless.

(184-5) After realisation the body and all else will not appear different from the Self.

(184-6) Knowledge presupposes some result of impressions on one's consciousness.

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(185-1) Ishvara, God, the Creator, the Personal God is the last of unreal forms to go: only the absolute Being is real. Hence not only the world not only the ego, but also the personal God are unreality. We must find the Absolute - nothing less.

(185-2) While men regard themselves as bodies, ignoring their true nature as spirit without form, they naturally fall into the error of regarding the Supreme God as being [with]¹⁸⁷ form. Realisation is the cure of both.

(185-3) Q: Does the Absolute know itself?

A: The ever-conscious, beyond both knowledge and ignorance, your question presupposes subject and object but the Absolute is beyond both. It is knowledge itself.

(185-4) Maharshi told that when a youth the actual process of obtaining his spiritual Self-realisation took no longer than twenty minutes; the next few years were spent merely in establishing this realisation and in gradual adjustment.

(185-5) There is nothing to get really. It is here now.

(185-6) Q: I maintain that the physical body of the man immersed in Samadhi as a result of unbroken contemplation of the Self need not become motionless for that reason. It may be active or inactive. Another man asserts that physical movement certainly prevents Nirvikalpa Samadhi or unbroken contemplation. What is your opinion?

A: Both of you are right, you refer to Sahaja Nirvikalpa and the other refers to Kevala Nirvikalpa. In the one case the mind lies immersed in the light of the Self.

¹⁸⁶ The original editor inserted "175" at the top of the page by hand.

¹⁸⁷ The original editor changed "without" to "with" by hand.

The subject discriminates one from the other - Samadhi, stirring p from Samadhi, and activity thereafter. Unrest of the body, of the sight, of the vital force and of the mind, the cognizance of objects and activity are obstructions

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(continued from the previous page) from him. But in Sahaja, however, the mind has resolved into the self and has been lost. Differences and obstructions mentioned above do not therefore, exist here. The activities of such a being are like the feeding of a somnolent boy, perceptible to the onlooker (but not to the subject). The driver sleeping in his moving cart is not aware of the motion of the car (because his mind has sunk in darkness). Similarly the Sahaja Jnani¹⁸⁸ remains unaware of his bodily activities because his mind is dead - having been resolved in the ecstasy of Chitananda (Self).

(The two words contemplation and samadhi have been used loosely in the question. Contemplation is a forced mental process whereas Samadhi lies beyond effort).

Sleep

1. Mind alive.

2. Sunk in oblivion

Nirvikalpa Samadhi

1. Mind alive.

2. Sunk in Light.

3. like a bucket with
rope left lying in
the water in a well

4. to be drawn out
by the other end
of the rope

Sajaha Samadhi

1. Mind dead.

2. Resolved into the Self

3. Like a river discharged
into the ocean and its
identity lost.

4. a river cannot be
redirected from the
ocean.

(186-1) Peace is the inner nature of man. If you find it within yourself, you will then find it everywhere.

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(187-1) The peace that you discovered in your temporary spiritual experiences was found in your Self. It was not imposed upon you. A time will come when we shall have to laugh at our own efforts to realise; for we shall not find that what we were before and after to be the same.

¹⁸⁸ "Gnani" in the original.

¹⁸⁹ The original editor inserted "177" at the top of the page by hand.

(187-2) Q: How to get rid of fear?

A: All fear is nothing more than thoughts. If there is only One there cannot be a second (to be afraid of). If we look to our self, then as it is one there is no second to be afraid of. To think that there is something outside ourselves is the cause of fear, but to be firmly rooted in our own reality, then there will be no fear, no doubt, no undesirable qualities as all the latter are centred about the ego.

(187-3) The state of equanimity is the state of bliss.

(187-4) Realisation is already there. There is no such action as Realisation. Is there any who is not realising the Self? Does any one deny his existence. Speaking of realisation, it implies two selves, the one to realise, the other to be really realised, is sought to be realised. Because we admit our existence, how is it that we do not know our Self? It is the thoughts that stands between our happiness. How do we know that we exist? If you say because of the world around us then how do you know that you existed in sleep?

(187-5) Q: What is liberation?

A: It is to know you were not born. Be still and know that I am God. To be still is not to think. You have lost hold of yourself. Turn inward. If the mind's source is sought, it will vanish leaving the Self behind.

(187-6) You become conscious of it later but that does not mean that your nature is different from meditation even now.

(187-7) Stillness or peace is realisation. There is no moment when the self is not. So long as there

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(continued from the previous page) is doubt or the feeling of non-realisation, attempt must be made to rid oneself of these thoughts. The thoughts are due to identification of the self with the non-self. When non-self disappears, the Self alone remains. To make room, it is enough that cramping is removed. Space is not brought in afresh. Nay more, space is there even in cramping.

Absence of thought does not mean blank. There must be one to know the blank. Knowledge and ignorance are of the mind. They are born of duality. But the Self is beyond knowledge and ignorance. It is Self luminous. There is no necessity to see the Self with another Self. There are no two selves. What is not Self is non-self. The non-self cannot see the self. Sight or hearing there cannot be. Self lies beyond – all alone as pure consciousness. Just as a woman with her necklace round her neck who imagines it has been lost and goes about searching for it until she is reminded of it by a friend, has created her own anxiety of loss and then her own pleasure of no loss, the Self is there whether you search for it or not. Again, just as

the woman feels as if regaining the lost necklace, so also the removal of ignorance and the cessation of false identification reveal the self which is eternally existing. This is called realisation. But realisation is not new. It amounts to elimination of ignorance and nothing more. Blankness is the evil of searching the mind. The mind must be erased out of being. See who the thinker is, who the seeker is. Abide as the thinker, the seeker. All thoughts will then disappear.

That ego is pure ego purged of thoughts. It is the same as the Self. So long as false identification persists, doubts will persist too; questions will arise, there will be no end to them. Doubts will cease only when the non-self

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(continued from the previous page) is put an end to. That will result in realisation. There will be no one there to doubt or ask. All these doubts should be solved within. No amount of words will satisfy. Hold the thinker; when the thinker is not held, the objects appear or doubts arise.

(189-1) Q: How is God to be seen?

A: Within. If the mind is turned inward, God manifests as the inner consciousness.

(189-2) Q: But is not in all the objects we see around us?

A: God is in all and in the seer. Where can God be seen? He cannot be found outside. He should be felt within. To see the objects, mind is necessary and to conceive God in them, is only a mental operation. But that is not real. The consciousness within, purged of the mind, is felt as God.

(189-3) Q: If I am infinite how did I become finite?

A: Analyse your words. You begin with I. Know the I first. If the question persists afterwards, it may be considered but not before.

(189-4) The Self is here and now and alone. It is not new and something to be acquired. It is natural and permanent.

(189-5) The term Self refers to the unlimited, the infinite self; do not limit the meaning.

(189-6) Q: Why the sorrow and evil in the universe?

A: God's will!

Q: Why.

A: Inscrutable. No motive can be attributed to that Power, no desire, no goal to achieve, can be asserted of that all-wise, all-powerful being. God like the sun is

¹⁹⁰ The original editor inserted "179" at the top of the page by hand.

untouched by the activities which take place in His presence. If the mind is unsatisfied or restless on account of events, it is a good solution to accept God's will as the solution; thus it is wise to drop the sense of responsibility and freewill, by regarding ourselves as the instruments of God,

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(continued from the previous page) to do and suffer as he pleases.

(190-1) Sive, Ganapati and other deities like Brahma, exist from a human standpoint; i.e. if you consider your personal self as real and existing; then they also exist. Just as a Government has its high executive officers, to carry on the government, so has the Creator; but from the standpoint of Supreme Absolute Self all these gods are illusory and must themselves merge into the One Reality.

(190-2) Paramatma and Atma are one and same, the Self. The Self is eternally realised. If it were not eternal it must have a beginning. What begins must have an end and is only transient. There is no use seeking a temporary condition. The fact is that it is the state of effortless alert Peace. Effortlessness while remaining aware is the bliss state.

(190-3) Q: You say that even the highest God is still only an idea. Does that mean there is no God?

A: Yes; there is an Isvara.

(190-4) The seat of realisation is within because the seeker cannot find it as an object outside him. That seat is Bliss and is the core of all. Hence it is called the Heart. The only useful purpose of this birth is to turn within and realise. There is nothing else to do.

(190-5) Q: Why does Krishna speak of evolution? Does Bhagavan believe in evolution?

A: Evolution must be from one state to another. When no differences are admitted, how can evolution arise? How does the Gita begin? So there is no birth, no death, no present as you look at it. Reality was, is and will be. It is changeless. Later Arjuna asked Krishna how he could have lived before Avidya? Then Krishna, seeing Arjuna confounded him with the gross body, spoke to him accordingly. The instruction was then to one who sees diversity. There is however no bondage or liberation to himself or others from the

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¹⁹¹ The original editor inserted "181" at the top of the page by hand.

(continued from the previous page) Jnani's¹⁹² standpoint. There is no liberation. It could only be if there was bondage. There was really no bondage and so it follows there is no liberation. There is no question of years. Prevent this thought at this moment. You are only in your natural state, whether you practice yoga or not.

(191-1) Q: Why do not all realise in that case?

A: It is the same question in another form. Why do you raise this question? In as much as you raise this question of effort in yoga, it shows you require it. Do it. But to remain without questions and doubts is the natural state. Self is not attainable because you are the Self.

(191-2) Forgetfulness never overtakes the Self. It is your nature. Self is now confounded with the non-self and that makes you speak of oblivion.

(191-3) If an enquiry is made whether mind exists, it will be found that it does not. That is control of mind. Otherwise, if the mind is taken to exist and one seeks to control it amounts to mind controlling the mind. In that way mind only persists but eludes itself.

(191-4) Q: Why is there imperfection in Perfection?

A: For whom is relativity? For whom imperfection? The Absolute is not imperfect. Does the Absolute tell you that it is covered up? It is the individual soul who says something covers the Absolute.

(191-5) Q: Several terms are used in holy books - Atman, paramatman, para, etc. What is the distinction between them?

A: They mean the same to the user of the words. But they are understood differently by persons according to their development.

(191-6) Q: But why use so many words to mean the same thing?

A: It is according to circumstances. They all mean the Self. "Para" means "not relative," or "beyond the relative," i.e. the Absolute.

(191-7) Q: Does not bhakti imply duality?

A: Bhakti and self-realisation are the same. The

(continued from the previous page) Self of the Advaitas is the God of the Bhaktas. Just as the individual body comprises the soul, the ego and the gross body, so also God comprises Paramatma, world and individuals.

¹⁹² "Gnani's" in the original.

(192-1) Being the Self, why does one continue to crave for happiness? To be rid of that craving is itself salvation. Scriptures say: "You are that." The import of that knowledge is their proper purpose. The realisation must be your finding out who you are and to abide as that I. To be saying "I am that or not this" is only waste of time. For the worthy disciple, the work is within himself and not without.

(192-2) Being in Tiruvannamalai, if one asks for the route, it is ridiculous. So also being the Self, if one asks how to realise it, it is absurd. Remain in the Self. That is all.

(192-3) The 'I' is the fundamental basis, knowing which all else is known.

(192-4) Q: Why are so many gods mentioned?

A: The body is only one. Still, how many functions are performed by it? The source of all the functions is only one. It is the same with the Gods.

(192-5) Q: How can I remember my real Self? What you say is for persons in the position of Maharshi himself.

A: How can you forget it? What is the Maharshi different from you. He is not a person with two horns? Whatever happens to your body, the Self continues throughout.

(192-6) Q: What is this Self?

A: Know the Self and God is known. Of all the definitions of God none is so well put as the Biblical: "I am that I AM" in Exodus II. But none is so direct as the name JEHOVAH – "I AM." The Absolute is. It is Self, God.

(192-7) Q: Convince me of the existence of God?

A: Realisation of the Self amounts to such conviction.

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(193-1) To one seeking help: I am atma: Atma is the Guru and Atma is Grace also. No one remains without Atma. He is always in contact; nothing is more intimate.

(193-2) The body is not 'I.' The body could not exist without our own existence. Why should we see the body as different from the Self. The Self is not born nor does it die. There is nothing new. The sages see everything in and of the Self. There is no diversity. Therefore there is no birth or death.

(193-3) To give grace is not a special function of God; nor is there any special time or occasion when He is gracious or occasions when he is not gracious.

¹⁹³ The original editor inserted "183" at the top of the page by hand.

(193-4) Q: Is God Personal?

A: Yes, God is always the first person standing before you. We must give up everything and make God alone munnilai (Tr. Stand before one).

(193-5) Q: No answer comes to my search inward?

A: The inquirer is the answer and no other answer can come. What comes cannot be true. What is, is true.

(193-6) Man cannot help being in his own nature; he has but to know it.

(193-7) Q: How is "I-I" consciousness felt?

A: As an unbroken awareness of 'I.' It is simply consciousness. You are that even now. There will be no mistaking it, when pure.

(193-8) Q: Can that consciousness give any pleasure?

A: Its nature is pleasure. Pleasure alone is. There is no enjoyer to enjoy pleasure; enjoyer and pleasure, both merge in it. Pleasure is turning and keeping the mind within; pain is sending it outward. Absence of pleasure is called pain. One's nature is pleasure, i.e. bliss.

(193-9) It is not the soul which years for realisation, as the latter is always there. Do you deny yourself? No, then the self exists. It is only the ego which seeks.

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THE ULTIMATE AS TRUTH

(194-1) In Vasishta it says what is real is hidden from us, but what is false is revealed as true. We are actually experiencing the Reality only. Still, we do not know it. Is it not a wonder of wonders?

(194-2) Q: How to get rid of fear?

A: What is fear? It is only a thought. When there is anything besides the Self, there is no reason to fear. Who sees the second? The ego arises first and sees objects; if the ego is not, the Self alone exists and there is no second. For anything external to oneself, the source is within. Seeking it there will be no doubt, no fear, and all other thoughts centring around the ego will disappear along with the ego. Weakness or strength are in the mind. The Self is beyond mind.

(194-3) Q: Is it necessary to give up worldly desires?

A: Why do we desire? Enquire. If you find no real happiness there, then your mind will not go there, but by subconscious tendencies it may tempt you there, but you will return. Why do you want the life of freedom? The fact you crave for it admits you are in bondage. But really you are ever-free. Know that Self and desires fall away of own accord. Bring all desires and thoughts to one point within: that is realisation. Mind should be still. The bee buzzes noisily around the flower seeking

honey. When it finds it, it is silent and still. So with men's soul, seeking by desires the one true honey.

(194-4) Q: If one wants to come to goal soon what to do?

A: Time is a conception in your mind. The goal always exists. It is not something to be newly found out. The Absolute is our nature. The trouble comes in because you limit yourself.

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THE ULTIMATE AS REALITY

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(195-1) Q: Are our attempts sure to succeed?

A: Realisation is our nature. It is nothing new to be gained. What is new cannot be eternal, therefore there is no need for doubting if one would lose or gain the Self.

(195-2) Q: How long will it be for one to gain Chintamani, the celestial gem conferring all the wishes on its owner?

A: The example of Chintamani is found in "Yoga Vasistha." Chintamani signifies the Real nature of the Self, the story is as follows: A man was making tapasya for gaining chintamani. A gem mysteriously fell into his hands. He thought that it could not be chintamani because his effort had been too short and too little to gain the gem. He discarded it and continued the tapas. Later a sadhi placed before him a brilliant pebble cut into shape. The man was deceived by its appearance but found that it could not fulfil his desire as claimed. Similarly, the self being inherent should not be sought first elsewhere.

(195-3) Q: How is Purna Brahman to be attained? What is the method best suited to a grihasta?

A: You have already the said Purna (i.e. perfection). Are you apart from Purna? If apart from it, will it be purna? If not apart, how does the question arise? The knowledge that Purna Brahman and that you are not apart from the same is the finality. See it and you will find that you are not a grihasta or any limited being. Knowledge of it will elucidate other matters automatically.

(195-4) In my early manhood when I had the "death" experience as a lad, I entered into the Self and since then I have not "progressed" or moved one iota. It has remained the same ever since - no development.

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THE ULTIMATE AS TRUTH

¹⁹⁴ The original editor inserted "185" at the top of the page by hand.

¹⁹⁵ Blank page

Chapter 22: Eastern and Western Thinkers (including PB)

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EASTERN AND WESTERN THINKERS

[187]¹⁹⁶

(197-1) Sankara: Some say that Sankara was only an intellectual, not realised?

A: Why worry about Sankara? Realise yourself. Others can take care of themselves.

(197-2) RAMAKRISHNA: Ramakrishna wept before God. Is that not the path to follow?

A: He had a powerful force drawing him on through all his experiences. He could trust that great power to take him on to the goal. Tears are often considered a sign of weakness, but that great person was not weak. These manifestations of weeping are only passing signs of the great current carrying us on. We must look to the end to be achieved.

(197-3) SRI AUROBINDO says that the Self-Light which resides in the head must be brought down to the heart.

A: Is not the Self already in the Heart? How can the Self be taken from one place to another?

(197-4) SRI AUROBINDO is teaching the ideal of bringing the descent of the divine?

A: When the Self is known how can it either ascend or descend? It is always in one place.

(197-5) KRISHNAMURTI is head and shoulders above Mrs Besant.

(197-6) SANKARA'S "Vivekachudamani" verse 170 sums up the whole of Jnana yoga.

(197-7) MAYA VADA OF SRI SANKARA: The master said in the course of his conversation: "Reality and illusion are both the same." A disciple asked how it could be so. The Maharshi said: "The Tantrika and others condemn Sri Sankara's philosophy as Maya vada, i.e. philosophy of illusion, without understanding him aright. What does he say? (1) Brahma is real. (2) the universe is unreal, a myth. (3) Brahma is the universe. The Tantrika may be justified if Sri Sankara had stopped with his second statement but he amplifies the first two statements with the third one. What does it signify? It signifies that perception is wrong and illusory. The antagonists point to

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¹⁹⁶ The original editor inserted "187" at the top of the page by hand.

(continued from the previous page) illusion – snake in the rope, and think they have him clinched. This analogy is used by him to explain unqualified myth. After the truth of the rope is known, the illusion of the snake is removed once and for all. Since this illustration does not completely clarify the position he presses another analogy to his aid i.e. the mirage. Its mythical nature is qualified. A mirage does not disappear even after knowing it to be mirage. The appearance persists but now the man does not run to it for water. Similarly, the world persists in its appearance even though it is known to be unreal. The disputants continue to argue as follows: "Admitting both the illustrations, now is the world proved to be unreal? The water of the mirage is certainly unreal because it can serve no useful purpose. But the phenomena of the world differ from it, because of their usefulness." Sankara argues: "A phenomenon cannot be admitted to be real simply because it serves a purpose." He brings in the third example of the dream. The dream creations are full of purpose and they do serve the dream purpose. E.g. the dream water quenches the thirst in the dream. The dream creation is however contradicted in the waking state. What is real at one moment and unreal at the next moment cannot be said to be real. If real, it should always be so. So it is with the magical creations. They appear real and are yet illusory. If then the earnest seeker asks why the world should yet appear, he replies with the counter question "To whom does it appear," you reply must be "To the Self." Otherwise the question will arise "Will the world appear in the absence of the cognizing self?" Therefore the Self is the Ultimate and Sole Reality. His conclusion thus amounts to this: The phenomena are real when seen as the self, and myths when seen apart from the Self. Now what do the Tantriks say? They say that the phenomena are real because they are part of the reality in which they appear.

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(continued from the previous page) Are not these two statements the same? That is what I mean by "Reality and Illusion are the same."

(199-1) BUCKE: Of what nature is the beautific illumination of the Westerners mentioned in Bucke's Cosmic Consciousness?

A: It came as a flash and disappeared as such. That which has a beginning must also end. Only when the ever-existent consciousness is recognised will it be permanent.

(199-2) PAUL BRUNTON: Why PB went in for such a low thing as snake charming in Egypt when he had higher knowledge?

A: It must be his prarabdha (karma outworking in present birth).

¹⁹⁷ The original editor inserted "189" at the top of the page by hand.

(199-3) Several times visitors asked Maharshi how Paul Brunton came to have the illumination described in Secret India, and why they could not get it after many years. Maharshi said PB practiced Sadhana in former births to a highly advanced state, and consequently was ripe for fuller illumination

Someone asked whether PB's work was merely journalistic or result of genuine spirituality. Maharshi answered "What room can there be for doubt?"

(199-4) KRISHNAMURTI: Maharshi said of a talk by Krishnamurti, "How did he get all this enlightenment?" Meaning that Krishnamurti had to evolve through many births using idols, images, teachers, yoga, etc. and now kicks away the ladder by which he rose, not being tolerant to understand the limitations of people.

(199-5) SANKARA'S books are good for discussions and intellectual argument, but the practical experience is required.

(199-6) MUSSOLINI: During Italo-Abyssinian war, M. remarked: "It is a pity that a man like Mussolini who is n ordinary person, who is endowed with such unusual gifts should not use them for a higher purpose but misuse them for the destruction of his fellows.

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(200-1) PAUL BRUNTON: A. Kathirithambi of Colombo had a dream. Maharshi appeared to him said "when you have worldly or spiritual troubles practise a Yoga exercise, viz. Slow the breath and bring the mind to heart," which he described. The dreamer replied that it is precisely what is given by PB in "Quest of Overself." Yes, replied Maharshi. He is one of my "eyes." My shakti is working through him. Follow him closely.

(200-2) One day Maharshi said to PB "You are saying the same thing in your books that I say, only you say it in a modern way."

(200-3) Q: Is the Maharshi's teaching the same as Sankara's?

A: Maharshi's teaching is only an expression of his own experiences and realisation. Others find that it tallies with Sri Sankara's.

Q: Can it be put in other ways to express the same realisation?

A: A realised man will use his own language. Silence is the best language.

(200-4) KRISHNA's showing universal vision to Arjuna was only to enable Arjuna to see through Krishna's eyes like a mesmerist. What was given Arjuna for the occasion was not eyes but [divya]¹⁹⁸ eyes. The stars and worlds which Arjuna saw were not real. Space is not real. Time also is not real.

¹⁹⁸ A blank space was left in the original because the original typist couldn't read PB's handwriting, or because PB himself left a blank in the para. The original editor later inserted "divya" by hand.

(200-5) GHANDI: Babu Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Indian National Congress, visited Maharshi. On leaving, he asked for a message which he could convey to Ghandi. Maharshi said: "When heart speaks to heart, what need is there for worlds?"

(200-6) JESUS: Is self-knowledge what Jesus meant by the expression "kingdom of heaven?"

A: Yes. Vedantins can understand him.

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(201-1) Late Maharaja of Mysore had an interview with Maharshi for 15 minutes. He said "I am not a free person. I cannot come and stay here like your disciples. So I beg your grace." He remained silent for five minutes and prostrated and left, asking Asram to keep his visit secret. Afterwards, Maharshi observed that Maharaja was a most advanced soul and that speech between them was not needed.

(201-2) PAUL BRUNTON: Sri Ramana Maharshi's personal message to PB (sent by post to England): "Fear not! Thou art the Self!" Be That!" Mere mental figments are "far" and "near." No room for doubt in the true Self, so need not worry whether path is right or not. Fear and Doubt are only in Path unknown. The Path itself will teach you right."

(201-3) BUDDHA: Buddha has been unjustly accused of being an atheist because he denied the existence of a substratum. It is true that the Self is both Everything and Nothing. As matter it is every form, but as the Abstract Self, the Void out of which Matter springs, it is Nothing. Matter is relatively real, real in a limited sense, for its origin in the Reality itself.

(201-4) KRISHNA: Krishna gave the Vision of Universal Form to Arjuna, this does not mean that Iswara himself sees the Universe like that; he does not view all the individuals, he sees only the Self. Krishna merely lent his "eyes" to Arjuna to help the latter to see.

(201-5) PAUL BRUNTON: When the financial secretary, Mysore Government, came and asked "Is Paul Brunton's Secret Path useful to Indians also?" Maharshi replied "Yes, for all." The enquirer then said: "The doctrine that body, senses etc. are not I is common among us, but how to practice, to realise it?" Maharshi replied: "By the three-fold method mentioned in Brunton's book."

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¹⁹⁹ The original editor inserted "191" at the top of the page by hand.

(continued from the previous page) The Secretary said: "There is a blankness intervening, according to the book." Maharshi replied: "Yes. Do not stop there. See for whom the blankness appears. There is laya. Even disciples become unconscious in laya and wake up after some time."

(202-1) JESUS: In Christianity the Cross is the body, God is the Father, The Absolute Being. When the ego perishes the process is called Resurrection. Jesus calling out "My God!" on the cross may have been an intercession on behalf of the two thieves who were crucified with him. A Jnani²⁰⁰ may appear to suffer, another may be in trance, another may disappear from sight before death. Howsoever he departs from the body, it is immaterial, and makes no difference in his state. The Jnani²⁰¹ who appears to suffer does so only in the eyes of the onlooker and not to himself, for he has already transcended the mistaken identity of Self with body.

(202-2) PAUL: After Paul became self-conscious he identified the illumination with Christ consciousness. Illumination is absolute. Christ, consciousness, Ravana, Self are all one and the same.

(202-3) JESUS: Was Jesus a Siddha (Adept with occult powers)?

A: He could not have been conscious of his occult powers (Siddhis). He could not have been aware at the time that he was curing men of their diseases.

(202-4) GAUDAPADA: In Mandukya Karika says, that there is no difference between the two states from the standpoint of absolute reality?

A: Of course. The dream is for the one who says that he is awake. In fact, wakefulness and dreams are equally unreal from the absolute standpoint.

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(203-1) SRI AUROBINDO: Q: What is Bhagavan's opinion of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga and his claim to have probed beyond the experiences of Vedic Rishis?

A: Aurobindo advises complete surrender. Let us do it first; await results and discuss further, if need be, afterwards and not now. There is no use discussing transcendental experiences by those whose upadhis are not divested. Learn what surrender is: It is to merge in the Self. The Self is that to which we surrender our egos and let the Supreme power i.e. the Self do what it pleases. The ego is already self's. We have no right over the ego, even as it is. Supposing we have, we surrender. Aurobindo's talk of bringing down divine consciousness from above overlooks that the same is already in the heart. Kingdom of God is within, says the Bible. What is to be brought down? From where? Who is to bring, what and why?

²⁰⁰ "Gnani" in the original.

²⁰¹ "Gnani" in the original.

²⁰² The original editor inserted "193" at the top of the page by hand.

Realisation is only to remove the obstacles, to recognise the eternal, immanent Reality. Reality is. It need not be taken from place to place etc.

Q: What about Aurobindo's claim to start from self-realisation and develop further?

A: Let us first realise and then see. The Visishta-advaitis say that the Atma is first realised and the realised "jivatma" is surrendered to "Paramatma." Only then, it is complete. The "Anga" is given up to the "Angi." That is Moksha and Sayujya. Simple self-realisation stops at Kaivalya, says Visishta-advaiti. The Siddhas say that one who leaves his body behind as a corpse, cannot attain Mukti. They are reborn. Only such as whose bodies, dissolve in space, in light or from sight, attain salvation (moksha). The Advaitis of Sankara type stop short at Self-realisation and it is the end they say. There are others who extol their pet theories as the best e.g. the late Venkasami Rao of Kumbakonam, Brhmananda Yogi

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(continued from the previous page) of Cuddapah etc. The fact is there is Reality. It is not affected by any discussions. Let us abide as Reality and not engage in futile discussions as to its nature etc.

(204-1) The common idea of being separate from Brahman is itself wrong. Hence the man who follows the doctrine of having to get realisation is not aware of the truth that nothing new is to be acquired. Brahman is you even now. Therefore you are already realised but you should know it. The knowledge of Brahman means the removal of obstacles which prevent your knowing it. These obstacles are first: you think you are an individual, second that you are apart from Cosmos, third that God is something different from all this. There are no limitations in fact. When you read the printed words in a book you forget the white paper background and see only the words. Now the words limit your attention whereas the paper itself diffuses it. Similarly constantly thinking of yourself as individual limits your consciousness whereas thinking of yourself as Brahman makes it unlimited.

(204-2) PAUL BRUNTON: [Maharshi]²⁰³ said: "Yes, Brunton must [choose]²⁰⁴ a lady suited to his temperament and likely to render help to his spiritual salvation. She must be such a woman as is likely to help him attain success, living a married life and yet attain salvation. Then N. Iyer objected "But he will be having sexual intercourse with his wife." Maharshi replied "What is the harm?" One of those present objected that PB would retrograde spiritually because of sex in marrying. Maharshi retorted "He is bound to attain salvation. Once a man has set foot on this soil, he can never retrace it. Married life can never affect one if he controls his mind. It is mind that is the real cause of retrogression. People who think they have committed any sin believe do so because they identify the body with Self."

²⁰³ The original editor deleted "After The original editor got married," before "Maharshi" by hand.

²⁰⁴ The original editor changed "have chosen" to "choose" by hand.

(205-1)²⁰⁶ PAUL BRUNTON: Maharshi said to Swami Siddheswarananda of the Ramakrishna Mission on appearance of "Secret India," "Is not Brunton a wonderful man? With such a short stay in India he has been able to enter into the very basis of our life. It must be due to Samskaras."

(205-2) ["PB will not be able to find a suitable wife capable of undergoing the same self-denunciation that he was willing to undergo," said M after the {Jasmine tale.}]²⁰⁷

(205-3) When in February 1939 the Sarvadikari arranged to post men to prevent the entry of Paul Brunton into the asram, the Maharshi sternly forbade him. When the Sarvadikari insisted and declared that he would do so, then Maharshi replied "In that case I shall myself go out of the asram to meet him."

(205-4) [PERSONAL ANSWERS TO PB]²⁰⁸

(205-5) The life of action need NOT be renounced. Just meditate for an hour or two every day, then carry on with your duties. As a result you will find that your attitude towards things people and events will gradually change. Also the current of meditation will continue even while you are working. It is as though there were two ways of expressing the same idea, that is, in two languages. Thus the idea expressed in meditation is similarly expressed in your activity.

(205-6) The Guru is not limited by space or time and can communicate telepathically and otherwise.

(205-7) A Guru is required (1st) to point out the way and (2nd) to give the power or impetus to enable the aspirant to dive into himself in meditation. A definite request must be made to him, if one desires him to accept one as a disciple.

(205-8) You will be better able to serve humanity after you have found your Self, than now. Therefore, seek the Self first, before seeking to serve.

(205-9) As you get enlightenment, you can continue your journalistic work but when you are writing you

²⁰⁵ The original editor inserted "195" at the top of the page by hand.

²⁰⁶ The paras on this page are numbered 1 through 5; they are not consecutive with the paras on the previous page. Paras 205-3 through 205-9 were typed on a separate sheet of paper and pasted here by hand.

²⁰⁷ The original editor inserted ""The original editor will not be able to find a suitable wife capable of undergoing the same self-denunciation that he was willing to undergo," said M after the J?? T??le." By hand. The last two words are smudged out. Only J?? And t??le are visible in the original.

²⁰⁸ The original editor inserted "PERSONAL ANSWERS TO The original editor" by hand

(continued from the previous page) will not think that it is [Paul Brunton]²⁰⁹ who is writing, because your consciousness will be centred in That which is beyond the little self of PB

(206-1)²¹⁰ All thinking must cease before entering the state of Brahman. So long as you continue to have thoughts, even though they are about the Reality, so long you have not reached the highest state.

(206-2) During the vision described in "Secret India" I got telepathically the words: "Henceforth cast aside the idea that it is PB who is serving humanity or helping others by lighting their darkness. Realise it is THAT which is working in you, using body mind and pen. Forget PB; you have turned this life over to THAT, Brahman. This is your diksha - Initiation.

Chapter 23: Eastern and Western Schools of Thought

(207-1) BUDDHISM: Maharshi strongly deprecated the Buddha being called a "Sunyavadi," one who says only a void, an utter negation is left in Nirvana. Maharshi said the Buddha did not commit himself to any positive statement about Nirvana other than that it is something worthy to be attained. He only said it was the non-ego state. Maharshi in "Truth Revealed" has definitely said the egoless state is not a void.

(207-2) BUDDHISM: Buddhist view correct or Hindu?

A: Real self is continuous and unaffected. Reincarnating ego²¹¹ belongs to lower plane of thought. All are agreed on the annihilation of ego. Let us get to business on the agreed point. All that is immaterial to one's spiritual progress should not be bothered with. So first realise self. Then see what happens.

(207-3) DVAITA: If the Advaita is final, why did Madhva teach dvaita?

A: Is your self daita or advaita? All systems agree on self-realisation. Do it first. There will be time to judge whose view is right or otherwise.

²⁰⁹ The original editor inserted "Paul Brunton" by hand.

²¹⁰ The paras on this page are numbered 6 and 7, making them consecutive with the previous page. They were typed on a separate sheet of paper and pasted here by hand.

²¹¹ The original editor corrected the spelling of "ego" by hand.

²¹² Blank page

Chapter 24: The Need of Ultra-Mysticism

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THE NEED OF ULTRA-MYSTICISM

[199]²¹³

(209-1) All metaphysical discussion is profitless unless it causes us to seek within the Self for the true Reality.

(209-2) One can and often does go through numerous books, a whole library perhaps, and yet comes out without the faintest realisation of what he IS. Learning often renders a disservice when through it one's egotism develops with his study, and also pride: these prove serious obstacles to progress.

(209-3) Science is exploring the external universe, when it has not explored the Self. Inventions are being made constantly; they will never cease as we can go on inventing one new thing after another ad lib. What is the good? All this is Maya. Turn inwards and know your Self first.

(209-4) All these notes you are making of my sayings etc. are useful for beginners, for friends and to answer the questions of others. But for yourself you know they are only pieces of paper. Do you dive into the Self and find all you want to know there.

(209-5) All controversies about creation, the nature of the universe, evolution, the purpose of God, are useless. They do not conduce to our true happiness. People try to find out about things which are outside of them before they try to find out "Who am I?" Only by the latter means can they gain happiness – not by understanding the whole universe. For the Self is happiness.

(209-6) Ananda is the bliss of not being disturbed by any mental activity or characteristics. There is a temporary bliss and a permanent one. The latter is called Sahaja Nirvikalpa Samadhi i.e., the state of Nirvikalpa that has become natural.

The jnani in the former state enjoys the bliss of samadhi arising from the cessation of mental activity and disappearance of outside objects. But after a while his bliss ceases as

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(continued from the previous page) mental activities begin and there is no samadhi for a time. But the latter state means that there is no relapse into mental activities etc. and no consequent loss of bliss. His happiness is unbroken and ever enduring. His body, senses and mind may be operative, though, but the person is hardly conscious of the acts of his body.

²¹³ The original editor inserted "199" at the top of the page by hand.

(210-1) The life current originates in the "heart." This heart is not the physiological organ of that name, but a spiritual centre near to it (in the breast). Thus everyone, even a child, of every creed or race, when referring to the 'heart' as a metaphor meaning the deepest feelings will nevertheless touch the breast with their hands. But such discussions as inside or outside the body cannot arise in self-realisation. When you have found the centre, you will find that it is spread out to the circumference of the whole world, if you wish the radius can be extended to your body or to the world. We start with the wrong presumption that the circle is confined to the human form. Locate the centre first. To that you always return, in it you always remain; it is the common centre for all humanity when they realise.

(210-2) Q: After some period of mediation I find thought dies away and stillness reigns. Within that stillness I am aware of a tiny seed or point in my breast or heart upon which all my attention is centred. Is this the Self you mention?

A: Yes – that is the Self, though you have to go deeper to perfect your realisation. Hold on to it. Do not lose the current. Do not lose it by having the wrong idea that 'I am meditating on the Self,' 'I am meditating on something else.' At such a point try to remember that you ARE the Self, that this stillness is your natural condition. Hence watch vigilantly that you do not fall away from it.

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THE NEED OF ULTRA-MYSTICISM

[201]²¹⁴

(211-1) The intricate maze of philosophy of different schools is said to clarify matters and reveal the truth. But in fact, they create confusion where no confusion need exist. To understand anything there must be the Self. The Self is obvious. Why not remain as the Self? What need to explain the non-self? Take the Vedanta for instance:- They say there are fifteen kinds of prana. The student is made to commit the names to memory and also their functions. The air goes up and is called prana, goes down and is called apana; operates the indriyas and is called something else. Why all this? Why do you classify, give names and enumerate the functions, and so on? Is it not enough to know that one prana does the whole work? The antahkarana thinks, desires, wills, reasons, etc. and each function is attributed to one name such as mind, intellect etc. Has any man seen the pranas or the antahkaranas? Have they any real being? They are mere conceptions, when and where will such conceptions end? Consider the following:- A man sleeps. He says on waking that he slept. The question is asked: Why does he not say in his sleep that he is sleeping? The answer is given that he is sunk in the Self and cannot speak like a man who was diving into water to bring something from the bottom. The diver cannot speak. When he has actually recovered the article and comes out he speaks. Well what is the explanation? Being in water, water will flow into his mouth if he were to open the mouth for speaking. Is it not simple? But the philosopher is not content with this simple fact. He explains saying that fire is the deity presiding over speech; that it is

²¹⁴ The original editor inserted "201" at the top of the page by hand.

inimical to water and therefore cannot function. This is called philosophy and the learners are struggling to learn all this. Is it not sheer waste of time? Again the gods are said to preside over the limbs and senses of the individual. So they go on explaining Hiranyagarba etc. Why should confusion be created

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(continued from the previous page) and then explained away? Fortunate is the man who does not involve himself in this maze. I was indeed fortunate that I never took to it. Had I taken to it, I would probably be nowhere, always in confusion. My vasanās fortunately took me directly to the "Whom am I" enquiry.

(212-1) Q: What of scientific knowledge?

A: All relative knowledge pertains to the mind, not to the Self. It is therefore illusory, not permanent. A scientist who formulates the theory that the earth is round, for instance, may prove it incontrovertibly. When he falls asleep the whole idea vanishes: his mind is left a blank. What does it matter if the world is round or flat when he is asleep? So you see the futility of all such relative knowledge. Real knowledge is to go beyond all such relative knowledge and abide in Self. Realise that the self transcends intellect, the latter must itself vanish to reach self.

(212-2) Q: Which is better, to practice meditation or to study spiritual books like the Upanisad?

A: It is entirely a matter of temperament. If you find that meditation suits you and helps to attain progress then go on with it. Some other men find that studying books suits them better than meditation. Different people must have different paths, it is a matter of individual taste and temperament.

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THE NEED OF AN ULTRA-MYSTIC

[203]²¹⁵

(213-1) Q: Are there thoughts in Samadhi or not?

A: There will be the feeling "I am" and no other thoughts.

(213-2) Q: Is not "I am" a thought?

A: The egoless "I am" is not a thought. It is realisation.

(213-3) Mental Quiet is easier to attain, and earlier, but the ultimate goal is mental destruction. Most paths lead to the first, whereas Self-Enquiry leads to it quickly and then to the second. Find where mind takes its rise, or who is mentally quiet and you succeed.

²¹⁵ The original editor inserted "203" at the top of the page by hand.

(213-4) Q: What particular steps will be helpful to mind control?

A: That depends on the circumstances of each. Bhakti, Karma, Jnana and Yoga are all one. You cannot love God, without knowing him nor know without loving him. Love manifests itself in everything you do and that is karma. The adoption of mental perception (yoga) is the necessary preliminary before you can know or love God in the proper way.

(213-5) The Jnanis²¹⁶ point out that the Yogi assumes the existence of the body, its separateness from the Self and therefore advises effort for the re-union by practice of Yoga. The body is in the mind which has the brain for its seat which again functions by the light borrowed from another source, as admitted by the Yogis themselves in their fountain theory. The Jnani²¹⁷ further argues if the light is borrowed it must come from its native source. Go to the source direct and do not depend on borrowed resources. Just as an iron ball comes into being as separate from the mass of iron along with fiery heat, it cools down later giving up the fire, but must be again made fiery to reunite with the mass, so also, the cause of separation must also form the factor of union. Again if there is an image reflected, there must be a source and also accessories like the sun, a pot and water, for

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(continued from the previous page) reflection. To undo the reflection, either the surface may be covered corresponding to our reaching the fountain according to the Yogis; or the water may be drained away which is called tapas i.e. the thoughts or the brain activities are made to cease: this is Jnana²¹⁸ marga. All these are however on the assumption that the jiva is separate from Self or Brahman. But are we separate? "No" says the Jnani.²¹⁹ The ego is simply wrong identity of the Self with the non-self as in the case of a colourless crystal and its background. The crystal though colourless appears red because of its background. If the background is removed, the crystal shines in its original purity. So it is with the Self and the Antahkaranas.

(214-1) Q: Three or four times in my life great spiritual ecstasies came and went. I want them permanently.

A: They have come and gone, but you are not gone. Your real Self is still there!

(214-2) There is a unity really, but intellect makes the differences. Yet intellect is a power (faculty) of the Self. But the Principle which lies behind the intellect, cannot be known by the intellect.

²¹⁶ "Gnanis" in the original.

²¹⁷ "Gnani" in the original.

²¹⁸ "Gnana" in the original.

²¹⁹ "Gnani" in the original.

(214-3) However much you learn, there will be no bounds to knowledge. You ignore the doubter but try to solve the doubts. On the other hand, hold the doubter and the doubts will disappear.

(214-4) Yoga and meditation are for ordinary people. Vichara is for the wise. Vichara is the means to get realisation.

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(215-1) There are men of giant intellect who are spending their lives in discovering knowledge about many things; but all this intellect is being turned outwards. What is the use of knowing everything when you do not yet know yourself. Ask these men if they know who they are, and they will hang their heads in shame.

(215-2) Q: What is the difference between meditation and Vichara?

A: Meditation can be upon external or other object. Thus subject and object differ. In Vichara both subject and object are the same – the Self.

(215-3) I never knew of these philosophical conundrums and controversies and problems till after I came to Tiruvannamalai and people began to pester or come to me. Up till then I had never concerned myself with them. I never knew any system of philosophy. All these systems have evolved out of the one simple fact of Realisation. Therefore seek realisation, practice vichara and do not worry about philosophies and systems and problems.

(215-4) But all these rules regarding hours etc. of meditation are only for beginners. There will come a time when you will say “I have given up meditation” because then you will have realised that the idea connotes duality, viz. a person who meditates, and an object of meditation, and you will perceive the standpoint of the true Self which does not need to meditate.

(215-5) Let us not begin to exercise our intellect upon Atman by trying to find of what sort is the self-effulgence of this Atman, whether it is of this sort or that. It is such discursive thought that constitutes our bondage.

(215-6) Do not allow a single mental activity to intrude into your Dhyanam. One should continue the practice so long as Ego (Ahankara) or sense of possession are not completely put down i.e. till you can at will and without effort keep the mind free of concepts or activities. Otherwise you must go on with the practice.

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²²⁰ The original editor inserted “205” at the top of the page by hand.

(216-1) Q: Do you go into Nirvikalpa Samadhi?

A: If the eyes be closed, it is Nirvikalpa; if open, it is Savikalpa. The ever-present state is the natural one, i.e. sahaja.

(216-2) Ecstatic experience imply association of very subtle mind. What is your state in sleep? No ecstasy nor pain, but beyond both. The natural state is just that with conscience of existence added.

(216-3) The final obstacle to meditation is ecstasy; you feel great bliss and happiness and stay in that ecstasy; do not yield to it but pass on to the sixth stage which is great calm. The calm is higher than ecstasy and it merges into Samadhi. Successful samadhi causes a waking sleep state to supervene, when you are always consciousness, for consciousness is your nature. Hence a man is always in samadhi. Only he does not know it; all he has to do is to remove the above obstacles.

(216-4) Yes, intellect can be a help towards realisation up to a certain stage. But intellect must vanish to reach the Self.

(216-5) Q: How does book-lore help?

A: Only so far as to make a man spiritually aspiring.

(216-6) Q: How does intellect help?

A: Only so far as to make him sink his intellect in the ego and ego in the Self. After realisation all intellectual loads are thrown overboard as flotsam. Whose is the intellect? It is man's. Intellect is only an instrument.

(216-7) The study of the sacred books will not suffice to reveal the truth. So long as vasanas are latent in the mind, realisation cannot be achieved. Sastra learning is itself a vasana. Realisation is only in samadhi. Samadhi alone can reveal it. Thoughts cast a veil over reality and so it cannot be clear in states other than Samadhi.

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(217-1) Q: Yoga means union. But the union of what with which?

A: Exactly. Yoga implies division - union of one with another. Who is to be united with whom? You are the seeker, seeking union with something. That something is apart from you. Your Self is intimate to you. You are aware of the Self. Seek it and be it. That will expand as Infinity. Then there will be no question of Yoga etc. Whose is Viyoga? Find it. "Stoppage of mental activities" is applicable to all systems of yoga. The methods differ. So long as there is effort made towards that

²²¹ The original editor inserted "207" at the top of the page by hand.

goal, it is called yoga. The effort is the yoga. The cessation can be brought about in so many ways: (1) by questing the mind itself. When the mind is sought, its activities cease automatically. This is the method of Jnana.²²² The pure mind is the Self. (2) Looking for the source of the mind is another method. The source may be said to be God or Self or Consciousness. (3) Concentrating upon one thought, makes all other thoughts to disappear. Finally that thought also disappears.

(217-2) Q: What is the Sun Path "Ravi Marga?" What is the Moon path? Which of them is easier?

A: Sun path is jnana.²²³ Moon path is yoga. Yogis think that after purifying 12,000 nadis in the body, Sushuma is entered and the mind passes up to the Sahasrara chakra and there is nectar trickling. There are all mental concepts. The mind is already overwhelmed by the world of concepts. Better concepts are now added in the shape of this yoga. The object of all these is to rid the man of concepts – to make him inhere as the pure Self, i.e. absolute consciousness, bereft of thoughts! Why not go straight to it? Why add new encumbrances to the already existing ones?

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²²² "Gnana" in the original.

²²³ "gnana" in the original.

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