

ACHARYA RAJNEESH



Who Am I?

Naty Vairoul

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WHO AM I

काशी हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय

वैदिक विभाग, काशी

काशी हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय, काशी

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I

WHO AM I

One full moon I stood alone on a river bank, gazing at the sky. Silence prevailed. Suddenly I heard the sound of footsteps, and turning, I saw a young monk standing behind me. I asked him to sit, and as he did so, I saw that he was weeping. For some time I sat quietly with my hand on his shoulder. There was nothing I could say, but my silence, full of sympathy, consoled him. I do not remember how much time passed like this. At last he said: "I want to see God. Tell me does God exist? Or am I chasing a mirage?"

What could I say? I drew him nearer. "I do not know any God other than Love. He who ignores Love and searches for God is mistaken. He who searches for a temple other than that of Love, moves away from God." But all this was in my mind.

Finding me silent, he said: "Please say something, for I have come to you with great hopes. Can you show me God?" Again, what could I say? I kissed his eyes, which were full of tears. There was great expectation in those tears, an intense desire to see and to know God. But is God anything external which can be seen?

Finally, I said to him: "The same question which you have put to me, was put by someone else to Sri Ramana. Sri Ramana replied that God cannot be seen, but that if you want, you yourself can become God. I repeat this. It is meaningless to try to know and to find God. How can you find a thing

which you have not lost? How can you know that which you yourself are? What we can see is not our own self. The idea of visualizing God externalizes Him, and removes Him from the self. God is in our own self and therefore cannot be seen. Friend! What we see as God is just our own imaginary creation. The mind of man is capable of giving form to many imaginings, but one moves away from Truth when one is lost in these creations.

“This incident comes to mind because you also want to see God. You have come here so that I must say something about it. I myself was searching in the same way, but I have since come to realise the futility of this search. I realised that while I was not able to know myself, I could not know the Truth, because of my ignorance.

“It is necessary to know the ‘self’ before you can know the Truth. Once the self is known, one realises that nothing else remains to be known. With the key of self-realisation, the lock of Truth is opened. Truth is omnipresent in all existence. The way to reach it is through the self.

“He who cannot investigate the self, who cannot find something close at hand, cannot know something at a distance. Searching for a distant object can mean running away from that which is nearer. The investigation of worldly things begins as a means of escape from the self, and, therefore, from God. Are not all enquiries, except that into the self, ways to escape from the self?

“What is inside? Darkness, loneliness, emptiness. Are we not running for shelter, away from this darkness, this loneliness, this emptiness? But only suffering comes from this escapism. He who avoids the

self finds nothing, because investigation into other than the self leads nowhere.

“There are but two alternatives : escape from the self, or awakening in the self. There must be an external object for escape; for awakening there must be a disillusionment about the utility of external attractions.

“As long as God is external, He is an illusion, a hallucination. Man has invented Him to find an escape from the self. The first thing, therefore, which I wish to say, is that we need not investigate God, Truth, Liberation or Emancipation. We must investigate the investigator himself. That enquiry alone, will ultimately lead to the investigation of God, Truth and Liberation. No search is religious, other than that of the self.

“But the terms, ‘self’, ‘self-realisation’, etc. are extremely illusory, for how can we know the self? For knowledge, we require duality. How can there be knowledge if there are no two things? How can we see; how can we realise? ‘Knowledge’, ‘perception’, etc. belong to the world of duality, and where there is non-duality they lose credibility. To me, ‘self-perception’ is an impossibility. It is self-contradictory.

“I also say, ‘know the self’. Socrates said the same thing, so did Buddha, Mahavira, Christ, and Krsna. Even so, we must realise that what can be known cannot be the self. It can only be the non-self. The self is of necessity the perceiver, it can never be the object of knowledge. Then how can we know it, for only the object of knowledge is known. How can the ‘knower’ be known?

"Where there is knowledge, there is a subject who knows, and an object which is known. Is not the attempt to know the knower like an attempt to see an eye with the same eye? Have you ever seen a dog making an unsuccessful attempt to catch hold of his own tail? The tail moves away as quickly as he tries to grab it. It is impossible for him to catch it. In the same way, it is impossible to make the self an object of knowledge."

"I can know everything, but not my own self in the same way. The simple fact of self-knowledge is difficult and complicated. Then what should we understand by self-knowledge? Certainly, it is not the same knowledge with which we are familiar. It is not a relation between the knower and the object of knowledge. Therefore, we may call it supreme knowledge, because there remains nothing to be known after it. We may also call it supreme ignorance, because there is nothing to be known."

"The knowledge of an object is the relation between the subject and the object. Self-knowledge is the absence of both the subject and the object. There remains only pure knowledge without qualification."

"All objects in the world are known through knowledge. In fact, that which is known through knowledge, is the object. The one who knows, is apart from the object. The understanding of matter is the relation between the subject and object of knowledge. When there is neither object nor subject (because without an object there can be no subject), there is the knowledge of the self. The purest state of knowledge is self-knowledge."

"It is appropriate to call this state knowledge, because there is neither self nor non-self. This has been

correctly designated so by Buddha. The word 'self' suggests ego, and where there is ego, how can there be selfknowledge? But how is this knowledge attainable? Where is the path?

"I was a guest in a house. There was so much luggage in that house that there was no room to move about. The house was large, but because of the excessive amount of things in it, it seemed small. In fact, the house was invisible because the empty space enclosed by walls is the house, and not the walls themselves. The empty space is the house because that is what we live in. During the night, my host told me that there was no space in the house. How could space be created? I laughed, and told him that there was enough empty space in his house. It was there, but he had filled it up with luggage. If this was removed, space would be revealed."

"The process of self-knowledge is similar. 'I' am constantly present, whether awake or asleep, sitting or moving, in pain or in pleasure. Whether there is knowledge or ignorance, 'I' am present. My existence is beyond doubt. Everything else can be doubted, but one cannot doubt oneself. Descartes has said: 'Even if I doubt, I am there; because who else will doubt, except me?'"

But who am I? What is this 'I'? How can I know it? It is acceptable that I exist, but what am I? Who am I? There is no doubt about my existence, and about the fact that I know, that I have knowledge, consciousness and perception. It is possible that whatever I know may be false, may be a dream. But my knowledge and capacity to know are true.

"Let us consider these two facts. First, the fact of my existence, and secondly, the existence of

knowledge within me. The path can be investigated on the basis of these two facts.

"I am, but I do not know who I am. What should I do? I should investigate the capacity and power of knowledge. There is no other alternative to this. Knowledge is powerful, but it is hidden by the objects of knowledge. One object is superseded by another, as one thought is by another. Knowledge is freed from one object, and is bound by another. If knowledge became devoid of qualification, what would happen? In such a void, where there is nothing to comprehend, will not knowledge then know itself?

"Where knowledge is devoid of object, then it is established in itself. When it is free from object then it is pure. That purity, that emptiness itself, is self-knowledge. When consciousness is without object, thought, or change, such experience is 'self-realisation'. In this realisation there is no ego nor object. This experience is unprecedented, and there is no word for it. Laotza has described it thus: 'Whatever you may say about truth, it becomes falsehood as soon as you have said it.'

"Yet what else have we said so much about, as about truth? We do describe it when we say it is indescribable. Knowledge is beyond words. But love wants to describe its bliss, its light, its freedom. However incomplete the allusions, however incomplete the answers, even the dumb wish to say something, even if it is only to explain that they want to say something but cannot.

"But incomplete suggestions about the nature of Truth can create great misunderstandings about it. The one who investigates the self as an object of knowledge **ab initio**, is on the wrong path. The self is not the object of knowledge. Nor is it an ob-

ject in itself. It cannot be aimed at, for it is the innate nature of the seeker himself. The investigator and the investigation are one. Therefore, only those can investigate the self who investigate nothing else. Only those can know who become devoid of all knowledge. By rejecting all enquiry, the consciousness reaches that stage where it has always been.

"Meditation over, someone asked Lord Buddha what he had gained by it. Buddha replied: 'Nothing; I have lost much, but gained nothing. I have lost passions, thoughts, all struggles and desires, and gained only what has been since time immemorial.'

"I cannot lose my innate nature. I cannot lose God. And what is Truth? That which is without beginning or end. To find this innate nature, it is necessary to remove from the consciousness all which is not true. We know that which is true only after losing that which can be lost. Truth is gained when we lose our dreams.

"Friend, I repeat: Truth is gained as soon as we lose our dreams. When there is no dream, then what remains is the self. That alone is Truth, that alone is freedom."

II

WHAT IS DHARMA

“What should I say about Dharma? Whatever is said it will not be Dharma. That which is beyond thought, cannot be expressed in speech. What is in the scriptures is not Dharma, for only words are there. Words are sectarian, and have divided humanity. The walls between men are made of words and not of stones. The same wall of words is between man and truth. Whatever has separated him from truth, has separated him from everything. There is a circle of mantra in words which has hypnotised us all into straying from ourselves.

“One who is unfamiliar with oneself, is far from the truth. This is so, because the understanding of the self is the nearest truth. All else is distant. Words camouflage the self, as the ocean is hidden by the waves. The noise of words drowns the music within, as smoke envelops the fire. We perish in investigating the outer raiment rather than the man within.

“I see inside. I see words—thoughts, memories, images and dreams. I am buried under this layer of words. Is that the end, or is there something else beyond them within me? Everything depends on the answer to this question. If the answer comes from verbalised thought, man cannot reach Dharma, because thought cannot know that which is beyond thought. Thought is the limit of itself.

“Generally, people retrace their steps in the search for themselves. An invisible wall turns them

back. It is a desperation comparable to digging a well, and finding only stones and pebbles. It is natural to be confronted by the stones and pebbles of words. These are our external layers, which have become as a veil of dust.

“To find the self, it is necessary to pierce through this veil. We must stop only at the naked truth. We must dig at the words until we find the spring of wordlessness. We must remove the dust of thought until the mirror of ourselves is reflected. This is difficult. Not only the clothes must be removed, but also the skin. This is penance.

“Have you ever seen an onion being peeled? We have to peel ourselves like that. What remains after the peeling is the real essence. That is my authentic existence. That is myself.

“We have to drive away all thought, and know that it is not the self. We have to dive deep. There is to be no selection between what is good and bad, for such selection is an intellectual pursuit, and does not lead beyond thought itself. Here ethics and Dharma are different. Ethics is the selection of what is good as opposed to what is bad. Dharma is not a selection, yet it is behind all selection. All this is known when there is nothing to select, and what is left is only our own selves.

“We become devoid of thought when it is free from selection. Only discriminations persist. There is no object, only consciousness. At this point, latent wisdom awakens, and the gates of Dharma are opened. I invite you to this inauguration.

“What the scriptures cannot give to you, is already within you. What nobody can give to you, you can attain yourself. The truth is realised as soon as we go beyond the word.”

III

RELIGIOUS FAITH IN THE FIRE OF
SCIENCE

"I remember the first incident in the history of mankind. It is said that when Adam and Eve were turned out of the kingdom of heaven, the first words that Adam uttered to Eve were: 'We are passing through a great revolution.' Even if he did not say so, these ideas must have been in his mind; that he was about to enter an absolutely unknown world. He was being forced to leave what was familiar for what was strange. It is only natural to feel like that. These ideas are expressed by men of every age, because the development of life is constantly from the known to the unknown.

"One must progress from the known so that the unknown may be discovered. Whoever lacks courage and stops at the known, stops at the unknown itself. To stop at the known is not a symptom of knowledge. Until a man is perfect, he will constantly have to bid farewell to the familiar. One must pass through darkness during this process, as the sun must set to allow a new sun to rise. The process is difficult; but there is no birth without pain.

"We are passing through an unprecedented revolution, such a basic revolution in human consciousness as has never been before. Change has always manifested itself in a greater or lesser degree, because there is no life in the absence of change. But sometimes this eternal process of change reaches its zenith, and then there is a real revolution. The twentieth century has brought humanity to this pitch, and man's consciousness is ready to develop in an entirely new direction.

"It is possible that we may have to travel along an entirely new path, and whatever is known and considered familiar, will dissolve. The most powerful values of life are disappearing and the forces of tradition are disintegrating. This is in preparation for a great change. We are being uprooted from the past and are waiting for a transplantation to the future.

"In all this, I see man knocking at unfamiliar and mysterious doors of human life. The well-trod and circular paths have become desolate. There is an attempt to lighten the darkness of the future. All this is auspicious, and I am full of great hope, because this attempt is the harbinger of the good news that the consciousness of man wants to ascend in some new direction. We are close to some new stage of development, and man will not remain what he was.

"Those who have eyes to see at a distance, can see; those who have ears to hear from a distance, can hear. When the seeds break and the sprouts shoot out of the ground in search of the sun, there is an agitation. There is a similar agitation within us. There is nothing to be worried about, for this state of anarchy belongs to the age of transition.

"To turn away in fear is suicidal. It is not possible to go back, as life proceeds only forwards. Just as darkness becomes deepest before the dawn, so the pain of anarchy is the most intense before the new birth.

"The basis and the centre of all this agitation, anarchy, and revolution, in our consciousness and the possibility of a new birth is science. The light of science has opened our eyes, and has awakened us up

from sleep. It has destroyed many of our cherished dreams, and has made us naked before our ourselves. Science has awakened us as though from midnight.

"It has given man maturity, and taken away his childhood. Its inventions and conclusions have freed us from traditional and conventional modes of thought. In itself, this was false, because thought which is not free is not thought at all. The blind faith of centuries enmeshed us like the web of a spider. Science has broken this, and now it is possible for the mind of man to proceed towards discrimination, having been freed from the bondage of faith.

"The era that has just ended could be called that of faith. The coming period will be that of discrimination. The progress from faith to discrimination is the greatest gift of science. It is not merely a change of faith, but is rather freedom from faith. Beliefs change, and new faiths replace the old. But what has become possible through science today, is absolutely new. The old beliefs have died, and have yet to be replaced. This emptiness is unprecedented.

"Faith itself has not changed, it is disappearing. A consciousness, devoid of faith and belief, has come into being. There is no basic difference in a change of faith; one belief replaces another, just as a person changes a bier from shoulder to shoulder. The tendency to believe continues, but it is not the object of faith, but rather the tendency to believe, which is real. Science has not changed faith, it has broken it.

"The tendency to believe leads us to follow blindly, and it binds our minds to prejudices. A

mind which is bound to prejudice cannot know the truth. It is necessary to be free from prejudice to have knowledge.

"One who believes in something becomes devoid of knowledge. His very belief becomes a bondage. While it is necessary that the consciousness be free if it is to realise the truth, it is discrimination and not belief, which is capable of leading us to truth. There is no greater obstacle to the awakening of discrimination than belief.

"It should be remembered that one who believes, does not investigate. It is doubt, and not faith, which leads to investigation. All knowledge is born of doubt. Doubt itself does not mean lack of belief, for lack of belief is but the negative form of belief itself. For a real enquiry into truth, it is necessary to have a free mind which is full of doubts.

"Science questioned accepted knowledge, and doubt paved the way to further investigation. As prevailing beliefs were discarded, science proceeded towards the truth. Science does not require belief or disbelief, for it is free from prejudices. It does not accept anything except that knowledge which has been acquired by experiment. It is neither theist nor atheist, for it has no preconceived ideas. It has no belief of its own to prove. Thus science has not splintered, and its findings are universal.

"When we begin from preconceived notions, the result is sectarianism, and not truth. Only truth can be universal. This is the reason why there are so many so-called Dharmas which are mutually opposed to each other, whereas there is only one science. When Dharma is based on pure discrimination and not beliefs, it will necessarily be one.

There can be many beliefs, but discrimination is unique. There can be many lies, but Truth is one.

"The essence of Dharma was faith. Faith entails the acceptance of axioms without verification. If there is no faith, there is no Dharma, for it is the shadow of faith. The essence of atheism, which is opposed to Dharma, is lack of belief. This is the negative of faith, for it requires rejection without verification. Without faith there can be no theism or atheism. Man has always swung between these two extremes, between these two dualities.

"Science has given us a third option. It is now possible to be neither a theist nor an atheist, nor to be bound to any belief. Man may free himself from the basic precepts of life which have become established in the subconscious through tradition and teaching.

"Society, and the different schools of thought, leave the imprint of their ideas on the mind at a formative stage. Whether Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, Christian or Muslim, all implant in the minds of their children their own views and beliefs. These premises become ingrained in the unconscious mind by constant repetition. This nullifies the development of free-thinking. The same applies with both communism and atheism.

"This indoctrination of innocence is one of the biggest crimes against humanity. The mind is inculcated with ideas, and imprisoned by them, like a vehicle on rails, which appears to move on its own accord. These ideas may or may not be expressed, but man is under the illusion that they are his own.

"Ideology gives rise to the interaction of related beliefs, which is detrimental to the development of an uninhibited consciousness. The mental slavery

born of this circumscribed condition is comparable with a bull and a Persian wheel. Man travels within the boundaries of his beliefs, and is unable to think for himself. The latent power of thought only develops with the complete freedom of the mind, and this leads to truth.

"Science has been beneficial to humanity by attacking the static mentality of faith. By so doing it has laid the foundation of mental freedom. This will give rise to a new Dharma, which will be based not on belief, but on discrimination. Its essence will be knowledge and not faith. Dharma will be the science of consciousness. The real Dharma has always been science.

"The experiences of Mahavira, Buddha, Christ, Patanjali and Laotza were based on experiments conducted with discrimination. Belief followed, but was not the **prima motore**. The basis of their experiments was knowledge, and faith ensued. The truth of their propositions was the whole experience. Their words may differ, but the essence of the truth is the same.

"Truth cannot differ. But this scientific Dharma has remained limited to only a few super-beings, it has not spread to the people. The Dharma of the masses has always been constricted with blind belief. The attacks of science are destroying this, which is in the interest of the real Dharma. The fire of science will purify Dharma, which, in turn, will enlighten human consciousness. Dharma based on wisdom and discrimination can lead man to super-human consciousness. The consciousness of man cannot rise above itself except in this way; and when man rises above himself he will become one with the Lord."

IV THE SCIENCE OF MAN

"I believe that man has lost direction. This occurred because he accepted enquiry other than that into the self, as of the most value. There is nothing more fundamentally important for man than himself. His first investigation can only be himself. All his knowledge will lack validity without comprehension of the self. Nothing can be creative in the hands of ignorance, but even ignorance becomes creative in the hands of knowledge.

"If a man can understand and conquer himself, then his other achievements will have merit. If not, then he will dig his own grave. We are engaged in digging such a pit. Our own labour is creating our demise. Previous civilisations have been destroyed by external danger and attacks. Our civilisation has internal dangers. If twentieth century society is destroyed, we will have to call it suicide. We ourselves will have to call it so, because there will be nobody else to say so.

"The possible war will never be written into history. It will occur outside history, because it will destroy all humanity. Previous people made history. We are ready to unmake it. And there is only one reason for this suicidal possibility, and that is the ignorance of man about man. We are familiar with, and in control of, the infinite power of matter. But we do not know the depth of human hearts. We have no knowledge of the poison and the nectar hidden in its depth.

"We know the atom of matter, but not the atom of the soul. This is our misfortune. We have gained

power, but not peace or enlightenment. There is danger in power lying in the hands of those who are unawakened. These people should remain powerless, for power can have evil consequences. We have been searching for power and this has been our mistake. Now the danger is from our own achievements.

"All thinkers and scientists of the world should remember that they must not be preoccupied with the question of power, for this blind investigation has brought us to the present crisis. Our aim should be peace and not power. If the aim is peace the focus will be man and not nature.

"There has been much investigation and research of the unconscious. Now we must concentrate on man and his mind. The future science will be the science of man and not of matter. It is time for this change to take place, before it is too late.

"Those scientists who are devoted to the investigation of the unconscious are orthodox, and their minds are circumscribed by tradition and convention. Those with awareness should change the direction of their research. If this was towards the knowledge of man, there is no reason why the power which has succeeded in an unprecedented manner, in gaining mastery over the material world, should not be equally successful in gaining mastery over man. For man can also be known, conquered, and changed.

"I do not see any reason for disappointment. We can know ourselves, and on the knowledge of the self, we can build an entirely new consciousness. A new man with a new life can be born. In the past different religions have attempted this, but a scientific approach is necessary for its completion and perfection. What religion began, science can finish.

"In relation to matter, the paths of science and Dharma had different directions, according to the orthodox. In fact, Dharma was not concerned with matter. Science has risen supreme, but this victory should not be construed to mean that Dharma has nothing valuable to contribute. Conventional scientists should be ignored, and Dharma and science should be one. Only with this conjunction can man be saved. Whatever we have gained from the knowledge of matter is nothing compared to what we will gain by knowledge of the Self. Religions have made it possible for only a selected few. With the advent of a scientific approach, this knowledge will be accessible to all.

"There are infinite powers in the human mind with latent possibilities yet to be developed. The reason for our miseries is the anarchy and confusion of these energies. When the mind of an individual is in disarray, the confusion automatically becomes manifold as it reaches the universal mind. Society is nothing but the multiplication of individuals, it is the expansion of our interrelations. Therefore it must be remembered that whatever happens in an individual, will be reflected in a magnified form in society. All wars, and the roots of all degeneration, are within the individual human mind.

"If we are to change the society, we will have to change the man within it. If there is to be a new basis for society, we will have to find a new life for the individual. I have said that poison and nectar are both present in man. The disharmony of energy is the poison, the control of energy is the nectar. The way in which life is transformed into harmony and music is called Yoga.

"The ideas and actions which go against the inner music are sins. Those which create and nourish it

are virtues. That state of mind which is devoid of music is hell, and when we are all out of tune, there is a state of anarchy. When this music is sublime, that is heaven. When an individual becomes one with the music within him, his external actions reflect his involvement with the universal theme. Whatever is within us, the same flows towards us, for we are receptive and possessive of the same.

"We must create that science which can fill the inner life of an individual with health and music, not for any kingdom of the Lord, but for this earth and world. If this life is good, it is unnecessary to worry about any other life. The imagination is fired by the other world as an escape from this world. Real Dharma has nothing to do with the other world and other lives. That is the result of this world.

"The concern for the Dharma of the other world has been detrimental, because it has siphoned thought away from this world. Dharma, philosophy, and the scriptures were not concerned with the material world, as was science. Matter was conquered, but man, for whom this happened, was forgotten.

"Man must come first, and must be the centre of both science and Dharma. For this science must be disengaged from matter, and Dharma from another world. This rejection of attachment will be their meeting-point. This will be the greatest event in human history, and will give birth to a great creative energy. This union alone will save man, there is no other way. From it, the science of man will occur for the first time, and the life and future of man will depend on it alone."

V

FREEDOM FROM THOUGHT FOR THE BIRTH OF THOUGHTS

"There is no other power greater than that of thought. Thought is the essence of individuality. The flow of life is centred on it, and all that is manifested within man. It is the awareness of thought that differentiates man from the animal. But it must be remembered that there is a great difference between the power of thought, and being overpowered by thought. There is not only a difference, but there are contradictions also.

"A man becomes incapable of thinking when he is overpowered by thoughts. It can reduce his mind to madness, which is really but a state of disordered thought. Perhaps, therefore, madness has its roots deep in the progress of thoughts in the world. The spontaneous inspiration of thought becomes lifeless under the burden of a welter of thoughts, which are mistaken for the power of thinking.

"This mistake of confusing thought with the capacity to think, is at the basis of human ignorance. A collection of ideas is no proof of the ability to think. On the contrary, it may compensate for the lack of such ability. There is no easier way of satisfying the ego than conceiving knowledge in ignorance.

"The greater the emptiness of thought we feel in ourselves, the more we are inclined to conceal it by the thoughts of others. It requires much labour to develop the ability to think for oneself. Just as there is no difficulty in collecting conch-shells on the coast of an ocean, similarly it is easy to collect the ideas prevalent around us. The power to think is innate

within us, whereas the thoughts belong to others. One requires a search within, the other a search without. Therefore I have said that there are two different and contradictory journeys.

"One who is preoccupied with the study of knowledge negates his own ability for thought. Knowledge cannot be gained outside the self, because only consciousness is truth. By hiding ignorance, it is not removed, nor is knowledge attained. It is more beneficial to understand ignorance in its nakedness. But is not the knowledge which conceals ignorance more detrimental than the ignorance itself? Surely the friend who conceals the enemy is a greater enemy than the enemy himself. That knowledge is an enemy which is not born of itself. It is false.

"Why do we desire to acquire false knowledge? Why do we chase a mirage? Nothing happens without a cause, and our ego is responsible. We desire immediate knowledge to cover our ignorance, hence we tend to collect the ideas of others. The drive of the ego is strong, and it pushes people into mastering the scriptures and absorbing various doctrines. Pseudo knowledge intensifies the ego.

"The awareness of ignorance breeds humility; so-called knowledge enhances the ego. For real knowledge it is necessary to annihilate it. The centre of ego is possession, it has no existence of its own. The state of non-possessiveness nullifies it, and therefore it desires to possess as much as it is able. As long as the mind is acquisitive, it cannot know itself. The race for knowledge does not allow it the time to understand itself.

"It is irrelevant whether the race is of the character of the self, of status, of fame, of religion, of know-

ledge, or of renunciation, for where there is desire there is ego. Where there is ego, there is ignorance. The drive for ideas is similar to the drive for wealth. Wealth is a gross possession, whereas thought is a subtle possession, but it must be remembered that all possessions indicate inner poverty.

"The feeling of inner poverty leads to the investigation of the external being, and this is the basic mistake, which negates a correct conclusion. Poverty is inside, but the enquiry is directed into external riches. This disharmony is destructive of life, for the outer prosperity cannot remove the inner penury. There is no relation between the two. If poverty is an inner quality, then we must search for a prosperity that is within us.

"Knowledge coming from within alone can dispel ignorance. Do we want wealth or do we merely wish to appear wealthy? Do we want knowledge or do we wish to hide our ignorance? All accretions are deceptive, but we cannot deceive ourselves in this way. As soon as we realise this truth, there is a basic change of outlook.

"If ignorance is real, let us not run away from it. What shall we gain by escape? What use is it to shelter behind doctrines and scriptures? What purpose will it serve to conceal the self in a plethora of ideas? This is not the cure, and it but worsens the predicament in the name of treatment. A doctor can be more dangerous than the disease he diagnoses, and the medicines he prescribes can give rise to a chain of still new diseases.

"To desire an abundance of thought in the name of knowledge, is similar to becoming the prey of medicine. To be bound by scriptures in the attempt to be

free from ignorance, will, in the name of freedom, but lead to greater bondage. Truth does not exist in words, but is inherent in the self. To attain it, it is necessary to be free from all formal strictures. The realisation of truth exists in real freedom.

"Possession means dependence, and denotes a lack of confidence in the self. Faith in other than the self entails bondage. Only he who is free from faith in others is really free. Faith in preachers, sects or scriptures means dependence. Faith in words and doctrines means dependence. Therefore, I say, only real freedom leads to truth, and it is necessary to discard all thoughts and beliefs gained from others, regardless of from whom.

"It is natural that man should realise that he is ignorant, and he should not forget it. The tendency to forget is self-deceptive, to ameliorate the dark emptiness of the self. Those who suffer from an inferiority complex desire status, strength and power. Emptiness is the daughter of inferiority, as the lame man strives after feats of physical prowess. Hitler is a concrete example of this law.

"The greater the fear of death, the greater the violence that develops. By killing others, man believes that he is above the threat of death. There is exploitation and war because the disturbed minds of individuals are engaged in an escape from themselves. Society has become stagnant because we are not able to visualise our mental unrest. The race for possessions and power, even for existence, is a fatal disease of the mind.

"The disease is not external, it is internal, and therefore man cannot escape it. Ignorance increases the speed of the race to escape, but as the blight is

within, it is only intensified. Ultimately, this course leads to madness, which is the result of the attempt to do the impossible, to escape from the self. Intoxicants are required to reduce the excessive tensions of both body and mind—wine, sex, song and repetition of the sacred name, prayer and worship.

“The race for wealth, power and knowledge, is to forget the self. An even stronger intoxicant is necessary to do so. Some turn to Dharma, which is a palliative for them. In the so-called affluent nations, this is the reason for the increasing interest in Dharma. But still it is a race. The question is not that of changing the direction of the race, but of ending it.

“Philosophers escape through thought, artists through art, politicians through power, the wealthy through wealth, the ascetic through renunciation, and the devotee through God. But the truth of life can only be realised by one who does not try to escape from the self.

“Think about this. Is not the desire to collect and to possess but an escape from the self? The study of ideas covers an inner ignorance. Thus I am in favour of thought-power, but not in favour of thoughts.

“Neither wealth nor thought touches the centre of an individual. Wealth is external, and cannot reach the soul. It creates an illusion. Last night I met a beggar, who said: ‘I am a beggar.’ Poverty showed in both his eyes and his speech. But I laughed at his words, and told him: ‘Why do you say you are a poor man, a beggar? You have no money, but is that enough to call yourself poor? I know people who have much wealth, yet they are poor. If you call

yourself poor for want of wealth alone, you are mistaken. As far as the deeper poverty is concerned, all are poor and all are beggars.

“One who does not know the basic truth of the self is poor. One who is unfamiliar with the knowledge of the inner being is ignorant. It should be remembered that rich apparel does not mean prosperity. In the same way knowledge is not gained through the accumulation of thoughts. The one covers poverty and the other ignorance. For those with a deeper insight, the clothes are a manifestation of poverty, and the thoughts a manifestation of ignorance.

“Consider this for yourself. Are we not depriving ourselves of truth? Is there anything worth attaining by losing the self? I was the guest of a king, and I asked him: ‘Are you under the illusion of being a king?’ He was surprised, and said: ‘Illusion! I am a king.’ He said it with confidence, and I pitied him.

“I meet the learned, and find that they have the illusion of being so. I meet monks, and find them having the illusion of being ascetics. Thoughts create an illusion of knowledge, an illusion of kingship through prosperity, an illusion of asceticism through renunciation. If one is not rich and yet has wealth, how can one become an ascetic by giving it up? It is only an extension of the illusion of being wealthy. There is no truth in possession, nor in the renunciation of possession. Truth lies in being aware about that which is concealed behind both.

Knowledge is not found in thought or lack of thought. Knowledge is where He is, who is the witness of both thought and its absence. Thought is memory, but the training of memory is taken for knowledge. Answers are provided for external questions, and we mistake this for thinking. What is the

relation between thought and memory? Memory belongs to the past, it is a lifeless collection of past experiences. Where are the answers to living problems? Life becomes a riddle because the old solutions are incapable of solving new problems. There is a lack of harmony, a lack of any real relationship, between the accumulating solutions and problems. Thus the mind loses touch with life, and people age and die before they actually physically do so.

"To investigate the truth, a mind which will never be too old to face the mysteries of life is needed. When it is bound to the past, it loses freshness, inspiration, thought-power. It is closed to life. The possibility of pure and unprejudiced thinking becomes real only when the mind is not attached to memory, to the so-called knowledge which takes the form of memory. To see through memory means to see the present through the past. When the mind is free from this bondage, it attains the capacity of real perception. Real perception leads to real knowledge. If the vision is pure, then the latent power of knowledge of the self begins to awaken. The vision becomes free from the past as soon as it becomes free from the burden of memory, and becomes focused upon the present.

"Never mistake memory for knowledge, for it is only a mechanical process, a cover for thinking. The invention of computers has proved that memory is but a mechanical thing. Given the correct knowledge, these machines give the correct answers, there is no scope for mistake. In the same way we feed our memory with the **Gita**, the **Koran**, and the **Bible**, from Mahavira, Buddha, Mohammed, and even the daily newspapers. But the memory can only produce what has been given to it, it does not think of its own accord. It is important, but should not be misinterpreted.

"Real thought is always original, whereas memory is mechanical. Thought born of memory is neither original nor vital. Knowledge differs in that it is not a mechanical process, but a conscious awareness. Because of this, it cannot be produced by machines

"Wisdom has never been mechanical, whereas learning has always been so. Therefore the most stagnant mind belongs to the so-called man. Such a mind produces the answers to questions before they even arise. This is a repetitive process, which demands faith rather than initiative. Thought, depending on memory, seeks the support of faith, and this in turn is supported by repetition, which is also dependent on memory.

"Only this morning I saw a learned man who had memorised the **Gita**. He had read it for the last forty years, and now he recites it day and night, whether there is occasion to do so or not. He is restless and argumentative. People avoid him because of his learning. But he does not realise this, and yet he has at his command many ideas on how peace could be established throughout the world. His is a typical example of such a mind, which is mechanical rather than creative.

"Such people become tied to doctrines, and the scriptures can become a source of sectarianism and violence. Is it possible that the words of Buddha, Christ, Mahavira and Zoroaster, can separate one man from another? Can they become the basis of enmity and violence? An uncreative mind can exploit them to these ends.

"A learned mind is stagnant, because the problems of life continually change, but the solutions

offered do not. They are uncreative. If the world moves on to Marx, such a mind remains with Manu; when the world moves beyond Marx, such a mind will reach Marx. Whether it be the **Bible** or **Das Kapital**, an unoriginal man needs the help of scriptures.

“Doctrine and ideology are more valuable to him than actual life. The mature intellect approaches problems from a fresh angle, and not from a preconceived point of view. How can there be any mistake in the scriptures? For the unwise, errors are in life, just as the tailor blames the body as defective, rather than the ready-made clothes which do not fit.

“We have gradually become incapable of solving anything because of the burden of traditions and scriptures, which have been passed down for thousands of years. Our minds have become paralysed. Apart from finding the answers to our problems, we are unable even to see the roots of those problems. We must rise above the memory and awaken our thought-power.

“To do this, it is necessary to reduce the accumulation of thoughts to a minimum. Memory must not be a burden. The problems of life should not be seen through the medium of memory, but directly in their present-day context. It is fatal to place the scriptures between life and self. The more direct the contact of the self with the problems of life, the greater is the capability to understand them. To solve a problem, it is necessary to live it, a doctrine will not suffice, for the solution is hidden within the problem itself. It can be found by an unprejudiced mind.

“Thought-power only begins to awaken when we free ourselves from the ideologies of others. We learn to think only by doing so for ourselves. A new power awakens in our inner existence, and new and unfamiliar energy becomes manifest. The experience is similar to that of the blind man who suddenly is able to see without any effort, or when a light suddenly illumines a house that has been in darkness.

“When the power of thought awakens, the inner heart becomes full of light. With this illumination comes bliss. Where there is light, there are no hidden obstacles. The misery of life becomes music in the light of thought.”

and only then will actions replace reactions within us. Jung has called it the attainment of the centre of the individual.

“All effort is futile in the absence of an awakened individual, because there is no channel of direction. What one creates, another destroys. To illustrate this situation, someone might yoke bulls to all sides of a bullock-cart; the driver sleeps, and yet he presumes to reach his destination. The ordinary life of man is just like this. There appears to be movement, but there is none. Man cannot achieve anything, and yet his powers are exhausted.

“He must realise that what he mistakes for life, is, in reality, a slow suicide. With birth begins death. It is not accidental, it is the development of birth. There are two ends of life, birth and death. Either we reach the greater life, or we perish.

“It must be remembered that whatever comes in the end, is present in the beginning also, for the end in its manifested form is the same as in the beginning. And if life can have two ends, then it must also have two directions, and the possibilities of life and death both exist in it. Stagnancy means death, consciousness life. Man is the measure of the two. Man is a machine, but he also has an element which is able to comprehend this fact. By pursuing it, he attains life.

“The discovery of consciousness, gives me the knowledge that ‘I am’. This realisation itself can show me the path of existence. This ray is obscure and dim, but it is visible, and its existence is significant. That dim ray of light in the darkness is the symbol and indication of the possibility of reaching

VI

LET US LIVE AND KNOW

“As Gurdjieff has said, we have become human machines. We are the passive participants of our actions. Our actions are not conscious with awareness, they are but reactions.

“Man has the capacity for love, anger and passion. But these are unconscious and mechanical forces within him. In this sense, man is only an agent through whom nature works. He has no conscious vitality. Real life commences when the self rises above this mechanical state of existence.

“A young man visited me yesterday. He asked me: ‘In what manner should life be conducted, so that there will be no need for repentance in the future?’ I replied: ‘There is only one answer, and that is to discover real life. What you know now as life is not really so.’

“For one who has not yet gained life, the question of its utilisation does not arise. The non-attainment of true life is the very misuse of life, and its attainment is the right use. Its absence is the cause of repentance; its existence is bliss. What can the man do whose real life is still dormant?

“One who is asleep becomes manifold. Mahavira has said: ‘Man has many minds.’ In fact, there is not one, but many individuals within us. The many cannot decide anything, because they cannot judge and determine. To do anything, it is necessary that our individual souls become activated. We must be unique instead of a disorderly crowd. We must become conscious of our own individuality,

light. The ray of light fills me with the hope that the sun exists. Can the sun be known from its beam? The ray of awareness in man is a pointer to his being enlightened.

“The slightest indication of consciousness in man is his greatest possibility, his greatest asset. There is nothing more valuable in him than that. By following it, he can reach the self and its existence. This is the direction for life, the greater life, for Brahma.

“There is no third direction, there are but two options. From initial consciousness we can progress to enlightenment, or regress into a coma. The mechanical circle of ordinary life does not automatically move to the summit, or enlightenment. It is an eternal law that without effort, one falls. Death comes without invitation, but life has to be invited.

“The ray of knowledge exists in everyone; one can only move with its support. As the inward movement begins, the dimensions of knowledge become manifest, and the individual starts to ascend from his stagnant state. As he becomes familiar with his rising consciousness, something solid and deep begins to concentrate. This process leads to individuality.”

VII

THE AIM OF EDUCATION

“On looking into your eyes my heart is wrung with the agony and disappointment that I see in them. What has man done to himself? With what possibilities is he born, and with what result does he perish? One whose conscience should have touched the heights of divinity, is seen roaming about in the valleys of animals. Because of this we do not experience that pure happiness which is our birthright, and our lives have become heavy with the weight of darkness. The agony of man is due to the non-achievement of that development that he could have achieved.

“Education is a means and medium of manifesting that which is contained in the soul of man. Socrates once said: ‘I am like a nurse. I will bring out what is hidden in you.’ This statement is appropriate as the definition of education.

“The auspicious and the inauspicious are both hidden in man, both poison and nectar exist in him, both animal and the God dwell in him. This gives him the glorious freedom to choose whatever he wants to become. Therefore, the right education is the one which could show him the path of godliness.

“But it must be remembered that when man does not strive to achieve a better life, then he automatically descends to a lower level than that of the animal kingdom. For this, it is enough that he was born, for it is always easy to go down. But it requires labour and constant application to rise. That takes effort and courage and determination. Rising up-

wards is an art, it is the greatest art of life. The aim of education is to teach this art of becoming one with God.

"The aim of education is life. It is not merely to teach a means of livelihood. This in itself means nothing. But out of ignorance it may be mistaken as the aim of education, as though man does not eat to live, but lives to eat. With modern education, this conclusion is unavoidable. Has modern education no other mistakes? To say so is comparable to saying that in the body of a dead man everything is all right, only life is not present. Our education is such a body without life, because the means of livelihood is only the body of life.

"Education will be vital only when it teaches about life. To teach about life is to teach about the self. I may know everything, but if I am unfamiliar with the existence of the self, then, in reality, that knowledge is void. What use is knowledge which does not have the self as its centre? The illumination of the whole world is useless if the self is in darkness.

"To ascend, the first step should be in the direction of self-knowledge, because that is the ultimate aim of knowledge. To the extent that a man begins to know himself, to that extent the bestial element in him declines. The perfection of self-knowledge establishes man in God. There is fulfilment only in that attainment.

"Man carries the seeds of that supreme development and perfection within him. Unless those seeds become fertile, he will be barren. Similar are the seeds that are sown in the soil, which sprout and attain the light of the sun when watered and cultivated. The stage of movement, or restlessness, bet-

ween the sowing and the harvest is auspicious, for only after it does peace ensue.

"This restlessness must be intensified by education. A new man and a new humanity will be born when it takes the direction of science and of peace. Our future depends on this. The fate of man is in the hands of education. If man is to be saved from himself, it is absolutely necessary to re-create him. Otherwise, the animal in man will destroy him. The only escape is the establishment of man in the Lord."

VIII

THE RIGHT TO THE PROPERTY OF LIFE

"What do I see? I can see that all men are sleeping, whether it be night or day. Those who are presumed to be awake, are, in fact, asleep. The inner conscience must be activated for a real awakening, and only then will man cease to sleep, whether he does so physically or not.

"Consciousness is life, whereas sleep is a form of death. It is the light of awareness which fills the heart, whereas sleep is darkness, which is filled with misery, pain, and remorse. If we experience these states, then we should understand that we are in darkness. Before it is possible to wake, the state of sleep must be comprehended. One must experience imprisonment to be aware of the desire for freedom.

"I demand introspection of everyone. If there is a tendency to avoid the inner mind, then it is an attempt to escape the darkness which has been exposed there.

"I have the opportunity of meeting people everyday, and have the occasion to study many of them. One thing is common to all, and that is suffering. There is an intense misery and anxiety in which all are entangled. There is a sense of suffocation. Is it the same with you also? Are you experiencing the same feeling of claustrophobia?

"There is a lack of purpose everywhere, and a sense of boredom and frustration. Is this life? Are you satisfied and satiated with it? If this is life, what else can be death? Friend, life is an altoge-

ther different experience, one that we are not familiar with. I tell you this purposely, for I also have mistaken this so-called life for life. This mistake is a natural one, for, without an alternative, we necessarily accept as life what we experience. This is not a conscious mistake, but one of ignorance. The slightest thought about the self annihilates it. We should not accept whatever is available, for this is an unconscious and blind reaction. Thought is conscious, and brings disillusionment with it.

"Thought is diametrically opposed to belief, which is unconscious. To attain life, it is necessary to follow the direction of thought and discrimination, and not that of belief. Belief means acceptance, thought means investigation. Acceptance is detrimental to knowledge, and belief is an obstacle to investigation, for those who accept have no reason to proceed.

"The greatest obstacle in the path of knowledge is the tendency to believe. Belief is the only obstacle to freedom of thought. The chains of belief are a fetter to progress. Do not get caught. The true life can only be attained through investigation.

"Do not be satisfied with life as it is, for it lacks validity. It is only an experience, and a development of life. I have heard a story of an old man, who decided to test his two sons, for he wished to choose an heir to his property before his death. He gave some seeds of wheat to both of them and instructed them to keep them carefully, while he went on a pilgrimage for an uncertain period. The first son kept the seeds underground, the other cultivated them and increased them. Some years later, when the old man returned, the seeds of the first son had been destroyed while those of the other son had multiplied a thousand fold.

This is the situation of life, which, like the seeds, has latent possibilities within it. Only one who realises this potential, becomes master of the inner essence.

"All of us have opportunities to advance. To reach the furthest level of attainment possible is to become real. Have you ever seen flowers? One morning, in a garden full of beautiful flowers, I told those friends who were with me, that the flowers were beautiful, healthy and fragrant, because they had become what they could be. They had attained the perfection of their development. This is true for man also."

IX

THE PROCESS OF MEDITATION

"There are two directions in the investigation of truth: one through thought, the other through realisation. The path of thought is circular; it has pace, but the end is never reached. This direction is illusory and false, and leads to sectarianism. An ideology is an intellectual proposition, whereas truth is the experience of the whole vital force of life. Sects depend on logic, and therefore lack stability. Truth does not change, and its attainment establishes the eternal.

"The path of thought is borrowed, in that we proceed by ideas belonging to others. We create a deception of originality through argument, and through differing combinations of these thoughts. Only realisation is original, because it is born from within the self.

"Whatever is known does not lead to that which is unknown. Truth is unknown, and known thoughts cannot become the stepping-stone to it. It is only by their renunciation that we enter the truth. Truth can be perceived only in the stream of consciousness.

"Man collects experiences through his senses. These experiences belong to the external world because the senses can know only that which is external. The senses cannot approach that which is within the self. From these experiences arises thought. Therefore, thought can be constructive in scientific investigation, but not in the search for the supreme truth. Thought cannot touch the consciousness at the inner

centre of the self, because it is always tied to the senses.

"It is necessary to remember that thoughts are external. They do not reveal the self, rather, they cover it. The greater the accumulation of ideas, the more difficult it is to reach the self. He who does not know the self, cannot know the truth. There is no other way to reach the truth.

"To be absorbed in intellectual speculations about truth is comparable to a blind man who constantly thinks about light. His thoughts are futile, for light is something to be seen and not pondered over, and medical treatment is necessary rather than the thoughts of a philosopher.

"Thought is the concern, and realisation is the treatment. The question is not of light but of eyes. Here, thought and meditation are opposite. Thought is the consideration and analysis of light by the blind, whereas meditation provides the sight to see the truth.

"Yoga is the science of meditation. According to my view, meditation is the empty and perfectly awakened state of mind. In other words, when the mind becomes empty from the point of view of objects and fully awakened from the point of view of the subject, one attains meditation. Meditation is the ability to see the truth.

"Our minds are generally cluttered with objects, thoughts, and reactions to these. This creates a wall which shuts us out from ourselves. As clouds hide the sun, so the consciousness of man is hidden by his intellect. Man is free to close the doors of his own existence himself.

"But one who is capable of chaining himself is also capable of freeing himself. Freedom always has two sides. The power to create hides the power to destroy also. It is necessary to bear this truth in mind.

"One who tries to attain the truth, or the self, must attack on two fronts. One is the attack for awakening, and the other, the attack for emptiness. When the two are perfectly united, the result is meditation.

"For awakening, one must discard unconsciousness as well as personal pride in thought and actions. All thought and actions should take place in a conscious state. Through constant practice, the witness is born within the self. Latent wisdom begins to awaken and the consciousness of knowledge with it, with the continual fight against a lethargic mind. Finally, there is an awareness even in sleep. This is the first attack.

"The second attack is for emptiness. The peace of the mind must be safeguarded from the restlessness and agitation which are the result of the flow of thoughts and ideas. In the same way, a traveller in the night must protect his lamp from the wind.

"Both attacks are complementary to one another, and the adoption of one aids the other. The adoption of consciousness leads to emptiness, and the adoption of emptiness leads to consciousness. It is difficult to say which of them is the more important.

"When consciousness and emptiness reach fruition, the mind passes through a revolution which is difficult to imagine. No other change in the life of man is greater. This revolution is so basic that the whole life is changed as a result of it. It is best ex-

plained by the simile of a blind man suddenly achieving sight

“Through the experience of this indescribable light, man becomes established within himself. By this revolution he realises the bliss, consciousness and existence of his life. Death dissolves and immortality is perceived. Darkness dissolves and truth is realised. Real life begins only after this experience; prior to it man experiences life only in a limited sense.”

X

THE UNKNOWN ROOTS OF LIFE

“What should I talk to you about ? Should I say something about life? Perhaps it would be appropriate, because although we are alive, we have no relation with life. This fact appears to be contradictory, but not only is it possible, but it really is so. We are alive, but we have forgotten about life. Perhaps we are too absorbed in living to remember life

“When I look at trees, I wonder whether they are aware of their roots. But even man does not know about his roots. Without this knowledge, how can he have any relation to life? Life exists in roots, in invisible roots, for the essence of the visible is rooted in the invisible. The source of the life of the visible exists in the invisible. Unless we are aware of this, we live without any relation to the essence of life.

“It is not enough to have been born to be related to life. This merely provides the platform for the latent experience. It is only the beginning. But there are many people who stop at the starting point, mistaking it for the target.

“This is generally what happens. There are only a few people who can distinguish the difference between the starting point and the target. Some people perhaps differentiate between the two, but they do not live according to that difference. Their differentiation is purely intellectual, and it must be remembered that purely is not real perception. Only if understanding comes from a deeper feeling of the existence of life, can it be fruitful. This knowledge

comes from intensity of feeling and depth of heart, and it transforms and renews an individual.

“The intellect is under the illusion of knowledge, which is really the thought of others. Intellectual perceptions are basically very superficial, just as the waves rising on the surface of the ocean have neither stability nor strength. They come and go, but the depth of the ocean is not affected or changed by them. The intellect is to the understanding what waves are to the ocean.

“Awareness of the existence of the self, of the difference between birth and life, should come from the heart rather than from the intellect. Birth is the beginning, and not the end. If birth is mistaken for life, then death is the culminating point. This is an illusion, which is the natural corollary of the first mistake. Those who are bound by birth will be afraid of death.

“What we call life is, in fact, really a living death. The man who does not hold himself to be different from his body lives in name only. He who does not imagine his existence before birth and after death is not alive. He will not experience life between his birth and death, because the experience of life is unbroken. Birth is external, life is internal. Birth is the world, life is God. Birth provides the gateway leading to life. But without effort, this becomes the gateway to death, which is a development of birth. But consciousness and awareness lead to life. This is sadhana. This is dharmā.

“I look at both the old and the young. There is a difference between the two from the point of view of birth and death, but not from the point of view of life. Life is outside the movement of time. Birth

and death take place within time. The advance of age takes place in time, but it is not a development of life. Age and life are different. To attain life, it is necessary to go outside time. What is time? Time is change. In the material world nothing is static. Not a single atom is stable outside the self. But there is something in the self which is beyond change. The existence of the self is beyond time. To enter into this existence, to awaken in this existence, is life.

“Search for life, otherwise death will claim you. It is coming nearer every moment. After birth, each minute brings it closer to death’s victory. Whatever you do without entering life this victory is decided. Property, power or fame all these are nothing before it. The realisation of the existence of the self alone is outside death because it alone is outside time. To live within time is to run towards death. I find everybody running towards death. Stop and think about the direction you are taking.

“Everyday someone dies, and yet you remain a disinterested spectator. If you were aware of the truth, you would see your own death in his. The same thing will happen to you; indeed, it is already happening. What you have taken to be life is gradual death. The process of death is so slow that it does not become manifest until it attains its fruition. A subtle insight is required to see it, to clarify the state of the self. The desire to attain life originates only after the realisation that the self is in a precarious position. Just as a man runs out of a house when he knows it to be on fire, so when he knows that the self is enveloped by the flames of death, he develops an intense and acute desire to attain life. There is no greater fortune than this desire, because it leads to the penetration of the deeper layers of life.

"Do you have any such desire within you? Does your heart want to attain the unknown that is beyond the known? If not, then realise that your eyes are closed. Blindness can lead you nowhere except to death. Friend, it is necessary to awaken while there is still time. If you will open your eyes you will see that there is death all around. But there is nectar in the self, which is outside the world and outside time. One who reaches that nectar does not meet death anywhere, for then death is but an illusion, and life becomes real."

XI

WHAT IS NON-VIOLENCE

"I used to think much about non-violence, but the views I heard seemed to be superficial. They touched my intellect but not my heart. Slowly, I discovered the reason for this. The non-violence about which I used to hear was negative. Negation cannot go deeper than the intellect; there must be something positive to touch life. If non-violence means the renunciation of violence alone, it cannot touch life, for this requires an attainment as well as a negation.

"The negative character of the word 'non-violence' has given rise to illusions. The word is negative in character, but the experience is positive. It is an experience of pure love, which is love that is not attached. Love free from attachment is not directed to someone, but to everyone. In fact it is not directed to anyone, it simply exists. Detached love is non-violence.

"The aim of non-violence is to transform nature through love. It is not the renunciation of violence; it is the manifestation of love. But in this manifestation of love, violence is automatically discarded without effort. The sadhana in which one has to make an effort to discard violence is not true sadhana. Darkness disappears as soon as light arrives, and if it does not, then it is not light which has come. Love is enough; its existence means non-existence of violence.

"What is love? Generally, what is known as love is attachment. It is a way to forget oneself. It is a means of escape through someone else. Love works

as an intoxicant. It does not free anyone from misery, it merely stupefies. I call this the relationship form of love.

"In fact, this is not love. This is an illusion of love, which is derived from misery. The experience of misery can lead the consciousness of man in two directions: one is that of forgetting it, and the other is that of relieving it. In the former case, there is an experience of happiness and pleasure, but it is only transitory because it is not possible to forget the underlying misery for long. What is popularly known as love is such a state of mind, that is, a state of stupefaction and of forgetfulness. It springs from misery and is nothing more than a means to forget it.

"The love which I refer to as non-violence is the result of happiness. It does not mitigate misery; on the contrary, it manifests itself only after the misery has gone. It is not intoxication but awakening. The consciousness which goes in the direction of relief, and not the forgetfulness of misery, is the essence of love. If there is happiness inside, love results. In fact, what is happiness inside, is love outside. Both are two facets of the same feeling

"Happiness is experienced by the self, and those in the vicinity feel the emanation of love. Happiness is the centre, love is the circumference. This love is not expressed in relationship, but is innate nature. Just as light flows from the sun, so does love flow from the self. It has no relation with the outside world, nor does it aspire to it. It is free. I call this love non-violence.

"If I experience misery, then I am in a violent state. If I experience happiness, then I am in a non-violent state. It must be remembered that non-violence is never committed. It is not action, but existence. It refers to being. It is not a change of con-

duct, but a change of the self. What I do is not the question. The question is, what am I?

"Everybody has to ask himself whether he is in misery or in happiness. Everything depends on the answer. But we have to look beyond seeming appearances. It is necessary to become naked to know what reality is, without self-deception. When the veils are lifted man experiences darkness and misery. He is afraid, and wishes to hide from it. Those who disguise their misery out of fear never attain happiness. The misery must be removed, not covered, and to do so, it must be exposed. This perception is penance.

"The disguise of misery leads to mundane existence, its perception to the self. What we call life is nothing but hallucination. Life in which success is attained is called a successful life, and we call those persons successful who succeed in forgetting the misery of life under the intoxication of wealth or fame or work. But the truth is something else. Such people have not attained life, but have lost it. They have committed suicide by forgetting misery, for only the awareness of the same establishes understanding in the soul.

"Misery contains the essence of awakening. One who does not try to escape from oneself, awakens in an unprecedented consciousness. He becomes witness to an inner revolution, which in basic essence changes him. Within himself he can see darkness dissolving, and he discovers that light has pervaded his entire consciousness. In this light he knows himself for the first time. For the first time he realises who he is.

"When there is a pressure of awareness through misery, then alone is there self-awakening. Those

who face the extreme limit of misery finally transcend it. Truth requires such courage.

"To know who I am is to know the truth. Then the pain is relieved. Misery is nothing but ignorance of the self. When this is discovered, consciousness and bliss are experienced. This is Brahma. To know the self, the Brahma, is to know the truth. To know the truth is to attain happiness.

"Truth is attained. Happiness and love develop within it. What is happiness inside is non-violence in outward conduct. Non-violence is the result of the experience of truth. The essence of non-violence then pervades the whole atmosphere."

XII

THE DIRECTION OF HAPPINESS

"What has happened to man? I am surprised how we live in spite of so much misery, futility, and deep boredom.

"When I investigate into the soul of man, I find only darkness, and when I contemplate the life of man, I find nothing but death. Life is there, but not the concept of life. Life has become a burden. Without beauty, peace, happiness and light, life exists only in name. Have we forgotten how life should be lived? Animals, birds, and even plants, seem to live in greater accord with each other than we do.

"Some may say that the prosperity of man is increasing by leaps and bounds. My answer to this is: May God save man from this so-called prosperity. It is not prosperity, it is only a cover to obliterate poverty and weakness. The attainment of prosperity and power is but an escape from the self.

"My heart is filled with misery and pain when I see the inner poverty and pain of man beneath the cover of prosperity. One who gives some thought to this will easily realise that material affluence is only a disguise for inner paucity. Those suffering from inferiority search for position and wealth. Man tries to escape from his inner being, and tries to project another being externally.

"Generally, man manifests himself as the opposite of what he is inside. The proud become humble, the sensual become celibate, the poor search for prosperity, and the prosperous choose poverty.

Therefore, we should not say that the prosperity of man has increased, but rather the reverse. The richer he becomes outwardly, the poorer he becomes inwardly. In the race for wealth he forgets about the attainment of an inner wealth. This is the real development, in which the human consciousness rises upwards and attains intensity, beauty, music and truth.

"I want to know whether you are satisfied with material things, or whether you desire the development of your consciousness. One who is satisfied with the external world, is ultimately unhappy. For this only gives convenience, which is the absence of trouble, whereas real satisfaction is the attainment of happiness.

"What does your heart want? What is the greatest desire of your life? Have you ever asked yourself these questions? If not, then let me ask you. If you ask me, I will reply that I wish to attain that after which nothing remains to be attained. Does not this answer vibrate in your innermost soul? I do not ask this only of you but also of several thousand others.

"I have found that all human hearts are the same, and their ultimate desire is also the same. The soul wants happiness, perfect happiness, because only then can all desires end. Where there is desire there is misery, because there is no tranquillity. The total absence of desire creates happiness, which is freedom and liberation also, because where there is scarcity there is limitation and dependence. Where there is no scarcity, there is the possibility of supreme emancipation.

"Happiness is salvation, and liberation is happiness. Ultimate desire lies dormant in everybody

in the form of a seed; because a seed which does not contain the tree within it cannot sprout. In the same way, whatever is our ultimate desire is our hidden nature also, because it is our nature which in its perfectly developed state, becomes transformed into happiness and freedom. Our nature alone is true, and only its perfect attainment gives satisfaction.

"One who does not search for the well-being of one's own nature, mistakes misery for prosperity. But material wealth cannot end the scarcity within. Thus, even with the attainment of all that is possible externally, man feels that he has lost something. His innermost personality remains empty.

"Lord Buddha said: 'Desire is difficult to fulfil.' It is strange that whatever man attains, does not satisfy him and he still wishes for greater attainment even after the accomplishment. Thus the poverty of kings and beggars is equal. At this level, there is no difference between them.

"Moreover, whatever we gain in the external world, it is insecure, because it can be lost or destroyed at any time, and in the end death removes it from us. So it is not surprising that the inner heart cannot accept as its own those things which can be taken away. This sort of prosperity can never give a sense of security, no matter how much we may search for it. On the contrary, we ourselves have to provide security for this external well-being.

"It must be clearly understood that external power and prosperity do not eradicate scarcity, insecurity, or fear. These can be camouflaged only by false assurance. Property is called an intoxicant, because it disguises the reality of life. This type of

forgetfulness is worse than paucity itself, because it prevents us from eradicating scarcity.

“Scarcity is not due to the absence of any object, power or prosperity, because it is not eradicated even with the attainment of all these things. Are you not aware of the poverty of those who appear to have everything? Have your weaknesses ever been mitigated by your material possessions? Friend, there is a great difference between prosperity and the illusion of prosperity. All external prosperity, power or security is only a shadow of that real prosperity which is within.

“The basic reason for scarcity is not the non-attainment of anything external, but the extroversion of the self. Thus the paucity which cannot be eradicated by the attainment of anything external, can only be removed from within.

“The nature of the self is blissful. It is not a quality, but its very essence. There is no relationship between the soul and happiness, for the soul is bliss. They are but two names of the same truth. Whatever is soul from the point of view of existence, is bliss from the point of view of experience.

“Be careful not to mistake what is called happiness for real happiness, which is the soul. When this is attained, the search for everything else ceases. The attainment of false happiness merely increases the search, and the fear of loss disturbs the peace of mind. Water which increases thirst is not real water. Christ said: ‘Come, let me give you water of that well, by drinking of which, thirst is quenched forever’.

“We mistake pleasure for happiness, but pleasure is only an appearance, a shadow, a reflection of

happiness. The majority of people suffer under the illusion that this is what life is about. Finally, they are dissatisfied. It is similar to mistaking the reflection of the moon in a lake for the moon itself, and searching for it.

“The deeper a man probes into the lake in his search for the moon, the farther he removes himself from the real moon. Similarly, people move away from happiness in their search for pleasures. This path leads only to misery. Do you realise the truth of what I am saying? Surely the experience of your own life is witness to the truth that the search for pleasure leads only to unhappiness.

“This is natural, because a reflection or a shadow is identical to the original in its external form, but not in reality. Every pleasure has the attraction of happiness, and gives the assurance that it is, but it is nothing but the shadow of happiness. The acceptance of pleasure as happiness results only in failure and remorse. For how can I hold you by catching your shadow? And even if I could catch your shadow, what would I have in my hands?

“Let me remind you that reflections are always formed in the opposite direction of the things that they reflect. If I stand in front of a mirror, my image appears exactly opposite to where I really am. This is true also of pleasure, because it is but the reflection of happiness. Happiness lies within, whereas pleasure is manifested in the material world. Only happiness is bliss. Pursue pleasure, and you will discover the truth of what I am saying. All pleasure necessarily ends in misery, and as a thing is at the end, so, in reality, is it also in the beginning.

"Because our vision does not penetrate deeply enough, what we should have seen in the beginning, is only perceived in the end. But it is impossible that what is revealed in the end could not have been present in the beginning also. The end is but a development of the start. Whatever was hidden in the beginning becomes manifest in the end. However our eyes see things in reverse order, if they see at all, because we continue to follow the paths which lead to misery, pain, and remorse.

"Why do we go the same way again and again, when we suffer nothing but misery? Why? Because, perhaps, we do not see any other path. That is why I say that our sight is dim and perverse, if we have sight at all.

"There are very few people who actually use their eyes. All have eyes, but most people remain blind in spite of them. One who does not see within himself, has not yet utilised his eyes. Only he who has seen the self, can say that he has eyes, because what else can he see if he has not seen his own self?

"Friend, vision begins when it perceives the self. When a man has perceived himself, others can feel that he is not moving in the direction of pleasure, but that of happiness. The direction of pleasure is from the self to the world, the direction of happiness is from the world to the self."

XIII

ASK AND RECEIVE

"What am I seeing? What type of disappointment is there in your eyes? Do you know that when disappointment is visible in the eyes, then the fire of the heart is extinguished, and desires become dormant. Disappointment is a sin, because it detracts from the power of life to move upwards. It is not only sin, but suicide also, because those who are not striving for a better life automatically proceed towards death.

"It is an eternal law that one who does not go upwards falls down, and one who does not proceed is pushed backwards. When I discover someone falling, I know that he has ceased to strive upwards, as though to the summit of the mountains. To rise to the summit is positive, whereas to fall down, or to plunge into the valleys, is but an aspect of not striving upwards. It is negative.

"When I see disappointment in your eyes, it is but natural that my heart fills with love, agony and compassion, because such disillusionment is the beginning of a descent into the valleys of death.

"Hope, like the sun-flower, turns to the sun. And disappointment? It becomes one with darkness. One who becomes disillusioned is unaware of the great power which is latent in him, and he forgets what he is, and what he can be. Just as the seed lies in the earth unaware of what it has to become, so is the condition of a man who is engrossed in disappointment. Today, all are in this predicament.

"Nietzsche said: 'God is dead.' This view is not so shocking as the death of hope, because if there is

hope, it is possible to achieve God. If there is no hope, the existence of God is irrelevant. The pull of hope alone takes man on the journey into the unknown, and hope alone is the inspiration which awakens his sleeping powers and activates his inactive consciousness.

"Should I say that the positive state of hope is theism? Or that hope alone is the original spring and life of all development? But where is hope? I search for it in the lives of men, but I do not find anything there except the ashes of disappointment. If you do not have the fire of hope, how can you live? Without it, you cannot live.

"Friend, permit me to say that you are dead. In fact, you have not yet lived. You were born, but could not reach up into life. Birth is not life. One is born, but life has to be personally attained. Therefore, birth is destroyed by death, but death cannot destroy life. Life is neither birth nor death.

"Life exists before birth, and is beyond death. He alone who knows this can rise above fear and misery. But how can they, who are encircled by disappointment, know it? They perish in the tensions of birth and death.

"Life is a possibility requiring sadhana to transform it into truth. Sadhana does not take birth in disappointment, because disappointment is barren and nothing takes birth in it. It is because of this that I have said that disillusionment is suicidal, as it cannot manifest any creative power.

"I say: get up and throw away disappointment; you yourself have allowed it to shadow you. You

have to do nothing to throw it away, except decide to do so. You, and you only, are responsible for it.

"One becomes what one thinks. His thoughts create him. He is the architect of his own fate. The constant repetition of thoughts ultimately consolidates into objects and situations. Remember that whatever you are, you yourself have often desired to be so. You have thought about it and aspired for it. Search your memory and you will perceive the truth of what I am saying. When you see the truth, you will discover the key to the change of the self.

"With the possession of this key, it will not be difficult to discard the ideas and thoughts which you yourself have acquired. It will be even easier than to take off your clothes, because in reality they do not exist at all. They have no existence except in your own imagination.

"We become prisoners of our own ideas, by ourselves. But what is within has been free from time immemorial. And can there be a greater prison than disappointment? No. What cannot be done by stone-walls is done by disappointment, for it is possible to break walls, but disappointment breaks even the desire to be free.

"Dear friend, break the chains of disappointment! They can be broken, that is why I am asking you to do so. Their existence is ephemeral, and the mere resolve to break them will shatter them. Just as darkness is dissolved immediately a lamp is lit, so that which is ephemeral disappears as soon as determination awakens. The light which pervades consciousness when the fetters of disillusionment are broken is known by the name of hope.

"Disappointment is a self-imposed condition. Hope is the innate nature of the self. Disappointment is a veil over the mind. Hope is a spiritual manifestation. Why? Because if it was not, there would be no possibility of the constant movement of life towards development and growth. The seed is eager to sprout because somewhere in it there is hope. All lives want to blossom, and whatever exists desires to develop to its full fruition. Without hope, how can there be any desire for perfection in the imperfect? Is the journey towards God possible without hope?"

"When I see rivers flowing towards the ocean, I find hope existing in them. When I see fire burning upwards towards the sun, I see some hidden hope in the flames. The light of hope illuminates the eyes of small children, the eyes of animals, and even the songs of birds. Whoever is alive, is alive in hope. Whoever is dead, is dead through disappointment.

"If we look at the small children who have not yet been spoiled by society, education and civilization, we will find many threads of life in them. The first thing seen will be hope, the second will be curiosity, and the third, faith. These qualities are natural, and are not acquired. They are within us, but can be lost. Yet we cannot lose them entirely, because the essence of nature is never destroyed. Nature can only be veiled.

"Whatever is not nature can only be a cover, and not the interior. Therefore I say: 'Remove your clothes and see what you are.' All clothes are bondage and it is certain that God is not in bonds.

"How nice will it be if you remove your clothes? I do not speak of those clothes which are made of the

threads of cotton. The iron chains of negative ideas, and not the weak threads of cotton are your bondage. Whoever discards them can attain that pure nakedness to which Mahavira has alluded

"It is necessary to be naked in order to attain the truth, to know the self, and to become established in the nature of the self. The raiment of disappointment will have to be discarded first, because all other coverings can be removed only after that

"If you falter before the attainment of God, then you must realise that the poison of disappointment is somewhere within you." It is this which creates negligence and idleness. Through negligence one may as the final goal. There is no other goal of life before God, and other than God. Let it be acknowledged by your entire being. Let it be said that there is no other ultimate place of rest except in God, because perfection lies in God alone. One who gives up before reaching God insults himself, because he has stopped before what he could have been.

"The higher your determination and goal, the deeper the latent powers of the self awaken. The height of your goal is the result of your power. Look at the trees touching the sky. Their roots go deep below the ground. If you are excited with hope and desire to touch the sky, then the dormant powers lying in the innermost recesses of your being would awaken. As is the height of your desires, so is the depth of your power.

"The wish for what is low makes the conscience low, so if you must beg, beg for God. What you ultimately want to become must be your demand from the very beginning, for the beginning itself is part of the final attainment.

"I know that you are constantly encircled by situations which are against you, and which prevent you from rising to God. But remember that all who ever rose towards God were also enveloped by similar circumstances. Do not use situations as excuses, for the excuse, not the situation, becomes the real hindrance. However unfavourable the situation may be it cannot be a real obstacle in your way to God.

"It is an impossibility. It is like saying that the darkness is so thick that it prevents the lighting of a lamp. The darkness is never so thick, nor the circumstances ever so unfavourable, that they could become an obstacle in the progress of light. There is no obstacle except your disappointment. In fact, there is no obstacle except yourself.

"Do not attach too much importance to that which exists today but will wither away tomorrow. That which changes every moment has little value. The flow of situations is like a river. Concentrate on something which is immobile, like a rock in the current of a river. What is that? That is your consciousness, your soul, it is you in your natural form.

"Everything changes, but that is unchangeable. Catch hold of that immobile point, for you are blowing in the winds, and drifting with the waves. You must see the static base of your existence. Develop it in your mind. Disappointment changes into hope as soon as we turn towards this base, and the darkness becomes light.

"Remember that whoever knocks at the door of the self with full heart, hope, confidence, power, determination, love and prayer, is never unsuccessful, for such a person cannot fail to find God. Success is an impossibility on the way to sin, as is failure on

the way to God. If there is success through sin, it is an illusion, and if there is failure in the way of the Lord, it must be interpreted as a test.

"The door to the attainment of the Lord is never closed. It is another thing that through disappointment we ourselves close our eyes. Remove disillusion, and see what is before you. Is it not the sun for which you were searching? Is it not the same beloved one for whom you were longing?

"Christ has said: 'Ask, and you will receive. Knock, and the door will open.' This was true before Christ, and it will be so in the future. Blessed are those who knock, who do not stand at the gate of God with their eyes closed."

XIV
LOVE IS GOD

"I see man proceeding from one perversion to another. It seems as if some necessary nerve of life within him has been destroyed, and civilization with it. It is not only the individual, but the whole of society which is living within a perverted framework. Its dissonant echoes reverberate throughout the world, and the music of culture has been lost.

"There is no instrument so out of tune as man. Moreover, just as the ripples produced by a falling stone spread over the surface of a lake, so the resonance of the perversion created in the mind of one man, agitates the whole of humanity. A man is an individual, but his roots are in the corporate body of mankind, and therefore his infections are contagious.

"With what disease is our century afflicted? Many diseases are acknowledged. I want to point to one affliction, which, in my opinion, is at the root of all other diseases. Whenever a man is overcome by that basic disease, he becomes involved in suicidal destruction.

"What name shall I give to that basic disease? It is not easy to give it a name. I would like to say that it is the drying up of the spring of love in the human heart. We are all afflicted by the absence of love. Our lungs are functioning, but not our hearts. There is no greater misfortune in the life of man than the absence of love, because without it, his relationship with life is cut. Love connects us to the whole. In the absence of love we are alone, and separated from the essence of existence."

"Man today finds himself alone. Without love everyone is an atom lacking connection with others. All of us are shut off within ourselves. This is similar to being in the grave. We are corpses even though we are alive.

"Do you see the truth of what I am saying? Are you alive, and do you feel in yourself the flow of the power of love? If that flow is not in your blood, and its throbbing has stopped in your heart, then you should understand that you are not really living.

"I was going on a journey, and somebody asked me what was the most valuable word in the language of man. My reply was 'love.' The man was surprised for he thought that I would say 'soul' or 'God.' I laughed at his natural astonishment, and said: 'Love is God.'

"The ray which comes from beyond the body and the mind is the ray of love. Love is unique, and is beyond the material world. All religion, poetry and philosophy, are inspired by it. Whatever is good and beautiful in human life, takes birth and life in love.

"Therefore I say: 'Love is God.' With the support of the beam of love one can reach the enlightened region of the Lord. It is better to say that love is God than that truth is God, for the music, the beauty, the spirit and the bliss which are a part of love, are not a part of truth. Truth is to be known, but love is something to be felt also.

"The development and perfection of love ultimately merges into God. I have heard that somebody requested Acharya Ramanuja to initiate him-

in religious life. Ramanuja asked him: 'Friend, do you love anybody?' He replied: 'No.' Ramanuja was pained by this answer and said: 'Then I am helpless. I cannot do anything for you, for if love was present in you, then it would be possible to purify it, and thus lead you to the Lord.'

"The greatest poverty is the absence of love. A man who has not developed the capacity to love, lives in a hell of his own. When a man is filled with love, he is in heaven.

"Man can be viewed as a wonderful plant, a plant which is capable of producing the flowers of either nectar or poison. If man lives by hate, he has reaped a harvest of poison. If he lives by love he has reaped the flowers of the nectar.

"If I mould my life towards the co-operative well-being, then the result will be love. Love is the result of the awareness that I am not separate and different from all other existence. I am in them and they are in me. Such love is religious.

"I recall the story of a sufi. A lover knocked at the door of his beloved. Somebody asked from the inside: 'Who is there?' He answered: 'I am your lover.' He heard in reply: 'There is no place for two in this house.' Many days later, he knocked at the door again, and was asked the same question. This time he said: 'Only you.' The door was opened for him.

"The doors of love are opened only for the person who is prepared to shed his ego. To surrender the ego for an individual in this world, is love. To surrender the ego for all, is divine love.

"Love is not sexual passion. Those who mistake sex for love remain devoid of love. Sex is only

an illusory manifestation of love. It is part of the mechanics of nature, through which procreation is achieved. Love is of a higher plane. As love develops, sex is dissipated. The energy which is manifest in sex is transformed into love.

"Love is the creative refinement of that power. Therefore, when love attains perfection, it follows automatically that there is an absence of sex. A life of love, of abstinence from carnal pleasures, is Brahmacharya. One who wishes to be free from the drive of sexual passion, must develop love. It cannot be done by suppression. Freedom from it is possible only through love.

"I said that love is God. This is the ultimate truth. But let me say that love envelops the family. This is the first step, and there is no basis for the ultimate in the absence of the beginning. Love is responsible for the family, and when the family unit spreads into the society of mankind, love increases and develops. When the family incorporates all, then for such a man, his love becomes one with God.

"With the absence of love, man is an egotist, an individual. He has no family, and no links with others. This is gradual death, because life means interrelations. Love surpasses the duality of the ego. This alone is truth. Those who thirst for truth must develop their capacity to love, until the difference between the lover and the beloved is eliminated, and only love remains.

"When the light of love is free from the smoke of subject and object and shines brightly, then that is emancipation and liberation. I invite all men to strive for that supreme freedom."

XV MORALITY FEAR AND LOVE

"When I think of man, I am reminded of those thousands of eyes that I have looked into. As I think of them, I am pained, for I remember what I have seen in them. What did I want to see, and what did I find? I was searching for happiness and found misery, I was searching for light and found darkness, I was searching for the Lord and found sin. What has happened to man?"

"His life is not real. How can there be life if there is no peace, no music, no power, no bliss? How can we give the name of life to anarchy? This cannot be called life, it can only be called a painful dream, an unconscious hallucination, a chain of miseries. It can only end in death, yet we die before we have lived. It is one thing to be born, all are born, but very few attain life."

"Only those can attain life who experience God in the self, and in mankind. In the absence of it, we are but lifeless bodies, unaware of the timeless beginning and current of life. Without such familiarity, life cannot be bliss. Ignorance of the self is misery. If there is self-knowledge, the heart of man is filled with light, if not, then it is in darkness. If it is there, he becomes divine, if not, then he becomes less than bestial."

"Those who cannot feel in themselves any truth besides and beyond the body, cannot attain the divine life. When the light of life is experienced rising above the material body, then the upward path begins. What was experienced as nature before that, is afterwards transformed into God."

"If there is restlessness, misery, agony, darkness or unconsciousness within us, then their germs spread and surround us also. The interior state conditions our conduct, which is but the reflection of the former. Whatever exists within us, pervades all our external relationships. We externalize our inner being in our thoughts, speech and behaviour."

"In this manner, the feelings of myriad individuals ultimately create society. If there is poison in society, the seeds are hidden in individuals. If the corporate body wishes for nectar, then it will have to be sown in individual beings. If the hearts of men are full of happiness, then their mutual relations will be filled with compassion, friendship and love. If they are full of misery, interrelations will be filled with violence, envy and hatred."

"If there is music within our lives, then there is music outside also, and the resonant notes spread outwards. If there is misery, agony and weeping within, then the echoes of the same are heard in the conduct of men. This is natural. Only the life of a person who has attained happiness, can be full of love."

"Love is moral. Absence of love is immoral. The deeper a man enters into love, the higher he rises in the Lord. The less a man loves, the lower is his spiritual condition. Love is the basis of a pure and moral life."

"Christ has said: 'Love is God.' Someone asked St. Augustine: 'What should I do, how can I live so that I do not commit any sin?' He replied: 'Love, and then whatever you do will be moral and auspicious.'"

"Love—in this one word is hidden all that enables man to reach God. But it must be remembered that love is only possible when there is happiness inside. Love cannot be imposed from above. It is not a cloth with which we can cover ourselves. It is our soul. It is to be discovered. It is not imposed, but manifested.

"Love is not an action. It is a state of consciousness in which one has to be. It is real only when it becomes our nature, and only then can it become the basis of a divine life.

"It must also be remembered that a moral life, in the absence of a spontaneously manifested love in the form of nature, is not capable of leading to divinity, because it lacks validity. It is based in one form or another, on fear or allurements, whether spiritual or material.

"If a person leads a pure or moral life through the allurements of heaven, or the fear of hell, I call him neither moral nor pure. He is not truly moral. Morality is unconditional, there is no question of any attainment or loss.

"Moral conduct springs forth from happiness and love combined. It is false if it springs from any other source. Just as light streams from the sun, so purity and merit flow from happiness.

"I recall a strange scene. St. Robia was running through a bazaar carrying a torch in one hand, and a pitcher full of water in the other. People stopped her and asked: 'Where are you running to with these things in your hand?' She replied: 'I am going to burn the heaven and drown the hell, so that the obstacles in your religious path are destroyed.'

"I agree with St. Robia, and would like to eradicate both heaven and hell. Ethical life has never been based, nor can it ever be, on allurements or fear. If it is, it is an illusion, and leads to self-deception rather than to self-development.

"The development of the knowledge of man has shown the falsity of ethical lives based on these. As a result, immorality has been nakedly exposed. The conceptions of heaven and hell now seem to be baseless, and therefore, their respective attraction and abhorrence have also disappeared.

"The basic reason for the immorality and anarchy of today is this. The illusion of morality has been dispelled. In consequence, a great responsibility has fallen on us, to find a new basis for an ethical life. This has always been existent, we have but to uncover it.

"The inner beings of Mahavira, Buddha, Christ and Krsna, were not based on false ethics. They lived through love, knowledge and happiness, and not through allurements or fear.

"We have to revive the ethics based on love. Without it, there is no future in an ethical basis for man's life. Ethics based on fear are dead. If love is not rekindled, then there will be no option for man but to be immoral. Man cannot be made moral forcibly, nor can his developed intellect accept blind beliefs.

"The only path he can follow, is that of love. It is through this that purity and ethics can be reborn. But love for all will take birth in man only when happiness takes birth in the self. Therefore the real question is that of experiencing happiness. If

there is happiness within, then love develops from the realization of the self.

"One who is unfamiliar with the absolute existence of the self cannot attain happiness. Happiness arises out of the establishment of the self. Thus the real path to morality is by self-knowledge. As soon as we know the self, the music of happiness begins and the light of knowledge spreads. What one then sees within the self, one sees in all.

"As soon as one knows the self, the total existence of all is known. Love is born when one sees oneself in all. There is no greater revolution than that of love, there is no greater purity than love nor any greater attainment. One who attains it, attains life."

XVI

THE MEANING OF NON-VIOLENCE

"I am reminded of those days when my mind was in darkness, and nothing was visible within me. I remember one thing of those days, and that is that I did not feel any love for anyone. I had no love even for myself.

"When I came to understand meditation, I felt as though innumerable latent springs of love had spontaneously become active. This love was not directed to anybody in particular, it was simply a fluid force. It was flowing as the light streams from a lamp, or fragrance from flowers. In that wonderful moment of awakening, I realised that love was the manifestation of one's nature. It is not directed to anyone. It is a manifestation of the self.

"Before this experience, I believed that love meant attachment. Now I realise that love and attachment are two different things. Attachment is the absence of love. It is the opposite of hatred, and therefore can easily turn into hatred. Attachment and hatred are a pair, which are mutually interchangeable. Love is not the opposite of hatred, and is quite different from attachment. It is an entirely new dimension. It is the absence of both, yet it is not negative. Love is the positive existence of some high power. This power flows from the self towards all, not because it is attracted by them, but because it is inspired by the self."

"When I knew love, I knew non-violence also. The meaning of this came from the self rather than from scriptures. The experience of the self provid-

ed the solution to everything. If love is a relationship, then it is attachment. If it is unrelated, unattached and self-inspired, it is non-violence.

“An ascetic asked me how I could attain the love of which I talked so much. I told him: ‘Love is not attained directly. Attain wisdom, and love will be the result.’ The important thing is wisdom. Love follows automatically. It is impossible to have knowledge without non-violence. Therefore non-violence is the real test of knowledge. It is the supreme duty, because it is the ultimate criterion. Dharma proves to be pure only when tested on this anvil.

“The basic enquiry of religion is the same as that of wisdom. The power of knowledge is transposed into wisdom if it is free from attachments. With the absence of objects, knowledge knows itself, and the knowledge of the self by the self is wisdom. There is no duality in that awakening, only the pure power of knowledge. The illumination of knowledge by itself, is the greatest revolution of human consciousness. Man becomes related to himself only through this revolution. Then, and then only, the purpose and meaning of life is revealed to him.

“Such revolution is attained by meditation. Meditation is the means for attaining wisdom. Meditation is the means, wisdom is the aim. Love is the result of that success.

“The mind of man is constantly filled with objective things. Some objects of knowledge invariably surround our knowledge. We have to free knowledge from its bondage to objects. Meditation is the means of this liberation.

“There is freedom in deep sleep, which is a state of unconsciousness. The mind remains absorbed

within itself. This state is its own innate nature. Therefore we say ‘svapiti’ (he sleeps); ‘sva’ means the self, ‘apiti’ means to enter. In deep sleep enter into the self

“The states of meditation and of deep sleep are similar to each other except in one respect. The former is a state of perfect consciousness and vigilance, whereas the latter is a state of unconsciousness. In deep sleep there is a feeling of unison with the world, whereas in meditation, there is a complete identification with the supreme consciousness.

“Therefore it must be remembered that deep sleep is not a state of meditation. Many psychologists think that when there is no object in the consciousness, there is sleep. This is a mistake which is the result of thought without experiment. When the consciousness is asleep, it is free from attachment to objects, but this does not mean that it is actually devoid of them. To set it free requires so much labour and conscious effort, that it is impossible to sleep after its attainment. Only pure consciousness then remains.

“The process of meditation has three parts :

- (1) Detachment from the objects of the mind.
- (2) Awareness of the trends of the mind.
- (3) Retainment of the knowledge of the mind.

With the detachment from the objects of the mind, their impressions cease to form. With the awareness of the trends of the mind, there is a gradual relief from their development. With the achievement of these two, together with the retainment of the knowledge of the mind, the possibility of self-realisation occurs.

"The point of origin is also the point of dissolution. Whatever the origin of a thing its dissolution is innate in its nature. Meditation is the dissolved state of mind. Just as the waves are ultimately dissolved in the ocean, so the mind dissolves in the supreme consciousness. The centre of the mind is the ego. When the mind is dissolved, that is released. What remains, and what is experienced, is the soul.

"What is non-violence? This question is put to me daily. My answer is that non-violence is knowledge of the self. If I become capable of knowing the self, I will know the essence of man. This awareness gives birth to love, and it is impossible for love to inflict pain. This is non-violence.

"The ego is at the centre of self-ignorance. All violence is born of that. I am all, and the rest of the world exists for me. I am the centre and the target of all existence. The exploitation born of this ego is violence. The centre of self-knowledge is love.

"When the ego is dissolved, love becomes perfect. There are two states of consciousness in the world, that of ego and that of love. The ego is the narrow and atomic stage, love is all-encompassing, it is Brahma. The centre of the ego is 'I'. The ego lives for itself. The centre of love is the universe. Love exists for all. Ego means exploitation, Love means service, and the service which flows spontaneously from love is non-violence.

"Practise meditation so that your life is filled with the light of wisdom. When there is light within, then love will flow without. Love is the highest fruit of spiritual development and attainment. Those who perish without attaining it, perish without experiencing life. If you have not known love, then you have not known anything, because love is God."

XVII I TEACH DEATH

"I do not speak of light because that is not the issue. The question is of vision. With vision there is light, without it, there is no light. We cannot perceive that which is beyond our vision, and therefore the issue is not of existence, but of the capacity of knowledge. Existence is realised only to the extent that knowledge is awakened.

"Someone asked me whether the soul existed or not. I replied: 'If you have the eyes to see it, it exists, otherwise it does not.' Normally we perceive only objective reality. The senses are attuned only to that. It is not possible to know anything through the medium of the body, which is apart from the body itself. The soul is beyond it, as its essence is different. It must be approached through another medium.

"Dharma is the way to know the self. Dharma is the disciplining of the inner eye, which can perceive what is beyond the objective, and what surpasses it. It is not a thought but a practice. Thought is always sensuous because all thoughts are grasped by the senses. Thoughts are inspired from without, not from within. They belong to others, not to the self. Therefore, the culmination of thought is science, and is necessarily centred on objective things. Thought cannot lead beyond the objective.

"By its nature thought negates the soul, because it is born of and experienced through the senses. What is beyond the senses does not come within its scope. Thus it is natural that all thoughts which try to depict the soul seem incoherent and illogical.

"Dharma is supra-logical because it is beyond both the senses and thought. With it comes coherence. Dharma is not the experience of thought, but an awakening in thoughtless consciousness. The culminating point of thought is the object. The ultimate perception of objectless consciousness is the soul. Therefore all thoughts pertaining to the soul are futile. The only path which is meaningful, is the practice of thoughtlessness.

"Behind thought there is awakening, discrimination and intelligence. But a person preoccupied with thought is not aware of it. Thoughts envelop the underlying reality, as smoke covers the fire, and the individual remains in ignorance of the knowledge which is real existence.

"Thought belongs to many. The real fire of knowledge is uniquely personal. Thought is not knowledge. But if it does not exist we are blind, and in blindness we cannot be aware of either darkness or light.

"A monk once explained at length to a blind man that there was light, but he did not agree. His disagreement was correct and coherent with thought. What he could not see was not there. Most of us have this logic. The blind man was a thinker and his disagreement was in accordance with the rules of thought. The monk said to the man's friends: 'Why have you brought him to me? Take him to a doctor, for he needs treatment rather than an explanation of light.'

"I say the same thing. If there is vision, light is seen, and the self is known. Whatever we can perceive is the truth, though not necessarily the only truth. Truth is infinite, and yet perceptible. Thought

is our limit, the senses are our limit. What is known through them is limited. To know the limitless, we must rise above them. What can be perceived beyond thought is the infinite, limitless, and timeless soul.

"The soul is perceived through meditation, which is Yoga. When the trends of the mind are dissolved our vision perceives the light and our life is transformed. Then there is no question of whether the soul exists or not, for then we know, we have perception. Then we are beyond thought, and we experience knowledge.

"The ultimate is realised through emptiness, and the emptiness is achieved by remaining the impartial and inactive witness to the processes of thought. This is the life and essence of the mind, and we must free ourselves from the bondage of thought. To be impartial, inactive, and unfeeling, or to be thoughtless, is attained through meditation. We have but to see, not to select or decide. This perception requires great effort.

"The habit of activity has become so strong, that the simple task of not doing anything has become extremely difficult. With the concentration of vision on a single point, thoughts begin to disappear, just as drops of water on the grass start evaporating in the heat of the morning sun. The heat of concentrated observation is enough for the dissolution of thoughts. This is the point where emptiness begins, and man attains vision and soul.

"I was sitting alone one dark night. There was nobody present, and there was no thought within. I was passive, gazing, with no point of focus. My perception was without object or basis. I was ex-

periencing perception itself. Somebody came by and asked me what I was doing. What could I say? I was not doing anything. I was just there, alone, which is the beginning of emptiness. This is the point where the objective world is bypassed, and the realisation of God begins.

“Dear friend, I teach emptiness, I teach dissolution, I teach death. I teach this so that you may become perfect, so that you may become immortal. It may seem surprising, but one gains life through death. Those who cling to life, lose it. One who worries about perfection becomes void, but one who becomes free from worry by being empty, attains perfection.

“A drop cannot become an ocean by remaining isolated from other drops. The ego is a hindrance. On its own, the drop can be reduced to nothing, but it can never amount to anything. The ocean does not bar it, the obstacle is the desire for individuality. Its walls and boundaries are its own. It does wish to become one with the ocean, but it does not want to lose its existence as an actual drop. This is its problem.

“The problem for man is the same. It is impossible for a drop to remain an entity on its own, and at the same time become an ocean. In the same way, an individual cannot remain an individual and become one with Brahma. When the ego is dissolved, the soul is attained.

“The soul is very close at hand, and we are unnecessarily concerned with the ego. The ego has to be destroyed, we will have to remove the covers and walls and boundaries with our own hands. Then

alone can we become part of the infinite, limitless, truth.

“Those who do not have the courage to do this, cannot become religious. Religion is the supreme bravery of human life, because it necessitates the annihilation of the ego. Dharma is not the path of cowards. It is not for those who are afflicted with the allurements of heaven and the fear of hell. These belong to the ego.

“The ego has to be annihilated. The individual has to be killed. Only he who is fearless and courageous can embrace the infinity of realisation in truth.”

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