

PART 2

The Initial Urge and the Journey of Evolving Consciousness

LET US now think of one unconscious soul.

In the beginning the soul had no impressions (*sanskaras*) and no consciousness.

Therefore at this stage or in this state, the soul had no gross form or body, subtle body or mental body, **because only the existence of gross, subtle and mental impressions (*sanskaras*) can give existence to gross, subtle and mental bodies**, and only the existence of these bodies can make possible the existence of gross, subtle and mental worlds.

Hence in the beginning the soul had no consciousness of gross, subtle and mental bodies and was also unconscious of its own self, and the soul then naturally had no experience of the gross, subtle and mental worlds and also had no experience of the Over-Soul (*Paramatma*).

This infinite, impressionless, unconscious tranquil state of the soul reverberated with an impulse which we call THE FIRST URGE (the first urge to know Itself).

The first urge was latent in *Paramatma*.

When we compare *Paramatma* to an infinite, unlimited ocean and when we say that *Paramatma* got the first urge, it could also be said in terms of comparison that the infinite, unlimited ocean got the first urge or THE WHIM.*

In the Infinite, both finite and infinite are included.

* [See also Meher Baba, "The Whim from the Beyond," *Beams from Meher Baba on the Spiritual Panorama* (San Francisco: Sufism Reoriented, Inc., 1958), 7–11. Ed.]

Now was this first urge infinite or finite, and was it at first finite and then infinite or vice versa?

The first urge was most finite, but this first urge was of the Infinite.

This most finite first urge was of the infinite Ocean-*Paramatma*, and the manifestation of this latent most finite first urge of the Infinite was restricted to a most finite point in the infinite, unlimited Ocean.

But as this most finite point of manifestation of the latent first urge, which was most finite too, was in the infinite, unlimited Ocean, this most finite point of manifestation of the first urge was also unlimited.

Through this most finite point of manifestation of the first urge (also most finite), the shadow of the Infinite (which shadow, when of Reality, is infinite) gradually appeared* and went on expanding.

This most finite point of manifestation of the latent first urge is called the **“Om” Point** or **Creation Point** and this point is unlimited.

Simultaneously with reverberations of the first urge, the most gross first impression emerged, objectifying the soul as the most absolute opposite and most finite gross counterpart of the Infinite.

Because of this most gross first impression of the first urge, the infinite Soul **experienced** for the first time. This first experience of the infinite Soul was that it (the Soul) experienced a contrariety in its identity with its infinite, impressionless, unconscious state.

This experience of contrariety effected changeableness in the eternal, indivisible stability of the infinite Soul, and spontaneously there occurred a sort of eruption, disrupting the indivisible poise and the unconscious tranquility of the infinite Soul with a **recoil or tremendous shock** which impregnated the unconsciousness of the unconscious Soul with first consciousness of its apparent separateness from the indivisible state of *Paramatma*. But the Soul being infinite, the first consciousness that it derived from the recoil or shock of an absolutely opposite and most gross first impression of its apparent separateness was naturally and necessarily **finite** first consciousness.

* The sense to be conveyed is that the shadow of the Infinite seeped through or oozed out of the most finite point.

This first consciousness derived by the Soul is obviously most, most-finite in proportion to the experience of the absolute opposites of its own original infinite state.

It then means that in the beginning, when the impressionless infinite Soul was first impressed, it got as its first impression an absolutely gross impression. And the first consciousness it (the Soul) derived was most, most-finite.

Simultaneously at that instant, the unconsciousness of the infinite Soul actually experienced most, most-finite first consciousness of the most-gross first impression.

This infinite and eternal Soul did get consciousness, but this consciousness by impression was not of its **eternal** state or its infinite Self but was of the most-finite, by the most-gross impression.

Now as will be explained later, if the soul is conscious of impressions (*sanskaras*) then the soul **must necessarily experience these impressions**, and in order to experience the impressions, the consciousness of the soul must experience them through proper media.

As the impressions are, so are the experiences of impressions and so must be the media to experience the impressions. That is, the impressions give rise to experiences, and to experience the impressions the use of appropriate media is necessitated.

Therefore as the infinite, eternal and formless Soul now has the most, most-finite first consciousness of the most, most-gross first impression, quite obviously and necessarily this most, most-finite first consciousness of the soul must utilize the most, most-finite and most, most-gross **first** medium to experience the most, most-gross first impression.

At this stage it suffices to mention here for the limited human understanding that the most, most-finite first consciousness of the soul, while experiencing the most, most-gross first impression, centred itself in an appropriate most, most-finite and most, most-gross medium, imperceptibly tending the Soul (without form) to associate and identify its very infinite, eternal Self with this most, most-gross and most, most-finite limited form as its first medium.

The first consciousness of the indivisible Soul, experiencing the first impression through the first medium, creates a tendency in the

soul to associate and identify its eternal, infinite Self with the first form, the most-finite and most-gross, which was as the seed of the contrariety, spontaneously sown by the reverberations of the first urge, imperceptibly germinated and manifested, for the first time, in the shape of duality. When it is made to associate and identify itself, by its newly gained consciousness, with the finite, gross form or medium, the consciousness of the soul actually makes the infinite, eternal, indivisible Soul without form experience that it is that finite, gross form.

Thus the consciousness gained by the unconscious soul, instead of experiencing **reality** through unity and identity with the Over-Soul, experiences **illusion** through duality and identity with the gross form, multiplying diverse, innumerable impressions in a series of experiences while associating with the gross form and gradually gaining or evolving more and more consciousness.

In order to understand more clearly and concretely how the consciousness gained by the soul gradually develops through the process of evolution, let us examine that state of the conscious soul where the consciousness of the soul associates itself with stone-form as the most-finite and most-gross medium, and the soul thus begins to identify itself as stone.

Actually the consciousness of the soul utilizes the stone-form only after innumerable cycles and ages of diverse experiences through diverse species of forms, of which there are **seven major** different kinds of most, most-finite and most, most-gross gaseous forms, which cannot even be concretely grasped nor imagined by ordinary human beings.

It is for convenience that we begin with that state of conscious soul when it just begins to associate and identify itself with stone-form.

In stone-form, too, there are varied species, and the consciousness of the soul has to utilize each and all of these species as appropriate media, one after the other, in accordance with the diversity of impressions of the soul, to experience varied and countless impressions gathered one after the other in stone-form.

If we take stone as a medium for most-gross impressions, it follows that the soul, which is eternally in the Over-Soul, now with

most-finite consciousness experiences most-gross impressions through the medium of stone-form.

It is thus that the infinite, indivisible, eternal soul (without form) which is eternally in the Over-Soul, while experiencing the most-finite gross impressions through its own most-finite consciousness, utilizes the most-finite gross medium of the first-most species of stone ("first-most" meaning the very, very first), and the soul is thus imperceptibly, though spontaneously, made to identify itself as stone.

After ages and cycles the most-finite gross consciousness is gradually much more evolved in the soul by innumerable and varied experiences of the most-gross finite impressions through the identification of the soul with the first-most species of stone. Eventually, when a limit to having experiences is reached, the identification of the soul with the first-most species of stone is gradually dissociated and that stone-form is dropped.

The soul remains now for a period without any medium, though the most-finite consciousness which has been evolved remains together with the most-gross finite impressions of the most-first species of stone-form just shed.

Thus the soul, now without any medium or form, is conscious of the most-finite impressions (*sanskaras*). But as long as consciousness is centred in impressions, the soul must necessarily experience those impressions.

Therefore, in order to experience the impressions of the most-first species of stone-form dropped, the consciousness of the soul centred in the impressions of the dropped stone-form begins to associate with the most-next species of stone-form. The soul identifies itself with this species of stone, and the consciousness of the soul begins to experience, through association with the new medium of the most-next species of stone-form, the impressions of the most-first species of stone-form.

The most important point to be understood here is that when the consciousness of the soul dissociates its identification from one form or medium and retains only the impressions of the form so dissociated, these impressions are experienced through another

appropriate medium when the consciousness of the soul associates with the next medium or form. But this next medium or form is always created and moulded of the consolidated impressions of the last species of form with which the soul associated and identified itself and which (impressions) were retained by the consciousness of the soul even when dissociated from the form.

Thus, innumerable diverse experiences of countless impressions experienced by the consciousness of the soul through diverse species of stone-forms, one after the other, lead to the greater evolution of consciousness of the soul.

Ultimately a stage is reached after ages and cycles of experiences where the consciousness of the soul has a tendency to dissociate the soul even from the most-last species of stone-form; and, although the most-last species of stone-form is dissociated or dropped by the soul, the most-finite consciousness evolved thus far remains together with the most-finite gross impressions of the most-last species of stone-form dropped.

The soul, now without any medium or form, is conscious of the most-finite gross impressions (*sanskaras*) of the most-last species of stone-form. The soul must necessarily experience these impressions.

Now, in order to experience the impressions of the most-last stone-form, the soul associates and identifies with another medium—the metal-form. This medium of metal-form is but the mould of the impressions of the most-last species of stone-form. In other words, the most-first species of metal-form is created and moulded of the most-last species of stone-form impressions.

It is thus that the infinite, eternal soul without form, which is eternally in the Over-Soul, experiences through evolved consciousness the most-gross finite impressions of the most-last species of stone-form while associating and identifying itself with the most-first species of metal-form.

There are diverse species of metal-form just as there are of stone-form, and the consciousness of the soul utilizes these diverse innumerable species of metal-form as media through which to experience the diverse and innumerable impressions gathered. Thus the evolution of the consciousness of the soul gains and gathers momentum

in proportion to the diverse and multiple experiences of varied and innumerable impressions, through different media or species of forms.

This is how the cycles of evolution of consciousness of the soul go on evolving further and greater consciousness with evolution of forms of higher and higher species, while experiencing and exhausting the impressions of the dissociated forms of the lower and lower species.

The consciousness of the soul experiences and exhausts all the impressions of the most-last species of stone-form through the medium of the most-first species of metal-form. When all the impressions of the most-last species of stone-form are exhausted, the consciousness of the soul dissociates itself from the most-first species of metal-form, and drops that form. But the consciousness now retains the impressions of the most-first species of the metal-form.*

These impressions of the most-first species of the metal-form are now experienced by the conscious soul through its association and identification with the most-next species of metal-form. This form is but the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-first species of metal-form which was dropped or dissociated by the conscious soul. A chain of varied species of metal-forms is thus created and the soul (or to be more precise, the consciousness of the soul) associates with and dissociates from every species of the metal-form, exhausting and gaining diverse impressions. While experiencing these impressions, the soul evolves more and more consciousness simultaneously with the evolution of the higher and higher species of forms. After ages and cycles, at last the consciousness of the soul associates and identifies itself with the most-last species of metal-form to experience the impressions of the most-last but one species of metal-form that the soul has just dropped or dissociated.

* [The reader should not think the oft-appearing “mosts,” such as most-first, most-next, most-finite, are superfluous or redundant, because each species of a certain form—stone, for instance—has numerous repetitions with slight variations before going on to the most-next species of that same form, and it seemed necessary to differentiate. “Most-last” is used to mean the form most recently encountered, *i.e.*, the highest and latest evolutionary form of the species, and should not be construed as the form furthest down the scale. Ed.]

This soul, eternally in the Over-Soul, though being infinite and without form, finds itself as metal.

While identifying itself with diverse species of metal-form the soul begins to experience simultaneously the gross world in accordance with and in proportion to the soul's experiences of the stone-form and the metal-form.

The metal-form, which includes a series of diverse species of metal, is as inorganic, inanimate and solid as the stone-form, which includes a series of diverse species of stone.

The soul, or more precisely, the consciousness of the soul, while identifying itself with the species of stone- and metal-forms, finds itself as one with the stone- or metal-form and thus realizes itself as inorganic, inanimate and solid, and experiences these inorganic, inanimate and solid states throughout the entire evolution of the stone- and metal-forms in the gross world.

The solid, inanimate state of the soul is one in which life and energy are still dormant in spite of greater evolution of consciousness. Hence the forms in this solid state cannot of their own accord move about by themselves (*i.e.*, they cannot have voluntary motion), and therefore the consciousness of the soul, associating with these solid forms which are inanimate and inorganic and with life and energy still dormant in them, tends to assert recumbent, horizontal positions rather than to assert vertical, upright stands or erect positions in the gross world.

After ages and cycles of varied innumerable gross experiences of diverse and innumerable impressions through a variety of species of metal-forms, the consciousness of the soul eventually dissociates itself even from the most-last species of metal-form. Thus the identity of the soul with the most-last species of metal-form is dropped and as usual the conscious soul now is once again temporarily unidentified with any form (*i.e.*, the soul is now without any form).

In this state of the conscious soul, when there is no form with which to be associated, the consciousness of the soul is centred only in the impressions of the most-last species of metal-form, which has now been dropped.

Thus the conscious soul in this state—of having no form for identification—is conscious only of the impressions of the most-last species of metal-form.

The conscious soul must exhaust these impressions of the most-last species of the metal-form by the consciousness of the soul experiencing these impressions through some appropriate medium. And the appropriate medium to spend or exhaust these impressions of the most-last species of metal-form is the most-first species of vegetable-form. This species of vegetable-form is nothing but the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-last species of the metal-form.

When the consciousness of the soul associates now with the most-first species of vegetable-form, the soul, thus conscious, tends to identify itself with that form and actually finds itself as that species of vegetable-form, quite oblivious of the reality that it (soul) is infinite, eternal and without form—eternally in the Over-Soul (*Paramatma*).

In this state of the most-first species of the vegetable-form the consciousness of the soul experiences the gross world, in accordance with and in proportion to the impressions it experienced and experiences of the stone-forms, metal-forms and vegetable-form respectively.

While thus experiencing the gross world, this consciousness of the soul, identified with the vegetable-form, realizes now that it is vegetable and has half inanimate and half animate attributes. The conscious soul now asserts in the gross world through this vegetable-form an upright, erect stand. Although this form cannot stand independently by itself, it uses the support of other media to assert an upright stand. This form is still not capable, however, of giving the experience of voluntary movement to the consciousness of the soul.

After the impressions of the last-most species of the metal-form are exhausted by the consciousness of the soul through the most-first species of vegetable-form, this most-first species of vegetable-form is dropped (*i.e.*, the consciousness of the soul dissociates itself from this most-first species of vegetable-form).

Again the conscious soul realizes that it is without a form although the evolved consciousness is there. This evolved consciousness of the soul is now centred in the impressions of the most-first species of the vegetable-form just dropped or dissociated.

To experience these impressions of the most-first species of vegetable-form, the consciousness of the soul, now without any form, utilizes an appropriate medium, which is the most-next species of the vegetable-form. This most-next species of the vegetable-form is nothing but the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-first species of vegetable-form.

By association with the medium of the most-next species of vegetable-form, the consciousness of the soul experiences in the gross world the impressions of that last species of the vegetable-form just dropped. When these impressions are exhausted through diverse experiences, the consciousness of the soul relinquishes its association with the most-next species of vegetable-form and again experiences that it (the soul) is without gross form and that its consciousness is centred only in the impressions of that species of form last dropped. Again, to experience these impressions the consciousness of the soul tends the soul to identify with the next species of vegetable-form. This chain of impressions, experiences and species of form, from one form to another, is so linked that it is apparently endless; and the consciousness of the soul, in order to evolve itself fully and completely, has no other course but to become entangled in this vicious circle until, perforce, the consciousness of the soul thus gained, makes the soul realize that it is infinite, eternal and eternally in the Over-Soul, and makes the soul experience infinite power, knowledge and bliss.

The point that is important and which is to be carefully noted is that, as the cycle of evolution of consciousness of the soul rolls on and on, and further and greater consciousness is evolved through experiences of further and greater impressions, this evolution of consciousness inadvertently evolves a series of forms of higher and higher species while exhausting the impressions of the lower and lower species that get dissociated or dropped or shed.

Thus the gap between the beginning and the end of a series of species of one particular form, such as stone-form or metal-form or

vegetable-form or other forms, beginning with the lowest or crude most-first species of a form of particular kind and ending with the highest or sublime most-last species of form of that particular kind, is progressively filled in by the evolution of forms of higher and higher types suitable to the impressions and aiding the consciousness of the soul to gain higher and higher consciousness. In short, in between the most-first and most-last species of form of a particular form, there are diverse species of forms of that particular form, evolved to suit the requirements of the evolving consciousness of the soul.

Coming to the point, when the consciousness of the soul associates itself with the most-last species of vegetable-form, the conscious soul identifies itself with this most-last species of vegetable-form and experiences the impressions of the most-last but one species of the vegetable-form that was last shed.

When all the impressions of this most-last but one species of vegetable-form are exhausted, the conscious soul no longer identifies itself with the most-last species of vegetable-form because the consciousness of the soul has dissociated itself from that most-last species of vegetable-form. This most-last species of vegetable-form is also eventually shed by the conscious soul after ages and cycles of experience of the whole vegetable kingdom through the gross world, on the earth and in the waters.

Although the most-last species of vegetable-form is shed by the conscious soul and the soul is now without any form, yet the consciousness evolved is there, and through this consciousness the soul (though without form) is conscious of the impressions of the most-last species of the vegetable-form just shed.

These impressions must necessarily be spent or exhausted.

In order to experience these impressions the consciousness of the soul now associates with an appropriate medium to experience these impressions of the most-last species of the vegetable-form. Therefore, the consciousness of the soul thus tends the soul to identify itself with the most-first species of the worm-form. It must be remembered that this form of the most-first species of worm-form is nothing other than the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-last species of vegetable-form.

While the conscious soul thus identifies itself with this most-first species of worm-form, the soul realizes that it is actually a worm and becomes worm-conscious.

Despite all of the consciousness so far evolved, the soul is still not conscious of its reality, its original, infinite, eternal state, eternally in the Over-Soul. Although the soul is eternally in the Over-Soul and is infinite and without form, this partially conscious soul actually experiences itself as a worm in the gross world. This is ignorance. This ignorance persists as long as the consciousness of the soul is not fully evolved, but even when the soul has come to full consciousness, it is still said to be enveloped by ignorance because this fully evolved consciousness does not make the soul Self-conscious instantaneously. On the contrary, when the consciousness of the soul is fully evolved the soul begins to identify itself as a human being.

While the consciousness of the soul associates itself with the most-first species of worm-form it experiences and exhausts the impressions of the most-last species of the vegetable-form. When all the impressions of the most-last species of vegetable-form are completely exhausted or spent through the diverse experiences had by the soul while identified with the most-first species of worm-form, then this most-first species of worm-form is dropped or dissociated and the soul is once again without any form although it is conscious of the impressions of the most-first species of worm-form.

These impressions of the most-first species of worm-form must be experienced and exhausted. Therefore the consciousness of the soul associates itself with another appropriate medium and tends the soul to identify with the most-next species of worm-form. This medium of the most-next species of worm-form is nothing other than the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-first species of worm-form.

Species after species of worm-form are thus moulded and dropped while the consciousness of the soul rapidly evolves through experiencing the varied impressions of worm-forms through diverse species of worm-forms.

When the conscious soul is worm-conscious and experiences itself as a worm in the gross world, the consciousness of the soul

also has for the first time the experience of voluntary movement, and also experiences that it is an animate creature. This worm-conscious soul in its travail to gain more and greater consciousness also experiences itself in the gross world as an invertebrate, and at a later stage in other states of vertebrate, limbless, creeping worm-forms of diverse species. In other diverse species of worm-form the consciousness of the soul undergoes further varied experiences of voluntary movement through crawling, through pairs of legs and sometimes through multiple pairs of legs, and sometimes through pairs of legs and pairs of wings. Sometimes the worm-conscious soul in varied species of worm-form realizes itself as possessing a hairy surface, sometimes a smooth and silky and sometimes a rough or scaly surface (hide). The worm-conscious soul also realizes more acutely that it has to struggle for its sustenance and also for its survival, and that it is endowed with sensation and life.

This worm-conscious soul, with further evolution of consciousness through greater and varied innumerable experiences of varied and multiple impressions of varied species of worm-form, also experiences and realizes that it is an amphibian—that it has not only voluntary movement on earth but also freedom and mobility in water.

For our own convenience in understanding the evolution of consciousness more clearly, we include in the worm-form the varied species of worms, varied species of insects, varied species of reptiles and varied species of amphibia. In short, we include in the worm-form all species that tend to crawl or that crawl in spite of having limbs, legs and wings, or that are otherwise distinct from birds and quadrupeds.

The stone- and metal-forms had no upright or erect stand. They were recumbent forms. Their posture was flat and horizontal. The vegetable-form had an upright, erect stand. Now the worm-form is again of the recumbent type of form which has no upright or erect stand but is prone to have a prostrate posture.

When the consciousness of the soul associates itself with the most-last species of worm-form after experiencing all the impressions of the varied species of worm-form, and when the conscious soul eventually drops or sheds this most-last species of worm-form

after ages and cycles of multiple diverse experiences in the gross world, the conscious soul again finds itself without any association or identification with forms. But the consciousness of the soul is now centred in the impressions of the most-last species of worm-form just shed. These impressions must necessarily be exhausted through experience, and to get experience a suitable medium is necessary.

Therefore the consciousness of the soul, being centred in the impressions of the most-last species of worm-form, associates with an appropriate medium and tends the soul to identify itself with the most-first species of fish-form in order to experience and exhaust the impressions of the most-last species of worm-form. This most-first species of fish-form is nothing other than the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-last species of worm-form.

As soon as the impressions of the most-last species of the worm-form are exhausted through experiences, the most-first species of fish-form is dropped or shed because the consciousness of the soul dissociates from this most-first species and the conscious soul no longer identifies itself with that species.

Although the conscious soul is now once again temporarily without form, yet the consciousness of the soul is centred in the impressions of the most-first species of fish-form.

In order to experience these impressions of the most-first species of fish-form, the consciousness of the soul associates itself with a suitable medium and tends the conscious soul to identify itself as the most-next species of fish-form. This species is nothing but the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-first species of fish-form.

After ages and cycles, and after innumerable varied impressions of diverse species of fish-forms are experienced and exhausted, the consciousness of the soul eventually associates itself with the most-last species of fish-form in order to experience and exhaust all the impressions of the most-last but one species of fish-form.

Thus the fish-conscious soul, identifying with varied species of the fish-form, experiences in the gross world that it is a living creature in water; a vertebrate endowed with life, sensation and voluntary motion; an animate creature with limbs (if any) modified into fins; and that it has to struggle for sustenance and for survival.

The fish-conscious soul does not experience an upright, erect stand but it experiences itself as a recumbent that can never hold its head high and erect and assert an upright stand in the gross world.

The fish-conscious soul eventually sheds or drops its identity with the most-last species of fish-form as soon as the consciousness of the soul has experienced and exhausted all the impressions of the most-last but one species of fish-form. Thus the conscious soul once again finds itself without identification with any form. But the consciousness of the soul is conscious of impressions of the most-last species of fish-form.

These impressions of the most-last species of fish-form must be experienced and exhausted, and therefore the consciousness of the soul now associates with another suitable medium and thus tends the soul to identify itself with the most-first species of bird-form, which is but the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-last species of fish-form.

In the most-first species of bird-form the consciousness of the soul experiences and exhausts the impressions of the most-last species of fish-form.

When all the impressions are thus exhausted the consciousness of the soul dissociates itself from the most-first species of bird-form, and the conscious soul drops or sheds its identity with the most-first species of bird-form (*i.e.*, the most-first species of bird-form is dropped).

The conscious soul is once again without form but it has consciousness centred in the impressions of the most-first species of bird-form just dropped.

These impressions must be experienced and exhausted, and therefore the consciousness of the soul automatically associates itself with the most-next species of bird-form and tends the conscious soul to identify itself with the most-next species of bird-form, which species is but the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-first species of bird-form.

On and on, ages after ages and cycles after cycles, this chain of successive associations and dissociations with varied species of a particular form moves onwards steadily and progressively, and gives out innumerable different impressions to be experienced by

the conscious soul. Directly and indirectly, these associations and dissociations of the consciousness of the soul are absolutely essential to keep the wheel of evolution of consciousness revolving. The evolution of gross forms is but a by-product in the universal factory of evolution of consciousness.

The bird-conscious soul identifies with one species, then with the next, and then the next species of bird-form, one after the other, in regular succession until all the species of bird-form are associated and dissociated alternately by the consciousness of the soul while experiencing multifarious impressions in the gross world, and thus the evolved consciousness of the conscious soul tends the soul to realize itself as bird in every species of the bird-form. Though the soul is eternally without form and in the Over-Soul, yet the bird-conscious soul consistently realizes that it is no other than a bird in the gross world experiencing bird impressions on earth, on water and in air. It realizes itself as a feathered vertebrate capable of flying in air, and with the help of two legs it maintains an erect stand.

Eventually, after ages and cycles of experiences of varied species of bird-form, the bird-conscious soul sheds or drops the most-last species of bird-form as soon as the consciousness of the soul dissociates itself from the most-last species of bird-form; and the consciousness of the soul dissociates itself from the most-last species of bird-form as soon as the consciousness experiences and fully exhausts all the impressions of the most-last but one species of bird-form in the most-last species of bird-form.

Again the conscious soul experiences itself as being without any form for the time being although the consciousness, evolved further and greater, is always there. (Once consciousness is achieved by the soul, this consciousness goes on evolving more and more and can never be lost or devolved.) This consciousness of the soul without form now gets centralized in the impressions of the most-last species of bird-form just dropped. These impressions must necessarily be spent or exhausted by the consciousness of the soul. Therefore consciousness associates itself with a suitable medium and thus tends the conscious soul to identify itself with the most-first species of animal-form. Through this most-first species of

animal-form the consciousness of the soul experiences the impressions of the most-last species of bird-form that was dropped or from which it was dissociated. This most-first species of animal-form is nothing other than the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-last species of bird-form shed.

After innumerable and diverse experiences of the impressions of the most-last species of bird-form through the form of the most-first species of animal-form, the consciousness of the soul completely exhausts the impressions of the most-last species of bird-form and then automatically dissociates itself from identification with the most-first species of animal-form. In this manner the form of that species is shed by the conscious soul, or the form of that species is said to have dropped or died.

Again, the conscious soul, with greater evolved consciousness, finds itself without a form, although the consciousness of the soul is centred in the impressions of the form (just discarded or dropped) of the most-first species of animal-form.

These impressions of the form (just dropped) of the most-first species of animal-form must be experienced or exhausted by the consciousness of the soul, so that the conscious soul should not be aware of any impressions of any form, but be conscious only of the **reality** of its own infinite, eternal state, without forms or impressions, and through knowledge experience the Over-Soul. Throughout the travail of the soul to gain that consciousness for itself which would make it realize the reality of its Self, the conscious soul goes on and on in an apparently unending chain with its consciousness endeavoring ceaselessly to experience and exhaust all impressions that centralize the consciousness of the soul, deviating this consciousness from the reality of the eternal and infinite state of the Self (eternally in the Over-Soul) to the consciousness of duality of illusion of the gross world. Thus the consciousness of the soul, in an effort to gain consciousness of the reality of the Self, is consistently shrouded in an envelope of ignorance.

Therefore, in order that the consciousness of the soul should experience and thus exhaust the impressions of the most-first species of animal-form, the consciousness of the soul now associates automatically with an appropriate medium which will permit

and aid it to experience the impressions of the most-first species of animal-form. This association of the consciousness of the soul perforce tends the conscious soul to identify itself with the most-next species of animal-form. This most-next species of animal-form is no other than the consolidated mould of the impressions of the most-first species of animal-form.

As soon as the impressions are experienced and exhausted through the most-next species of animal-form, this species is dropped by the conscious soul. The soul once again experiences that it is not identified with any gross form of the gross world.

When the animal-conscious soul is without any form the consciousness of the soul is centred in the impressions of the most-next species of animal-form just dropped or shed.

These impressions must also be experienced in order that they may be exhausted, and therefore the consciousness of the soul automatically associates itself with another medium and this perforce tends the conscious soul to identify itself with the most-next to the next species of animal-form.

After ages and cycles of varied and innumerable associations with and dissociations from diverse species of animal-form, the consciousness of the soul eventually associates itself with that medium which tends the conscious soul to identify itself as being the most-last of the last species of animal-form.

All throughout the experiences of the animal-conscious soul, the soul identified itself (through its consciousness) with varied species of animals in the gross world in water, on earth and below the surface of the earth, and realized the experiences of an animate creature, usually as a quadrupedal-organized being, endowed with life, sensation and voluntary motion, and which all the while had to struggle for sustenance and survival, sometimes as an herbivorous creature and sometimes as a carnivorous creature. The animal-form has no erect or upright posture and has a tendency to look down with drooping head. Apes, however, are the most evolved types of animals, and they tend to stand erect like human beings.

Ultimately, after ages and cycles, when all the impressions of the most-last but one species of animal-form are experienced and exhausted through the medium of the most-last species of animal-form,

the consciousness of the soul dissociates itself from the most-last species of animal-form and the conscious soul no longer identifies itself with this most-last species of animal-form. This form is dissociated by the consciousness of the soul and is dropped or shed. However, though the most-last species of animal-form is dropped or shed, the impressions of the most-last species of animal-form are left or retained, and the consciousness of the soul is centralized or focussed on the impressions of the most-last species of animal-form. The conscious soul is once again without form.

These impressions must necessarily be experienced and exhausted, and hence the consciousness of the soul now associates itself with another suitable medium and the soul perforce tends to identify itself through its own consciousness with the most-first human-form. This human-form is no other than the consolidated mould or cast of the impressions of the most-last species of animal-form.

Through the most-first human-form the consciousness of the soul experiences and exhausts the impressions of the most-last species of animal-form.

When all the impressions of the most-last species of the animal-form are experienced and exhausted by the consciousness of the soul, then the consciousness of the soul dissociates itself from the most-first human-form and the conscious soul automatically drops or sheds the body association. This is called the **death** of the most-first human-form. But the consciousness of the soul is now focussed or centralized in the impressions of the most-first human-form and the soul is now temporarily without a form.

In order that the impressions of the most-first human-form may be experienced and exhausted, the consciousness of the soul associates itself with another appropriate medium, and the conscious soul is thereupon inclined to identify itself with the most-next human-form, which form is no other than the consolidated mould or cast of the impressions of the most-first human-form just dropped or shed. This identification of the conscious soul with the next form and those following is called the **birth** of a human being.

As soon as the consciousness of the soul associates with the most-first human-form the EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS IS

FULL AND COMPLETE.* Because the consciousness¹ of the soul is fully developed in human-form, the evolution of form is also complete, and no new higher forms are now evolved once the conscious soul identifies itself with the most-first human-form. In short, in human-form the consciousness of the soul is full and complete. The process of the evolution of consciousness is brought to a standstill. The human-form is the highest and the most sublime form evolved during the evolution of consciousness. Hence in the human being consciousness is fully developed and the form moulded and cast after ages and cycles is the most perfect form or medium. The consciousness of the soul therefore utilizes this perfect medium to experience and **completely** exhaust all impressions so that the fully conscious soul becomes devoid of any impression whatsoever, and thus is able to realize its own real, eternal and infinite state in the Over-Soul.

* [Meher Baba maintains that such subjects should no longer be left indefinite, although he concedes that belief or non-belief in evolution and reincarnation does not in any way hasten or impede man's spiritual progress. He tells us the spiritual significance of evolution and reincarnation in the following words: "It is the evolutionary struggle that enables the soul to develop full consciousness as that in the human-form, and the purpose having been achieved, the side issues or by-products of evolutionary travel (the *nuqush-e-amal* or *sanskaras*) have to be done away with, while retaining the consciousness intact. The process of reincarnation therefore is to enable the soul to eliminate the *sanskaras* by passing through the furnace of pain and pleasure." Ed.]

1. All numbered references are contained in the Supplement.