



DISCOURSES
BY
MEHER BABA

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Meher Baba

on

The New Humanity

AS in the great critical periods of human history, humanity is now going through the agonising travail of spiritual rebirth. Great forces of destruction are afoot and might seem to be dominant at the moment.

The Divine Plan But constructive and creative forces, which will redeem humanity are also being released through several channels. And though the working of these forces of light is chiefly silent, it is eventually bound to bring about those transformations, which will make the further spiritual sojourn of humanity safe and steady. *It is all a part of the Divine Plan, which is to give to the hungry and weary world a fresh dispensation of the eternal and only Truth.*

At present, the urgent problem, with which humanity is faced, is to devise ways and means of eliminating competition, conflict and rivalry in all the subtle and gross

War is a Symptom of Graver Causes forms, which they assume in the various spheres of life. Military wars are of course the most obvious among the sources of chaos and destruction. However, *wars, in themselves do not constitute the central problem for humanity, but are rather the external symptoms of something graver, which is at their root.* Wars and the suffering, which they bring, cannot be completely avoided

by a mere propaganda against wars; if they are to disappear from human history, it is necessary to tackle their root-cause. Even when military wars are not being waged, individuals or groups of individuals are constantly engaged in *economic or some other subtle form of warfare*: and the military wars, with all the cruelty which they involve, arise only when these underground causes are aggravated.

The root-cause of the chaos, which precipitates itself in wars, is, that most persons are in the grip of egoism and selfish considerations; and they express their *egoism and self-interest* individually as well as collectively. *This is the life of illusory values in which men are caught.* To face the Truth is to realize that life is one, in and through its manifold manifestations; and to have this understanding is to forget the limiting self in the realization of the unity of life.

With the dawn of this true understanding, the problem of wars would immediately disappear. *Wars have to be so clearly seen to be both unnecessary and unreasonable that the immediate problem would not be to stop wars but to wage them spiritually against the attitude of mind responsible for such a cruel and painful state of things.* In the light of the Truth of the unity of all, life co-operative and harmonious becomes natural and inevitable. Hence, the chief task before those, who are deeply concerned with the rebuilding of humanity, is to do their utmost in dispelling the spiritual ignorance, which envelops humanity.

Wars do not arise merely to secure material adjustment: they are often the product of uncritical identification with the narrow interests, which through association come to be included in that part of the world, which is regarded as 'mine'. *Material adjustment is only a part of the wider problem of establishing spiritual adjustment: but spiritual adjustment requires the elimination of the self not only*

The Ultimate Cause of Chaos is in Egoism and Self-Interest

Wars are Both Un-necessary and Un-reasonable

Self-Interest must be Eliminated from all the Spheres of Life

from the material aspects of life but also from those spheres which affect the intellectual, emotional and cultural life of man.

To understand the problem of humanity as merely the problem of bread is to reduce humanity to the level of animality. But, even when man sets himself to the limited task of securing purely material adjustment, he can only succeed in this attempt if he has spiritual understanding. Economic adjustment is impossible unless people realize that there can be no planned and co-operative action in economic matters unless self-interest gives place to self-giving love; otherwise with the best of equipment and efficiency in the material spheres, they cannot avoid mutual conflict and insufficiency.

The NEW HUMANITY, which has to emerge out of the travail of present struggle and suffering, will of course not afford to ignore science or its practical attainments. It is a mistake to look upon science as anti-spiritual. *Science is a help or hindrance to spirituality according to the use to which it is put.* Just as art, when rightly expressed, is the expression of spirituality, science, which is properly handled, can be the expression and fulfilment of the spirit. Scientific truths, concerning the physical body and its life in the gross world, can become a medium for the soul to know itself; but, if they have to serve this purpose they must be properly fitted in the larger spiritual understanding, which includes a steady perception of true and lasting values. In the absence of such spiritual understanding, scientific truths and attainments are liable to be used for mutual destruction and for a life, which will tend to strengthen the chains which bind the spirit. All-sided progress of humanity can be assured only if science and religion proceed hand in hand.

The coming civilization of the New Humanity shall be ensouled not by dry intellectual doctrines, but by living spiritual

experience. Spiritual experience has a hold on the deeper truths, which are inaccessible to mere intellect; it cannot be born of unaided intellect. Spiritual truths can often be stated and expressed through the intellect; and the intellect surely is of some help for the communication of spiritual experience. But by itself, the intellect is insufficient to enable man to have spiritual experience or to communicate it to others. If two persons have had headache they can co-operatively examine their experience of headache and make it explicit to themselves through the work of the intellect. But, if a person has never experienced headache, no amount of intellectual explanation will be enough for making him understand what headache is. A man must have the headache if he is to know what it truly is: and in order that he should understand it, he may have to be hit on the head. Intellectual explanation can never be a substitute for spiritual experience; it can at best prepare the ground for the appearance of that experience.

Spiritual experience involves something more than what can be grasped by mere intellect; and this is often emphasised by saying that it is a mystical experience.

The Nature and Place of Spiritual Experience

Mysticism is often regarded as something anti-intellectual, obscure and confused, or impractical, and unconnected with experience; but in fact true mysticism is none of these. *There is nothing irrational in true mysticism, when it is, as it should be, a vision of Reality as it is; it is a form of perception, which is absolutely unclouded; it is so practical that it can be lived every moment of life and can be expressed in every-day duties; and its connection with experience is so deep that, in one sense, it is the final understanding of all experience.* When spiritual experience is described as being mystical one should not assume that it is something supernatural or entirely beyond the grasp of human consciousness; all that is meant is that it is not accessible to the limited human intellect, unless it transcends its limits and

is illumined by the direct realization of the infinite. Christ pointed out the way to the spiritual experience when he said: 'Leave all and follow me.' This meant that man has to leave his limitations and get established in the infinite life of God. Real spiritual experience not only involves the realization of the soul on the higher planes, but also a right attitude to worldly duties and every-day life; if it loses its connection with experience or the different phases of life, what we have is a neurotic reaction, which is far from, being a spiritual experience.

The spiritual experience, which shall enliven and energise the New Humanity, cannot be a reaction to the stern and uncompromising demands by the realities of life.

Spiritual Experience is not Born of Escape Those, who do not have the capacity to adjust themselves to the flow of life, have a tendency to recoil from the realities of life and to seek shelter and protection in the self-created fortress of illusions. Such reaction is an attempt to perpetuate one's separate existence by protecting it from the demands made by life; and it can only give a psuedo-solution of the problems of life, by providing a false sense of safety and self-completeness. It is not even an advance towards the real and lasting solution; on the contrary, it is a side-tracking from the true Path. *Man will again and again be dislodged from his illusory shelters by fresh and irresistible waves of life; and he will invite upon himself fresh forms of suffering by seeking to protect his separative existence through escape.*

Just as a person may seek, to hold on his separative experience through escape, he may seek to hold it on through uncritical identification with forms, ceremonies and rituals or with traditions

The New Humanity will not be Attached to External Forms and conventions. Forms, ceremonies and rituals, traditions and conventions are, in most cases, fetters to the release of infinite life. If they are a pliant medium for the expression of unlimited life, they would be an asset rather than a handicap for securing the fulfilment of the

divine life on earth; but they mostly have a tendency to gather prestige and claims in their own right independently of the life, which they might express; and, when this happens, any attachment to them must eventually lead to a drastic curtailment and restriction of life. *The New Humanity shall be free from the life of limitations and allow unhampered scope for the creative life of the spirit, and break the attachment to external forms and learn to subordinate them to the claims of the spirit.* The limited life of illusions and false values will then be replaced by the unlimited life in the Truth; and the limitations, through which the separative self lives will wither away at the touch of true understanding.

Just as a person may seek to hold on his separative existence through escape or identification with the external forms, he may seek to hold it on through identification with

**Identification with
a Narrow Group is a
Form of the Limited
Self**

some narrow class, creed, sect or religion, or with the divisions based upon sex. Here the individual may seem to have lost his separative existence through identification with the larger whole. But, in fact, he is often *expressing* his separative existence through such identification, which enables him to take delight from his feeling of being separate from others, who belong to another class, nationality, creed, sect, religion or sex.

Separative existence derives its being and strength by identifying itself with one opposite and by contradicting itself from the other. A man may seek to

**The Limited Self
Lives through the
Opposites**

protect his separate existence through identification with one ideology rather than another or with his conception of the good as distinguished from what he regards as evil. *What we get in identification with a narrow group or section or with some limited ideal, is not a real merging of the separative self but only an appearance of such merging. A real merging of the limited self in the ocean of universal life involves complete surrender of separative existence in all its forms.*

The large mass of humanity is, however, caught up in the clutches of separative and assertive tendencies; and, for one, who is overpowered by the spectacle of these fetters of humanity there is bound to be nothing but unrelieved despair about its future. One must look deeper into the realities of the day if he is to get a correct perspective of the present distress of humanity. The real possibilities of the New Humanity of the Future are hidden to the perception of those, who only look at the surface of the World-situation; but they *are* there all the same and they only need the spark of spiritual understanding to come into full play and effect. The forces of lust and hate and greed make for incalculable suffering and chaos; but, *the one relieving feature about human nature is that even in the midst of the working of disruptive forces there invariably exists some form of love.*

Even wars require and call upon the existence and exercise of co-operative functioning; but the scope of this co-operative functioning is artificially restricted by identification with a limited group or ideal. **Love must be free from its Limitations** *Wars are often carried on by a form of love; but it is a love which has not been understood properly. In order that love should come to its own it must be free from all its trammels and become unlimited.* Love does exist in all the phases of human life; but it is latent or is limited and poisoned by personal ambition, racial pride, narrow loyalties and rivalries, and attachment to sex, nationality, sect, caste, or religion. If there is to be the resurrection of humanity, the heart of man will have to be unlocked so that a new love is born into it—a *love which shall know no corruption and which shall be entirely free from individual or collective greed.*

The New Humanity will come into existence through a release of love in measureless abundance: and this release of love itself can come through the spiritual awakening brought about by the Masters. **Love is Self-Communicative** *Love cannot be born of mere determination: through the exercise of will, one can at best be dutiful.* One

may, through struggle and effort, succeed in securing that his external action is in conformity with his conception of what is right: but such action is spiritually barren, because it lacks the inward beauty of spontaneous love. Love has to spring spontaneously from within: and it is in no way amenable to any form of inner or outer force. Love and coercion can never go together; but, though love cannot be forced upon any one, it can be awakened in him through love itself. *Love is essentially self-communicative: those who do not have it, catch it from those who have it.* Those, who get love from others cannot be its recipients without giving a response, which, in itself, is of the nature of love. True love is unconquerable and irresistible; and it goes on gathering power and spreading itself, until eventually it transforms everyone, whom it touches. *Humanity will attain to a new mode of being and life through the free and unhampered interplay of pure love from heart to heart.*

When it is recognised that there are no claims greater than the claims of the universal Divine Life which without exception includes every one and everything, love

**Redemption of
Humanity through
Divine Love**

shall not only establish peace, harmony and happiness in social, national and international spheres, but it will shine in its own purity and beauty.

Divine Love is unassailable by the onslaughts of duality and is an expression of divinity itself; and it is through Divine Love, that the New Humanity will come in tune with the Divine Plan. Divine Love will not only introduce imperishable sweetness and infinite bliss in personal life, but it will also make possible an era of New Humanity. *Through Divine Love, the New Humanity will learn the art of co-operative and harmonious life; it will free itself from the tyranny of dead forms and release the creative life of spiritual wisdom; it will shed all illusions and get established in the Truth; it will enjoy peace and abiding happiness; it will be initiated in the life of Eternity.*

Meher Baba

on

The Place of Occultism in Spiritual Life

Part I

THE VALUE OF OCCULT EXPERIENCES

SPIRITUAL emancipation of consciousness brings with it an unfoldment of many psychic capacities which are latent in the human soul: and this unfoldment increases the scope and the range of facts which can come within the ken of human consciousness. These new facts often play an important part in helping or hindering the spiritual emancipation of consciousness; and, therefore, the aspirant has not only to understand the value which belongs to occult experiences like unusual and significant dreams, visions, glimpses of the subtle world, and astral journeys, but he has also to learn to distinguish such occult realities from hallucinations and delusions.

Though it is usual to exaggerate the importance of occult experiences, it is not uncommon to doubt their claim to validity

and to treat them with a sort of contempt which is characteristic of the general attitude to all forms of mental aberrations and abnormalities. *The attitude of unqualified contempt for occult experience is of course most pronounced in those who are not even abecedarians in the direct knowledge of occult realities.* It hurts the Ego to admit and feel that there might be vast unexplored fields of the universe, which are accessible just to a limited number of persons, from whom one happens to be excluded; and the undeserved contempt to which occultism is at times exposed as almost always, the outcome of profound ignorance about what it really means and stands for. This attitude of contempt is of course different from cautious and critical spirit. *Those who have the cautious and critical spirit are endowed with humility and openness of mind; and they are ever ready to recognize and admit the existence of occult realities, when they come within their reach.*

The Master usually helps the aspirant through ordinary means and prefers to take him under the veil; but when there is a special indication, he may also use occult medium to help. Special types of dreams are among the common media which are used for touching the deeper life of the aspirant. *Masters have not infrequently first contacted the aspirants by appearing in their dreams.* Such dreams, however, have to be carefully distinguished from ordinary dreams. In ordinary dreams, the subtle body is active in exercising its functions of seeing, tasting, smelling, touching and hearing; but the soul is not using the subtle body with full consciousness. As these experiences of ordinary dreams are received *sub-consciously*, they are in most cases purely *subjective*, relating to physical activities, and concerning the gross living and being the creations of the nascent *sanskaras* stored in the mind. In some cases, however, a dream, which is indistinguishable from ordinary dreams, may be the reflection in the subconscious of some objective experience of the subtle body and not merely a product of fancy.

Most dreams are purely subjective and sub-conscious experiences of the subtle body and they have no special spiritual significance, except that they can be the occasions for the forging of new **Rare Types of Dreams** *sanskaras* or the spending up of old ones and that occasionally they shed a light upon the hidden complexes and unfaced problems of personality. But such dreams can never include something which is not, in some way, a part of the past experience of the person; and they allow scope for novelty only in respect of new combinations of the items which have already appeared in past experience. *The rare types of dreams are the dreams of persons and things which have been known to the man not in this life but in some past life or lives; and even still more rare are the dreams of persons and things which have never appeared in his life or lives but are going to appear in his life in future.* Ordinary dreams are thus utterly different from dreams which have occult significance.

Very often, when the aspirant is having psychic unfoldment, he has occasional experience of the subtle world in the form of significant visions, lights, colours, sounds, smells or contacts. To start with, these experiences are fitful and the aspirant is likely to treat them as hallucinations. But, *even when he treats them as hallucinations, he finds it impossible to resist their directive influence because of their intrinsic potency.* The spiritual journey, however, becomes more smooth, if the aspirant learns to cultivate for occult experiences the right attitude, which consists in taking them for what they are worth. But, this balanced attitude is just the thing which the aspirant, in the initial stages, finds it difficult to maintain.

The beginner is either found to exaggerate the importance of his glimpses into the hitherto known facts of the inner worlds and develop an ungovernable craving for the further repetition of these experiences or he tries to treat them as abnormal phenomena and underrates their significance. Of these two alternatives,

Balanced Attitude to Occult Experiences is very Rare

the attitude of exaggerating the importance of occult experiences is the most common, because the novelty and rarity of the occult experiences are the factors which contribute in charging them with overwhelming importance.

In fact, the Ego of the aspirant has a tendency to fasten itself upon this new field which comes to be revealed to him; and he derives the feeling of being a rare person who is admitted to an exclusive privilege. The more

Craving for Occult Experiences experiences a person might get the further expansion of his scope he desires. And he also develops the

habit of depending upon occult goading for each step in the Path, just as those who take the drugs get addicted to them and require stimulation even for doing things which they could formerly do without such stimulation. In order to avoid this pitfall for the aspirant, the Master takes good care not to cater to his new craving for occultism. *Occult experiences are vouchsafed to the aspirant if and when they are absolutely necessary for spiritual purposes and not when he wants or asks for them.*

If the aspirant is found to attach undue importance to occult experiences or develop ungovernable craving for continued and consistent development of the same, the

Dealing with the Craving for Occult Experiences Master might in his own way, deal with this obstacle by actually weakening and annulling the occult experiences which have become the basis for false

search. This is like giving immediate relief to the patient by the surgical removal of the root cause of physical disorder; and it serves the purpose of protecting the aspirant from forging fresh chains for self-limitation. The aspirant must, under no circumstances, be allowed to get caught up in false values and wrong search: these can only lead to side-tracking and cause unnecessary delay in achieving the real goal, which is to get initiated into the truly spiritual life. The introduction of the aspirant into the occult realities is necessarily a very gradual and prolonged process; and the Master is never anxious to expedite it, as

few persons are really qualified to stand the expansion of their experience in this new dimension.

In the initial stages, the appearance of occult realities is very fitful and the aspirant sometimes doubts their claims to validity and treats them with caution in order to rule out the possibility of his being deluded. *But occult experiences often bear unmistakable credentials of their own claim to validity: and even when any such credentials are not patent on their very face, they compel due respect and attention because of the unusual significance, bliss, peace and directive value with which they are surcharged.* It is mainly because of these characteristics that the aspirant is able to discriminate real occult experiences from hallucinations and delusions.

Hallucinations are erroneous perceptions and consist in actually seeing or hearing things which do not really exist; but, though they are, in this respect, clearly different from merely imagining things, they remain objects of doubt, in spite of their likeness to normal perceptions. Delusions represent a greater degree of deceit because they consist not only in actually seeing things which really do not exist, but also in believing them to have real existence with a certainty which leaves no room for any doubt. But, ordinary hallucinations as well as delusions do not bring with them extraordinary bliss or peace to the person who experiences them. *The bliss and peace which are attendant upon real occult experiences is a fairly reliable criterion to distinguish them from hallucinations and delusions.* Hallucinations are like the nightmare of wakeful consciousness.

Even when occult experience is such that it can be clearly and unmistakably distinguished from illusions, it suffers in its power and efficacy and becomes the object of poignant doubt. This happens when the person who has had the experience

discusses the matter with others, who, because of their incapacity to understand such things, in all good spirit, throw out contrary thoughts and shake him in his own conviction. It is for this reason that, in ancient times, the Master usually required that the disciple should maintain strict *secrecy* about his occult experiences. *Even a deep experience is likely to become weak through the contradiction and scepticism of others, unless the aspirant has learnt to follow his own inner experience irrespective of what others might think or say.* If the aspirant is to make quick progress and profit most through the occult help he must develop immense and unshakable confidence in himself and the Master. He must not look to others for guidance, because *those who will understand his problems or his experiences are very few.* The aspirant must, indeed, be prepared to face the possibility of his not being thoroughly understood by all friends, or relations of his, for they might be in the dark about the grounds which determine his ideology and course of action.

If an occult experience has, at the time of its occurrence, served the purpose of giving a new momentum to spiritual endeavour, it often does not matter, if, in retrospective analysis and thought, the aspirant considers it as being a form of delusion. However, *there are some occult experiences, which are deliberately vouchsafed to the aspirant in order that they should be a standing source of inspiration and guidance:* and, with regard to these special experiences, it becomes necessary that the aspirant should cease to doubt their validity and importance. But the general attitude to seek endless corroborations of occult experiences is definitely unhealthy: and the Master gives corroborative confirmation only when he considers it as being necessary. Further, he takes the initiative in this matter, in the way that he judges to be the best under the situation. Whatever he does arises entirely out of his *unfettered discretion* and is in no way related

**The Beneficiary of
Occult help must
Develop Self-Con-
fidence**

**The Effect of
Doubt on the Poten-
cy of Occult Experi-
ences**

to or dependent upon any expectations, which the aspirant, in his limited knowledge, might have developed. But, when it is spiritually necessary, the Master does increase the efficacy of occult experience, *by confirming its validity and authority through some direct or indirect corroboration from ordinary experience*, which is within the normal range of the aspirant.

In the advanced stages of the Path, the aspirant becomes spiritually prepared for being entrusted with the free use of the forces of the subtle world. Then, he may get used to undertaking astral journeys in his subtle body, after leaving the physical body in sleep or wakefulness. The astral journeys which are undertaken unconsciously are much less important than those which are undertaken with full consciousness and as a result of deliberate volition. This implies conscious use of the subtle body. The conscious separation of the subtle body from the outer vehicle of the gross body has its own value in making the soul feel its distinction from the gross body and in arriving at a fuller control of the gross body. He can, at will, put on and put off the external gross body, as if it were a cloak and use the subtle body for experiencing the subtle world and undertaking journeys through it, if and when necessary.

The sights, smells, tastes, contacts and sounds which are experienced through the conscious use of the subtle body are clear and definite like the experiences gained through the conscious use of the gross body. They are not vague or subjective, as in ordinary dreams, but are as objective and effective as other experiences of wakeful consciousness. The power to undertake astral journeys, therefore, involves considerable expansion of the scope of experience and work; and it brings its own opportunities not only for promoting one's own spiritual advancement but also for helping others, who have not yet entered the Path.

The raining of occult forces is not to be regarded as in any way a substitute for the inner effort which the aspirant must

make to advance further. *When the occult experiences are gifts from the Masters or spiritually advanced souls, they serve the purpose of unveiling much of the hitherto obscured intuition, removing some of the difficulties on the Path and filling the aspirant with the great confidence and enthusiasm which are necessary to cope with the new requirements of each stage of the Path. But, the aspirant makes real progress by putting into practice the best intuitions of his heart and not merely by being the passive recipient of occult experiences.*

Occult Experience is only an Aid to Intuition and not its Substitute

Meher Baba

on

The Place of Occultism

in Spiritual Life

Part II

THE OCCULT BASIS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

THOSE who have even preliminary acquaintance with the structure and the laws of the inner spheres of existence know that complete isolation of human beings is a fiction of imagination. Whether they desire it or not, all persons are constantly acting and interacting upon each other by their very existence, even when they do not establish any contact on the physical plane. There are no limits to the spreading of the influence of man. The magnetic influence of the subtle spheres knows no barriers of national frontiers or any other conventional limitations. Good thoughts as well as evil thoughts, cheerful moods as well as gloomy moods, noble and expansive feelings as well as petty and narrow emotions, unselfish aspiration as well as selfish ambition—all these have a tendency to spread out and influence others, even when they are not expressed in words or deeds. Thus, *the world of mental life is as much a unified system as the world of gross matter*. The gross world as a vehicle of spiritual

People are Constantly Interacting upon each other on the Inner Planes

life has its own indubitable importance; but the links and connections existing between different persons can by no means be fully estimated, if we merely consider the tangible transactions which take place in the gross world.

The seeing of saints and masters is one of the things which do not yield their full significance except when they are taken in the context of all the corresponding hap-

The Value of Darshana and Sahavasa

penings of the inner planes. The ancient *Rishis* have attached great importance to having the *Darshana* of saints and Masters, because *they are the source of the constant flow of love and light which emanate from them and make an irresistible appeal to the inner being of the aspirant even when he receives no verbal instruction from them.* The effect of *Darshana* is dependent upon the receptivity and the response of the aspirant, whose reaction is determined by his own *sanskaras* and past connections. Often, the aspirant is completely satisfied with the *Darshana* of the Master and he has no further desire to have anything else from him. To derive bliss and contentment from the mere *Darshana* of the Master is a great thing because it indicates that the aspirant has desirelessness and love, which are the two essentials of spiritual life. Having had the *Darshana* of the supreme Beloved, the aspirant naturally desires nothing except to have more and more of this *Darshana*: and he is thus impelled by his inner spiritual urge to have as much *Sahavasa* or company of the Master as is possible. Further *Sahavasa* of the Master implements and strengthens the purifying effect of *Darshana* and also results in drawing the aspirant closer and closer to the Master on the inner planes of life.

Like *Darshana*, falling at the feet of the Master also has a special value of its own. The feet which are physically the lowest part of the body, are from the spiritual point of view, the highest. Physically, the feet go through everything—good and bad, beautiful and ugly, clean and dirty;

The Feet of the Master

yet they remain above everything. So, spiritually, the feet of

Master are above everything in the universe which is like dust to them. *When people come to a perfect Master and touch his feet with their hands, they lay the burden of their sanskaras on him.* He collects the *sanskaras* from all over the universe, just as an ordinary person, in walking, collects dust on his feet. There is a hoary custom that after the aspirant has the *Darshana* of the Master and falls at his feet, he washes his feet with milk and honey and places a coconut near his feet as his offering. Honey represents the red *sanskaras*; the milk represents the white *sanskaras*; and the coconut represents the mind. Thus the convention which, in some parts, has become established, in connection with the greeting of the Masters, really symbolises the throwing of the burden of all *sanskaras* on the Master and surrendering the mind to him. The adoption of this inner attitude constitutes the most critical and important step which the aspirant has to take for getting initiated into the Path.

Once the aspirant has the bliss of having the *Darshana* of a Master, that sight gets carved on his mind; and even when he is unable to establish frequent personal contact with him, his mind turns to the Master again and again, with a view to understand the significance of the Master. This process of establishing mental contact with the Master is essentially different from merely imaginative revival of past incidents. In the ordinary play of imagination, the recall of past incidents is not necessarily animated by a definite purpose whereas in establishing mental contact there is a definite purpose. Owing to the *directive power of purpose*, imagination ceases to be a mere revolution of ideas in the mind; and it reaches out to the Master through the inner planes and establishes a contact with him. Such mental contact with the Master is often as fruitful and effective as his actual physical *Darshana*. The inward repetition of such mental contacts is like constructing a channel between the Master and the aspirant, so that the aspirant becomes the recipient of the grace, love and light, which are constantly

flowing from the Master, in spite of the apparent distance between them. Thus, *the help of the Master is going out not only to those who happen to be in his physical presence but also to others who establish mental contact with him.*

The Master devotes careful attention to the individual needs of the disciple and the first thing that he does is to protect the disciple from such influences as will divert his attention from the Path or interfere with his progress. Often the Master requires the disciple to accept some kind of temporary isolation so that his mind is guarded against impacts which might prove contrary to his spiritual progress. The ancient Yogis, under instructions from their Masters, prepared their own food and did not allow any one to remain present at the time of eating it. The reason was that they wanted to avoid the impressions of the evil sight of bad persons. A disciple is also likely to catch the impressions of another's lust and he is likely to be affected by them, just in the same way as a clean cloth is likely to be readily soiled by dirt. In the earlier stages, the aspirant must guard himself against any complications, which might arise through association with others, who are not on the Path. But, *the Master gives special instructions for the severance or avoidance of certain connections and contacts, only when they are absolutely indicated for the special case.* In most cases, however, all that is necessary in this way, is secured merely by the constant company of the Master and there does not arise any need to submit the disciple to actual isolation. But although the disciple may be outwardly in touch with the world, he remains mentally detached from it because of his inward connection with the Master.

Just as the Master may relatively isolate a close disciple of his from undesirable contacts and connections, he might actually encourage and bring about new and fresh contacts, when he sees them to be in the spiritual interest of the disciple. He has a consummate understanding of the *sanskaras* and

Special Precautions may be Indicated by Certain Occult Experiences

Helpful Contacts and Associations

the *karmic* ties and complications of all and he can consciously help people to enter into such associations as will allow and call forth, important responses and activities and help the progress of all concerned along the line of least resistance or by a shortest possible route. *He uses his knowledge of the past lives of people, their sanskaras and connections to help them to economise their spiritual energy and use it with best results.*

The unity and solidarity of the inner plane makes it possible for the Master to use his disciple as a medium for his work even when the disciple is unconscious of his serving this larger purpose of the Master. This is possible because the disciple through his love and understanding of the Master as well as his obedience and surrender establishes a rapport between himself and the Master and comes into tune with him. Those who come into direct contact with the Master receive his direct help ; and those who are closely connected with his disciple receive his indirect help.

Sharing of spiritual work is by no means one-sided; even the disciples who merely think of the Master or meditate upon him have the privilege of sharing the spiritual and universal work in which the Master might, at that moment, be engaged. As one, who is one with Eternity, the Master is beyond time and all limitations of time; but as one, who is interested in the spiritual upliftment of humanity, he assumes many of the limitations of time and is capable of being helped on his work by the voluntary co-operation of his disciples. *The Master feeds upon the love of his disciples and utilises the spiritual forces released by them for his universal work.* From this point of view, the Master is like the *relaying station* which receives a song only in order to broadcast it to the world at large. To love the Master is to love all, not merely symbolically but actually; for what the Master receives on the subtle planes, he spiritualises, and distributes: and thus, he not only strengthens the personal

links which the disciples may have with him but also gives them the privilege of sharing his divine work.

By infinite ways, the Master tries to draw the aspirant into his own being, so that he might get disentangled from the mazes of the universe and come to desire God. This longing for God is present in the aspirant from the very beginning; but the Master makes this primary longing more intense and articulate by opening the internal eye of the aspirant. *When the internal eye is opened, God who is the object of search and longing is actually sighted.* As the gaze of the soul is turned inward and fixed upon the supreme reality, the desire for establishing union with it becomes much more ardent than when the soul is groping for God through mere speculation or imagination. When the time is ripe, the Master can open this internal eye in less than a second.

Ultimately, the aspirant has to realize that God is the only reality and that he is really one with God. This implies that he should not be overpowered by the spectacle of the multiform universe. In fact, *the whole universe is in the self and springs into existence from a tiny point in the self which is referred to as 'Om'.* But, the self has got habituated to gathering experience through some medium or the other; and, therefore, it comes to experience the universe as a formidable rival other than itself. Those who have realized God can constantly see the universe as springing from this 'Om-point', which is in every one.

The process of perception runs parallel to the process of creation; and the reversing of the process of perception without obliterating consciousness amounts to realising the nothingness of the universe as a separate entity through the mind, then through the subtle eye and lastly through the physical eye; and it is *vaster than all that it can perceive.* The big ocean and the vast spaces of the sky are tiny as

compared with the self. In fact, *all that the self can perceive is finite; but the self itself is infinite*. When the self retains full consciousness and yet sees nothing, it has crossed the universe of its own creation and has taken the first step to know itself as everything.

The entire process of withdrawing consciousness from the universe and becoming conscious of the Self is accompanied by an increasing control of all the vehicles of consciousness. Such control is made possible by the vivification and activation of unused *centres of control*; and the functioning of new centres brings, in its train, a number of occult powers. These new powers are commonly known as *siddhis*; and they can come before the aspirant has become spiritually perfect. In fact, egoism can flourish through the acquisition of such occult powers; and the aspirant may not only take delight in possessing them, but might actually use them for mundane purposes, from which he has not necessarily freed himself. *Siddhis* are, therefore, rightly regarded as obstacles in the attainment of realization. However, after God is realized, all these occult powers dwindle in their importance. *The Siddhis have their field in the nothingness which is the universe; and the person who realizes God is permanently and immoveably established in the supreme reality*. But, although the whole universe is like a zero to the God-realized person, he may voluntarily assume responsibility towards those souls, who are enmeshed in the tangles of the universe; and, in that case, he can freely and legitimately make use of his occult powers for the spiritual good of others.

There is nothing which does not admit of direct or indirect control by the Masters of wisdom. Large social phenomena like wars, revolutions, and epidemics, as well as cosmic phenomena like earthquakes, floods and other changes are equally amenable to their control and direction, through the release of the great forces of the exalted planes on which the Masters are consciously stationed. The Masters can also use the occult

Furtherance of the Divine Plan

forces and possibilities for securing *co-operative and co-ordinated spiritual work*; and they frequently hold meetings and conferences on the higher planes for securing the advancement of humanity. *The over-soul in all is only one and it always functions as a unity*. Those, who have become conscious of this unity, become fit to undertake unlimited responsibility, because they have shed the lower limitations of the human mind and have become so impersonal and universal in their interest that *they are effective vehicles for the execution and furtherance of the Divine Plan on earth*.

Meher Baba

on

The Place of Occultism

in Spiritual Life

Part III

OCCULTISM AND SPIRITUALITY

OCCULTISM is a branch of knowledge concerned with the study of the universe and human personality; and in this respect there is no difference of principle between occult-

Occultism as a Science ism and other sciences which also are concerned with the study of these topics. The difference between occultism and other sciences arises because ether sciences are concerned with such aspects and forces as are directly or indirectly accessible for ordinary observation and manipulation, whereas *occultism is concerned with those hidden aspects and forces which are essentially inaccessible to ordinary observation and manipulation*. The development of occult knowledge is conditioned by the unfoldment of the latent powers of the human spirit.

Many of the Psychical Research Societies of modern times consider occult knowledge with the same attitude which

characterises other forms of knowledge; because, in principle, there seems to be no reason why it should be looked upon as being either less valuable or more valuable than other forms of theoretical knowledge.

**The Limitations
of the Spread of
Occultism as a
Science**

We find these societies trying to pursue occult knowledge in an organised and co-operative form. The Masters also have, at times, deemed it desirable to reveal to the generality of mankind some theoretical knowledge about certain important features of the occult world like the facts of immortality and reincarnation, the existence of different bodies and planes and the laws concerning evolution and the operation of *Karma*, because, such knowledge gives the right sort of background for spiritual aspiration and effort and brings the perspective of the average man as near to the truth as is possible under the circumstances. But, *with the exception of such general knowledge about fundamentals, the Masters have consistently preferred to attach minimum importance to the spread of detailed knowledge about occult realities and have even scrupulously withheld information in respect of those points which are likely to have vital bearing upon occultism as an art.*

In occultism, more than in any other science, there is a sharp and significant division between *those who know* and *those who do not know*. In other sciences, indirect knowledge can, to a certain extent, take the place of direct knowledge.

**Those who know
and those who do
not know**

But, in occultism, indirect knowledge can in no way approximate direct knowledge in respect of import and significance. Therefore, though occultism is an important science, the spread of purely theoretical information about occult realities can have little importance. For those, who have no first-hand experience of occult realities, purely theoretical acquaintance with some occult facts can have no special value; these occult realities are bound to remain for them more or less in the same category as descriptions of unseen lands or works of fancy.

Occultism as a science may be said to be more or less on the same footing as other sciences; but occultism as an art stands by itself. However, even the spread of

Occultism as an Art

purely theoretical information about occult facts is, at times, attended with capacity for mischief, since it is likely to arouse idle curiosity and stimulate craving for acquiring control over unknown forces with a view to use them for selfish ends. There is nothing particularly spiritual about occult power, as such. Like any other mundane powers or scientific inventions, it is capable of being used for good ends or bad. It gives immense scope for co-operative work on the higher planes; but, this necessarily implies a spiritual preparedness to shoulder a special responsibility.

The novice may seek some occult powers and, within certain limits, even succeed in having them; but, this new attainment will prove to be a curse rather than a blessing, if he is not spiritually prepared for

The Misuse of Occult Power

the adequate fulfilment of the new responsibility, which is implied in the acquisition of new powers. Even the slightest misuse of occult power has severe reaction and creates a binding for the soul. Sometimes, it may retard the progress of the aspirant and may even lead to a considerable set-back; and, *apart from the spiritual ruin which the novice may invite upon himself, through indiscrete use of occult power, he is bound to be a source of incalculable harm to others, against whom he has succeeded in having a formidable advantage.*

In the hands of the Masters of spiritual wisdom, occult power is not only safe but has immense capacity for being harnessed in the service of humanity; but, even they

Occultism as an Art has to be Restricted to the Furtherance of Spiritual Purposes

are very sparing and economical in its use. By its very nature, occultism as an art, has its own natural limitations. It cannot be widely used for helping the material needs of humanity or helping it in its mundane purposes.

The introduction of an uncertain and incalculable factor, which the free exercise of occult power would involve, is bound to create much confusion and disturbance, in the ordinary pursuits of men, who must be left to their own limitations, resources and possibilities, for the equal and uninterrupted working out of the law of Karma. The use of occult power, therefore, has to be strictly restricted to the furtherance of *spiritual* purposes.

The saints, sometimes, do fulfil some of the mundane desires of their devotees; but this is done, not because they are interested in mundane affairs, but because they are interested in weaning away their devotees from cravings. When children are very young, they cannot be induced to attending to the letters written on the slate. In order to induce them to attend to letters, the elders might, sometimes, present them with letters specially constructed out of sweets. Then, they attend to these letters, not because they are interested in the letters, as such, but because they are interested in the sweets. But, this often proves to be the beginning of their interest in the letters, themselves; and the sweets can soon be conveniently dropped out of the scene after they have cultivated interest in the letters. Worldly people are like such young children. Just as the father may occasionally give a piece of chocolate to the baby in order to encourage it in being good, the saints might give to their worldly minded devotees certain harmless objects of mundane desire, so that they may eventually be willing to part with them and get interested in true spirituality.

Worldly people are so much immersed in material cravings that nothing interests them, unless it has some direct bearing upon the fulfilment of these cravings. But they may come to saints and serve or respect them with the expectation of being helped in their material problems; and, *when a person approaches a saint with respect, it becomes the duty of the saint to help him spiritually even*

Saints should not be approached with Material Motives

when he has come with some other motive. The saint, with his larger understanding of the human mind, therefore, may decide to help the person materially, in order that he might be readily won over for true spirituality. But, such offering of a material bait for spiritual purposes is an *exception*, rather than a rule; and, mostly the saints discourage people in approaching them for any material advantage. From the spiritual point of view, it is infinitely better for a person to love saints simply because they are lovable than to love them for some selfish ends. *People should go to saints because they are genuinely interested in true spirituality and for no other reason;* it is only then that they derive greatest benefit out of their contact with the saints.

Occultism as an art derives its justification solely from its capacity to subserve spiritual purposes; any diversion of occult power from this end may be looked upon as misuse. It must not be summoned merely for worldly purposes. Its true function is to be found, not in its capacity for securing fulfilment of human cravings, but in its capacity to lend itself for securing the purification of the human heart. *Occultism as an art is among the most effective and potent factors which can contribute to the purging of humanity by helping it to give up the baser desires.*

Occultism as an art becomes particularly relevant and necessary, in the case of those, who because of their evolution, are about to unfold their latent psychic powers or those who have already considerably developed psychic powers, but are, sometimes, not fully alive to the gross world, owing to the withdrawal of their consciousness to the higher planes. They have to be spoken to *in a language which they can understand.* Many advanced aspirants develop a number of occult powers; but, they are, often, as much in need of spiritual help as the ordinary run of humanity. And, since they are in possession of many occult powers, they

Occult Powers are used to Promote Purification of Humanity

The Special Sphere for the use of Occult Powers

can be readily and effectively helped by perfect Masters irrespective of distance. *When the Master's help can be consciously received on the higher planes, it becomes much more fruitful than the help which he can give merely through the gross medium.*

Apart from the difficulties existing in the forward movement on the Path, one of the characteristics of the advanced aspirants is to get so much established in the happiness of their station that they are reluctant to come down for work in the gross plane. This coming down of advanced aspirants must not be mixed up with the return to normal consciousness after the 7th plane experience which is the state of God-realization of Perfect Ones. *The Perfect Masters'* return journey and the consequent position in different planes after Realization, is actuated by altruistic motives and is the result of *Prarabdha* which the Perfect Ones utilize for the spiritual uplift of humanity in accordance with the authority they are invested with. For instance, Mohomed stationed himself after God-realization in the 7th plane, Buddha in the 5th and Moenuddin Chisti of Ajmer in the 5th planes respectively.

The coming down of advanced *aspirants* is with a view to help and accelerate their forward movement on the Path when they find themselves stuck up anywhere betwixt the planes. For example, when an aspirant gets stuck up somewhere between the 3rd and 4th planes, a Master usually brings such an one down to the 3rd plane prior to pushing him up to the 4th plane. But such coming down from their high station for the sake of others is often necessary in the interest of those who are still in the wilderness of the world and have not even entered the Path. *The Master may sometimes decide to get some spiritual work done through an advanced aspirant and may require him to postpone his efforts for individual advancement.* Such coming down eventually turns out to be a spiritual preparation for traversing the next stage of the Path smoothly and quickly; but, even so, the aspirant finds it difficult to renounce the advantages of his attainment for the purposes

of helping others. Coming down is particularly difficult for a person on the fifth plane, where the soul has sighted the Infinite and has illumination. In Sufism, this state is known as *Hairat*. In this state, the aspirant finds it extremely difficult to keep away from illumination. But, sometimes, it is necessary that he should resist getting lost in illumination and *come down for the sake of others in the world*. The Master has his own way of dealing with an advanced aspirant and he can bring him round to any unpalatable move.

This is very well illustrated in the story of a famous *Vali*, whose tomb at Ajmer is a well-known place of pilgrimage. He could not close his eyes, which were always open, dazed and glassy; and he would not eat. He was on the fifth plane. His Master, the Khwaja of Ajmer, wanted him to keep away from illumination and come down; but he found it difficult to obey his Master. Then the Master turned the key and brought him round in the following manner. He inwardly inspired five thieves to come near the place of this *Vali*. They sat within five spaces from this *Vali* and began to share the exploits which they had stolen. Soon, they began quarrelling with each other and two of them killed the other three. These two, who were successful in the quarrel, divided the loot between them and ran away. But while running away, they passed by the place, where the *Vali* was sitting; and as soon they came near the *Vali*, he got normal consciousness. The close vicinity of these criminals was sufficiently crude stimulus to bring him down and become conscious of what was happening in his surroundings. The first thing that he saw was some sparrows and his first impulse was to try his nascent powers on them. He said, "O sparrows, die"; and the sparrows fell down dead. Then he said, "Sparrows, rise up", and they rose. The two thieves who saw this were amazed and they requested the *Vali* to raise the three thieves whom they had killed in a moment of anger. On this, the *Vali* addressed himself to the three dead thieves and said, "Rise up"; but

they did *not* rise. He was taken aghast at the thought that he had lost his powers; and, repenting for the frivolous use of his powers, he went crying to his Master. When he came near the Master, he saw that those three thieves were massaging the feet of his Master. The *Vali* then went back to his original place, indifferent to food or drink. He became lean and remained stationed in the same spot for ten years, until white ants began to eat up his body. People used to come to the *Vali* and place near his body large quantities of sugar which the ants ate. Since, his body was always surrounded by heaps of sugar, he came to be known as *Ganjay Shakkar* or the treasury of sugar. His story shows how even the most advanced aspirants need the help of the Master if they are to proceed further on the way to realization.

Ganjay Shakkar's story illustrates the sort of occasions which call forth the use of occult methods and occult powers. But it must be carefully noted that no occult

Occult Phenomena have no Intrinsic Value phenomena, of whichever grade, can have any intrinsic value in itself. *The value which seems to belong to phenomena—occult or non-occult—is either purely illusory or entirely relative.* Illusory values arise, when anything acquires false importance, because, it stimulates or promises to fulfil the passing cravings and the limited purposes born of ignorance. If the thing is taken out of the context of these passing cravings and limited purposes, it is immediately deprived of the entire meaning with which it seemed to be surcharged. Relative values arise, when a thing acquires importance, because, it serves the realization or the expression of the Truth. The importance of such things is derived from their being the essential conditions of the game of divine life; and, therefore, though it is relative, it is real and not illusory.

Most persons consciously or unconsciously attach undue importance to occult phenomena and mistake them for spirituality. For them, miracles and spirit-phenomena are the real topics of absorbing interest; and this is taken to be an

indication of their being interested in the true life of the spirit. But, *there is a very clear and definite distinction between occultism and mysticism, spiritualism and spirituality*; and any failure to grasp the full import of this difference can but lead to confusion.

All miracles belong to the phenomenal world, which is the world of shadows. As phenomena, they are subject to change; and nothing that changes can have lasting value. Realization of the eternal Truth is an initiation into unchangeable Being, which is the supreme Reality; and *no acquaintance of the occult world or capacity to manipulate its forces can really amount to the realization of the Truth.* The occult phenomena are as much within the domain of false imagination as ordinary phenomena of the gross world; and, from the spiritual point of view, the only important thing is to realize the Divine Life and help others to realize it, by manifesting it in the every-day happenings. *To penetrate into the essence of all being and significance and to release the fragrance of that inner attainment for the guidance and benefit of others, by expressing, in the world of forms, truth, love, purity and beauty,—this is the sole game which has any intrinsic and absolute worth. All other happenings, incidents and attainments can, in themselves, have no lasting importance.*



The Seven Realities of Meher Baba's Teaching

EXISTENCE, LOVE, SACRIFICE, RENUNCIATION,
KNOWLEDGE, CONTROL AND SURRENDER

Meher Baba's teaching gives no importance to creed, dogma, caste systems, and the performance of religious ceremonies and rites, but to the UNDERSTANDING of the following seven Realities :—

1. The only **Real Existence** is that of the One and only God, who is the Self in every (finite) self.

2. The only **Real Love** is the Love for this Infinity (God), which arouses an intense longing to see, know, and become one with its Truth (God).

3. The only **Real Sacrifice** is that in which, in pursuance of this Love, all things, body, mind, position, welfare, and even life itself, are sacrificed.

4. The only **Real Renunciation** is that which abandons, even in the midst of worldly duties, all selfish thoughts and desires.

5. The only **Real Knowledge** is the Knowledge that God is the inner dweller in good people and so-called bad, in saint and so-called sinner. This Knowledge requires you to help all equally as circumstances demand, without expectation of reward and when compelled to take part in a dispute, to act without the slightest trace of enmity or hatred; to try to make others happy, with brotherly or sisterly feeling for each one; to harm no one in thought, word, or deed, not even those who harm you.

6. The only **Real Control** is the discipline of the senses from indulgence in low desires, which alone ensures absolute purity of character.

7. The only **Real Surrender** is that in which the poise is undisturbed by any adverse circumstance, and the individual, amidst every kind of hardship, is resigned with perfect calm to the will of God.

Meher Baba

on

The Types of Meditation

Part I

THE NATURE OF MEDITATION AND ITS
CONDITIONS

MEDITATION may be described as *the path which the individual cuts for himself, while trying to get beyond the limitations of the mind*. If a man who is caught up in the

Meditation is the Path forced by the Individual while Transcending the Mind tangles of a thick forest tries to get into the open spaces, his efforts to break through the encircling impediments will leave behind him the marks of his journey; and the onlooker will, by the study of these marks, be able to describe the paths which he traversed in his attempt to come out into the open. The movements of the man, who comes out of the forest, are different in principle from the movements of the railway engine, which moves along the rails, already laid for the course, which it is to take. He is not following a ready made path; *the path comes to be inscribed after he has traversed it*. In the same way, the man, who finds himself drawn into deep meditations, is really grappling with the spiritual problems with which he is faced. He is not merely trying to adhere to a rigid line of movement, already existing in his mental make-up.

The development of meditation can, nevertheless, be *anticipated*, in outline, by those, who have a direct insight into the peculiar contours of the mind of the individual, just in the same way as a

The General Lines of Meditation can be anticipated

person, who has thorough acquaintance with the details of the constitution of the solidified crust of the earth, may, in general, expect the outburst of a volcano in one region rather than another. When the surging powers in the bowels of the earth are trying to burst out, they are bound to take the line of least resistance: and their actual passage will largely be dependent upon the nature of the surroundings, with which they are confronted. The difference between the volcanic forces and the spiritual urge is that the former are unconscious, while the latter is a conscious phenomenon. So, intelligence plays an important part in the course of meditation: and, *it is this intelligence, which is kindled by the Master by giving to the aspirant a few simple suggestions about what kinds of things he has to do or expect in his meditations.*

Meditation has often been misunderstood as being a mechanical process of *forcing* the mind upon some idea or object. Most people naturally have an aversion to meditation, because they

Intelligent Meditation is sustained by Interest

experience great difficulty in their attempts to coerce the mind in a particular direction, or pin it down to one particular thing. *Any purely mechanical handling of the mind is not only irksome but is ultimately bound to be unsuccessful.*

The first principle, which the aspirants, therefore, have to remember is that the mind can be controlled and directed in meditation *only according to the laws inherent in the make-up of the mind itself* and not by means of the application of any mechanical or semi-mechanical force.

Many persons who do not technically 'meditate' are oftentimes found to be deeply and intensely engrossed in systematic and clear thinking about some practical problem or

theoretical subject; and their mental process is, in a sense, very much like meditation, inasmuch as the mind is engrossed in intense thinking about a particular subject-matter to the exclusion of all other irrelevant things. Meditation is often easy and spontaneous in such mental processes, because the mind is dwelling upon an object in which it is interested and which it increasingly understands. But the spiritual tragedy about ordinary trains of thoughts is that they are not directed towards things that really matter. On the other hand, the object of meditation has always to be carefully selected, and must be *spiritually important*; it has to be some divine person or object, or some spiritually significant theme or Truth. But, in order to attain success in meditation, the mind must not only get interested in the divine subjects or truths, but must also begin by trying to *understand and appreciate them*. Such intelligent meditation is a natural process of the mind; and, since it avoids the monotonous rigidity and regularity of mechanical meditation, it becomes not only *spontaneous and inspiring, but easy and successful*.

Meditation would be distinguished from concentration. Meditation is the first stage of a process which gradually develops into concentration. *In concentration, the mind seeks to unite with its object by the process of meditation consists in thorough thinking about a particular object to the exclusion of every other thing.* In concentration, there is practically no movement of the mind: but in meditation the mind moves from one relevant idea to another relevant idea. In concentration, the mind merely dwells upon some *form* or a pithy and terse *formula*, without amplifying them through a succession of ideas; but, in meditation, the mind tries to understand and assimilate this object, by dwelling upon the diverse attributes of the form or the various implications of tin formula. In concentration, as well as in meditation, there is the peaceful intermingling of love and longing for the divine object or principle, on which

the mind dwells; and, both these psychic activities are very different from the merely *mechanical* processes, which have rigid regularity and unrelieved monotony.

Persons, who are not gifted with the capacity of intense concentration, have to begin with meditation, whereas, for those who are gifted with the capacity of concentration, meditation is unnecessary. It is sufficient if they concentrate their minds on the mere form of a God-man or some simple formula like '*I am neither the gross body, nor the subtle body¹ nor the mental body;² I am Atman (soul)*'.

Meditation is essentially an individual matter in the sense that it is not for self-display in society but for one's own spiritual advancement. Utter isolation of the individual from the social surroundings is almost always conducive to the unhampered prosecution of meditation. The ancient *yogis* took to mountains and caves in search of complete seclusion. Great quiet and undisturbed silence are the necessities for attaining success in meditation; and these

are easily available in the mountains or caves. However, it is not necessary for persons to go to mountains and caves in search of these conditions; even in the towns, a little care and trouble can secure for the aspirant the quiet, silence and seclusion which are necessary to facilitate and promote progress in the different forms of meditation.

The presence of darkness or the closing of eyes is not absolutely necessary for meditation. If the aspirant is face to face with the object of meditation, he may have

successful meditation, even when his eyes are open. But, in most cases, getting away from all gross sights is, like getting away from all gross sounds, conducive to intensive meditation. To secure complete external silence involves careful selection of the spot

¹ The subtle body is the seat of desires and vital forces.

² The mental body is the seat of the mind.

for meditation; but, one has only to close one's eyes in order to protect the mind from the disturbance of sights. Sometimes, when there is light, closing the eyes is not sufficient to ward off all visual stimulation; and then, it is advisable to start meditation in complete darkness. Darkness is normally one of the things that promote progress in meditation.

With regard to the posture, which is most helpful, there are no fixed rules. Any posture, which is comfortable and hygienically unobjectionable, may be adopted, so long

Posture for Meditation

as it does not induce sleep and contributes to alertness of the mind. The posture should not involve any physical tension or pain; because, it then invites the attention of the mind to the body itself. The body should, therefore, be completely relaxed, as when going to sleep; but the usual position, which is accompanied by sleep should be avoided, because it has a tendency to induce sleep. When the body has assumed a convenient and suitable posture, it is helpful to turn one's attention to the head as the centre of the body. When the head is regarded as the centre, it is easier to forget the body and to withdraw one's attention from the body and fix it on the object of meditation.

It is desirable that the aspirant should stick to the same posture for each meditation. The previous associations, which the posture has with his meditations,

The Importance of Fixing the Spot, Posture and Hour of Meditation

endow it with a special capacity to induce and facilitate similar meditations. When the body has assumed the chosen posture, it is, as it were, constantly under the subconscious suggestion that it must not any more obtrude upon consciousness and that it has to serve the purpose of meditation. Choosing the same spot and a fixed hour for meditation also has a salutary effect upon meditation because of their previous associations. Hence, the aspirant must be serious about resorting to an identical spot, posture and hour for the purposes of meditation. The choice of the spot also involves

consideration of the occult associations and possibilities of the spot. Special importance is attached to meditating in holy places or the spots, where the Masters have themselves lived or meditated.

The spot, posture and hour of meditation have all their relative importance, which varies according to the peculiarities and history of the individual. The Master, therefore, often gives, in respect of them, different instructions to each disciple to suit his individual case. However, in those cases, where meditation has become habitual through constant practice, adherence to a fixed spot, posture or time can be dispensed with; and, the aspirant can carry on his meditation at any time under any conditions. Even when he is walking he may be inwardly absorbed in his meditation.

Meditation should not be resorted to with a heavy heart, as if, it were like taking castor oil. One has got to be serious about meditation; but, this does not mean that the aspirant must always look grave or melancholy. Sense of humour and cheerfulness not only do not interfere with the progress of meditation but actually contribute to it. Meditation should not be artificially turned into a distasteful and tiresome thing; *the aspirant should freely allow himself the natural joy, which is attendant upon successful meditation, without getting addicted to it.* Meditation should be something like a picnic on the higher planes. Like excursions into new and beautiful natural surroundings, meditation brings with it a *sense of enthusiasm, adventure, peace and exhilaration.* All thoughts of depression, fear or worry have to be completely cut out, if there is to be a really successful meditation.

Though meditation is essentially an individual matter, collective meditation has its own advantages. If different aspirants, who are in harmony with each other, take to the same line of meditation together, their thoughts have a

tendency to augment and strengthen each other; this is particularly noticeable when the disciples of the same Master are collectively engaged in meditating upon their common Master. But, if the collective meditation of this type is to yield its full advantage, each aspirant, who participates in the collective meditation, must be concerned with the course of his own meditation and not with what others in the same group are doing. Though he starts his meditation in the company of others, he has to forget all about it and get lost in the object of his meditation. He has to be entirely oblivious of the whole world, including his body; and, he has to be fully and exclusively cognisant of the object, which has been agreed upon by all, before the beginning of the meditation. When intelligently handled, collective meditation can prove to be of immense help to the *beginners*, although the advanced aspirants can carry on their meditation by themselves.

In ordinary thinking, the uninterrupted flow of relevant trains of ideas is common; but, when the mind sets itself to systematic meditation, there is inevitably a *reactionary tendency for irrelevant and contrary thoughts to create disturbance*. This is the *law of the mind*: and, the aspirant should not be upset by the appearance, in consciousness, of many contrary and unwholesome thoughts, which had hitherto never made their appearance. *Meditation involves bringing the subconscious contents of the mind to the forefront of consciousness*. Like the conjurer, who summons into existence many strange and unexpected things, the process of meditation invites many absurd and unwanted thoughts. The aspirant must expect and be prepared for all these disturbing thoughts and should exercise inexhaustible *patience* with the unshakable confidence that all these disturbances will be ultimately overcome.

The last but not the least important condition of attaining

success in meditation is the adopting of the *right technique* in respect of the disturbing thoughts and mental influences.

The Technique of Dealing with the Disturbing Thoughts It is no use wasting psychic energy by *directly* trying to combat and repress disturbing thoughts. Any such attempts involve giving further attention to the disturbing thoughts; and the disturbing thoughts feed upon the very attention, which is given to them for the purpose of repressing them, and get thereby further strengthened and confirmed in consciousness. The best thing is to ignore them and to turn to the object of meditation as early as possible, without attaching any undue importance to the disturbing factors. *By recognising the irrelevance and worthlessness of the disturbing thoughts and the relative value and importance of the object meditation, it becomes possible to leave the disturbing thoughts to themselves to die their natural death, through sheer neglect, and to make the mind permanently steady in the object of meditation.*

Meher Baba

on

The Types of Meditation

Part II

THE CHIEF TYPES OF MEDITATION AND THEIR
RELATIVE VALUE

MEDITATION is of different types; and the chief types of meditation can be conveniently distinguished from each other on the basis of *three* distinct principles. They can be classified either on the basis of the *function*, which they perform in respect of spiritual advancement, or on the basis of *the part of personality, which is predominantly brought into play, during the process of meditation*, or on the basis of *those items of experience, which it tries to understand*. Of these three principles, any principle can be adopted for the classification of the different types of meditation. The last principle would be availed of later, while giving a detailed account of the different forms of meditation, because, it is most suitable for *enumerative purposes*: and, this part will successively make use of the first two principles, because, they are helpful, in different ways, in explaining the relative value of the various forms of meditation.

In the light of the *first* principle, it turns out that meditation has to serve the purpose of *associating* consciousness with the eternal Truth and also the purpose of dissociating consciousness from the false and unimportant things of the phenomenal world. *Associative meditation* predominantly involves the *synthetic* activity of the mind (*Anwaya*); and *dissociative meditation* predominantly involves the *analytic* activity of the mind (*Vyatireka*). Associative meditation may be illustrated by the formula, 'I am Infinite' and, dissociative meditation may be illustrated by the formula, 'I am not my desires'.

Through associative meditation, the aspirant tries to unite with the spiritual ideal as mentally constructed by him; and through dissociative meditation, the aspirant tries

The Respective Functions of Associative Meditation and Dissociative Meditation *to separate himself from the conditions, which come to him as anti-spiritual. Associative meditation is a process of the assimilation of essentials of spiritual life; dissociative meditation is the process of the elimination of these factors, which prevent the life of the spirit.*

Associative meditation is concerned with objects, which are, so to say, selected from the land of Light; and dissociative meditation is concerned with objects, which are, so to say, parts of the land of shadows. The world of illusions, like the world of shadows, has a bewildering charm of its own; and, if a person is to succeed in getting out of the world of illusions and arrive at the Truth, he must develop resistance to the enticement of the world of illusions, by repeated attention to its real worthlessness, just as a person must develop discontent with regard to the world of shadows if he is to make any effort to come into the light. Therefore, dissociative meditation is a preliminary to associative

meditation ; it comes first and has its own value ; but, it is meant merely to pave the way for associative meditation.

Associative meditation, as well as dissociative meditation are, in a way, both necessary, but, eventually associative meditation turns out to be far more fruitful and

Associative Meditation is more fruitful than Dissociative Meditation important than dissociative meditation. If a person is surrounded by shadows, it does not help very much to be continuously upset about them. If he has no interest except that of being cross with the shadows, there will be no end to his worries. But, if instead of fretting and fuming about the engulfing shadows, he sets himself to the more important task of getting beneath the Sun, he will discover that by the time he has brought himself directly under the full blaze of the Sun, the shadows have all disappeared. *So what really matters is not aimless discontent with existing limitations but directive effort towards the established ideal.* As long as the face of the person is turned towards the Sun and as long as he is trying to walk into his light, the shadows, which encircle him, cannot be a serious handicap to his emancipation. In the same way, the aspirant need not worry too much about his failings, as long as his heart is firmly set upon uniting with his spiritual ideal. His failings will have all vanished into nothingness when his pilgrimage is at an end.

Associative meditation is to the spirit what the assimilation of food is to the body. The body can make up for its deficiencies by the assimilation of the right sort of food; so, the mind can secure its health by the assimilation of spiritual truths by meditating upon them. But, it is necessary to strike a balance between the different forms of associative meditation even though they are all, in their own way good just as it is necessary to attend to the balancing of the diet, even when we have satisfied ourselves of the nutritive value of the different components of the diet. Disproportionate development of mental life hampers advancement, because of

the internal friction which is attendant upon it; and, *happy combinations of the different forms of meditation facilitate rapid progress, because they secure harmonised and balanced mind.* The right combinations are those which promote an *advancing equilibrium*, by emphasising just those aspects of the truth, which are relevant for removing the special obstacles, with which the aspirant is at the moment faced.

The analogy of diet can be extended even to the second type of meditation, which consists in avoiding and eliminating the things, which are anti-spiritual. A faulty diet

The Extension of the Analogy can upset physical health; so, faulty types of meditation can throw the mind in disorder. The wrong type of food can ruin health instead of nourishing it; so, the instinctive, meditation on the objects of craving creates further fetters for the mind instead of breaking those, which already exist. *Therefore, it is as important to avoid the wrong type of meditation as it is to avoid the wrong type of food.* And further, just as good health requires constant elimination of the waste products and poisonous substances, spiritual health requires the *expulsion of undesirable thoughts and emotions.*

So far, explanations have been concerned with the two types of meditation into which the process of meditation gets differentiated by considering the nature of

According to the Second Principle we get Three Types of Meditation the *function* which it performs in respect of spiritual advancement. It is equally illuminating to understand the different types of meditation into which the process of meditation gets differentiated by considering the nature of the *part of personality, which is predominantly brought into play, during the process of meditation.* Through the application of this *second* principle, we have *three* distinct types of meditation.

In the first type of meditation, the intellect is predominantly brought into play and it might be called *'discriminative*

meditation'. In the second type of meditation, the heart is predominantly brought into play and it might be called the *'meditation of the heart'*. In the third type of meditation, the active nature of man is predominantly brought into play and it might be called *'the meditation of action'*. Discriminative meditation is represented by the intellectual assertion of a formula like 'I am not my body but the Infinite'; the meditation of the heart is represented by a steady and unhampered flow of love from the aspirant to the Divine Beloved; and, the meditation of action is represented by an unreserved dedication of one's life to the selfless service of the Master or humanity. Of these three types of meditation, meditation of the heart is the highest and most important; but the other two types of meditation have also their own value and cannot afford to be neglected without serious detriment to the spiritual progress of the aspirant.

In fact, the different types of meditation must not be looked upon as being entirely exclusive of each other. They can proceed in all sorts of combinations. Sometimes, one type of meditation inevitably leads to another type of meditation; and progress in one type of meditation is often held up until there is corresponding progress in the other types of meditation. All the different types of meditation are valuable for securing the spiritual advancement of the aspirant. They almost always make up for mutual deficiencies and supplement each other.

But one type of meditation may also seriously interfere with the progress of another type of meditation, if it is resorted to at an inopportune moment. The different types of genuine meditation all dwell upon aspects of life which are equally true. But, *relatively to the psychic state of the individual, the assimilation of a certain truth of life is often more urgently necessary than the assimilation of some other*

truths of life. Therefore, the Masters never prescribe the same form of meditation to all; but they give specific instructions, according to the *individual needs of the aspirant.*

The type of meditation, which is necessary in a particular situation, can, often, not be correctly ascertained by the aspirant, for himself. *The aspirant can get addicted to one type of meditation so exclusively that he finds it dif-*

The Need for Specific Instructions from the Master

ficult to get out of the groove, which has been cut into his mind by the type of meditation, Which he has been practising. He fails to see the importance of any other type of meditation and is not drawn by it. The aspirant may, of course, himself come to feel his own deficiency along a particular line. But just as many medicines are disagreeable to the patient, the types of meditation, which are really indicated in a specific situation, often, come to the aspirant as being distasteful; and he is disinclined to take to them. The help and advice of the Master are indispensable on this point. The insight, which the Master has into the deeper and real spiritual needs of the aspirant, is infinitely greater than the insight, which the aspirant can hope to have in himself. And, *the specific instructions from the Master supply the necessary corrective for the neglected aspects of personality.*

Although the aspirant may start with an initial aversion to the type of meditation, which he needs, he gets interested in it, when he comes to see its real value and

The True Value of Meditation can be perceived only in its Practice

purpose: and, he can come to appreciate the real value and of a particular type of meditation, perceived only when he has tried it. It is not possible to discover the value and possibilities of any type of meditation by purely theoretical speculation about that mode of meditation. Such purely theoretical guesswork may have some superficial results; but it fails to fathom the real utility of meditation. *Like many other things of spiritual, importance, meditation yields its full significance*

after the person has got into it and not when he is trying to understand it by envisaging it from outside.

In order to have real success in any mode of meditation, the aspirant must launch upon it with the determination to explore all its possibilities. He must not start with any limiting reservations but, should be prepared to encounter unexpected states of consciousness; and he should be willing to go where that line of meditation leads him, without making any rigid demands of preformed expectations. *The very essence of meditation is one-pointed-ness and the exclusion of all other considerations, even when these considerations happen to be enticing.*

However, if the aspirant takes to any type of meditation, on his own initiative and without having the benefit of the guidance and supervision of the Master, *he may get into it so far, that he loses his perspective and is unable to recover himself.* It may be impossible for him to change over to some other complementary mode of meditation, even when it is absolutely necessary. This risk is avoided if the aspirant has taken to a line of meditation on the orders of his Master. When he is under the guidance and supervision of the Master, the Master can not only ask the aspirant to halt at the right time, but he can actually help him to get out of the grooves cut by his previous meditation.

In this connection, there is an illustrative story of a man who was highly intelligent and who wanted to know from personal experience what it feels like, when a man is being suffocated by being hung. He was not content merely with imagining what it would be like; but he wanted to have that experience for himself. So, he asked one of his friends to come with him and to help him to perform the experiment upon himself, He said that he would get hanged by a rope and that

he would signal to his friend when the feeling of suffocation reached the dangerous limit. He further asked his friend not to relieve him from the gallows before he received the intended signal. His friend agreed to all this; and the man got hung by tying a rope round his own neck. But, when he got suffocated, he became unconscious, and he, therefore, could not give to his friend the promised signal. The friend, however, was wise; and, finding that the suffocation of the man had really reached a dangerous limit, he went beyond the limits of his agreement and relieved the man just in time to save his life. The man could be saved not through his own thoughtfulness and precautions, but through the wise discretion of his friend. In the same way, *it is safer for the aspirant to rely upon the Master than upon any provisions of his own making.*

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on

The Types of Meditation

Part III

GENERAL CLASSIFICATION OF THE
FORMS OF MEDITATION

THE process of meditation aims at *understanding and transcending the wide and varied range of experience*.

When meditation is interpreted in this manner, it is at once seen to be something which is not peculiar to a few aspirants; it turns out to be a *process in which every living creature is, in some way, engaged*.

Meditation is an Attempt to Understand Experience

The tiger, which is going to devour a lamb, which it has sighted, 'meditates' upon the lamb; the lamb, in its turn, having sighted the tiger, 'meditates' upon the tiger.

Meditation is Universal

The man who wants for the train at the platform, is 'meditating' upon the train; and the driver of the train, who expects to be relieved at the next station, is 'meditating' upon the station. The scientist, who works upon an unsolved problem 'meditates' upon that problem. The patient, who is waiting for the doctor with tense anxiety, is 'meditating' upon the doctor; and the doctor, who is waiting for

his bill, is 'meditating' upon the bill. When the police tries to catch the thief, they both 'meditate' upon each other. The person who 'falls in love' is 'meditating' upon the beloved; the man, who is jealously watchful about his rival is 'meditating' on his rival; the man, who is struck with grief at the bereavement of a friend is 'meditating' upon the friend; and the person who seeks a revenge upon his enemy, 'meditates' upon his enemy. The man, who is lost, in making himself presentable by a suitable dress is 'meditating' upon himself as the body; and the person who boasts of his intellectual or psychic attainments, is 'meditating' upon himself as the mind.

All these are, in a way, forms of 'meditation'; but, in spiritual discourses, the term meditation, is usually restricted to those forms of meditation, which tackle the problem of understanding experience *intensively* and *systematically*. In the above examples, meditation is a result of the natural application of the mind to the objects, with which it is presented; and, in this application of the mind the subject is almost unconscious of the ultimate purpose of the process of meditation. But, in the spiritual field, meditation is, at least in the initial stages, deliberate; and the subject, during such meditation, is more specifically conscious of the ultimate objective of the process of meditation. The forms of meditation which are characteristic of the spiritual field, however, are *continuous* with the forms of meditation, which are found throughout the world of consciousness; and, *the spiritual forms of meditation spring into existence only when the other more general forms of meditation have brought the person to a certain crisis or 'blind alley'*, so that he is forced to choose his object of meditation, in the light of some spiritual ideal and is also required to revise the manner of meditation, to which he might have been hitherto accustomed.

The spiritually important forms of meditation are of two kinds: (1) *General* meditation, which consists in the assimilation

of the Divine Truths and (2) *Specialised* meditation, in which the mind *selects* some definite item of experience and is *exclusively* concerned about it. General meditation is only a carrying further of the ordinary thought-processes systematically and intensively. It is different from the many pro-spiritual meditations of the *non-sadhaka* only in so far as (i) the thought-processes now come to be directed towards realities, which have spiritual importance and (ii) the mind makes intelligent use of the expositions of the Divine Truths, given by those who *know*, without renouncing its critical powers and the inherent zest for the Truth.

The specialized forms of meditation, on the other hand, imply and require something more than a purely intellectual approach to the Truth. In the specialised forms

Specialized Meditation Aims at more than Intellectual Understanding of meditation, as in general meditation, the mind has an opportunity to have an *intellectual* understanding of the object of meditation; but they also, in addition, help *to cultivate mental discipline, develop capacities, which were hitherto inactive and dormant and unfold latent possibilities of personality.*

The problem for the specialised forms of meditation is not theoretical but practical. *Specialised forms of meditation are helpful for overcoming some specific obstacles in the way of enlightenment and*

The Problem for Specialized Meditation is Practical *realization; they aim at controlling the mind and going beyond it.* Specialised forms of meditation are more like the desperate attempts of a man to break through the walls of his prison than like the idle speculative activity of forming 'opinions' about the strength of the different parts of the prison-walls or about what may become visible after coming into the open.

In spiritual life, even a sincere mistake, which is taken seriously, may have more value than half-hearted allegiance to

theoretical or formal truth. The *practical* purpose in the specialized forms of meditation must sometimes prevail *even at the cost of formal and theoretical truth.*

Practical Purpose may Over-ride Formal Truth

Thus, while concentrating on a particular formula or form, no other formula or form can be allowed access to the mind, although, intrinsically, this other formula or form may have the same or even greater spiritual importance. If an aspirant has been meditating upon one Master, he has to exclude from his mind all ideas of any other Masters, though these Masters may, in reality, be as perfect as the Master, on whom he is meditating. In the same way, intensive thinking about the nature of the soul cannot be carried on while trying to make the mind blank although intensive thinking might be as helpful towards the achievement of the goal as the process of making the mind blank.

As a rule, (excepting exceptions), *mixing* up of the specialised forms of meditation is not desirable though theoretically they may equally be directed towards different

Function of General Meditation

aspects of the Truth. *The task of bringing together the different facets of the Truth and building up a whole and complete view of life is attempted by general meditation,* in which thought is free, comprehensive and receptive to all aspects of the Truth. Such general meditation has its own value and justification. *General meditation is helpful before trying specialised forms of meditation as well as after trying them.* But, it cannot take the place of the specialised forms of meditation, because the specialised forms of meditation have a different purpose and function.

The different forms of Specialised Meditation are comparable to the different forms of *exercise*, which may have some specific purpose or justification. The exercise

Specialized Meditation is like Specific Exercise

for the muscles is meant only for the strengthening of the muscles; but this does not mean that the bowels are not an important part of the body. In the same way, the exercise for the bowels is meant only for the strengthening of the bowels,

but this does not mean that the muscles are not an important part of the body. Both types of exercise are important for securing the general health of the body, although it may not be possible to take to both of them at one and the same time. While performing the exercise for the bowels there need be no undue anxiety about the muscles; and while performing the exercise for the muscles there need be no undue anxiety of the bowels.

The functions of the different specialised forms of exercise have, however, to be correlated and governed in the light of our knowledge of true health or proportionate development of the body; and in the same way, the functions of the specialised forms of meditation have to be correlated and governed by the whole and complete ideal of life, which the aspirant constructs through the process of *general* meditation or *unrestrained thought, which knows no law except that of finding the Truth, in all its aspects. Just as specialised forms of meditation cannot be replaced by general meditation, general meditation can also cannot be replaced by specialised forms of meditation.* Both are necessary and have their own value.

For enumerative purposes, the different specialised forms of meditation can be conveniently classified *on the basis of those items of experience, which the mind tries to understand.* Human experience, in all its variety, is throughout characterised by the dual aspect of subject and object. Some forms of meditation are concerned with the *objects of experience*; some forms of meditation are concerned with the *subject of experience*; and some forms of meditation are concerned with the *mental operations*, which are involved in the interaction of the subject and the object. Thus, we get *three* kinds of meditation.

All the forms of meditation, which the aspirant (*sadhak*) might adopt, ultimately culminate in the goal of all meditation, which is to get established in *Sahaj Samadhi* or Spontaneous Meditation of the spiritually perfected soul. The *Sahaj Samadhi* has two forms: (i) *Nirvana* or *absorption* and (ii) *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* or *Divinity in expression*.

The Table of General Classification of the Types of Meditation

A	THE VARIED FORMS OF 'MEDITATION' BEFORE A PERSON BECOMES AN ASPIRANT (<i>Sadhaka</i>)				
B	FORMS OF THE MEDITATION OF THE ASPIRANT	i	General Meditation or The assimilation of the Divine Truth	1	Philosophical thinking.
		2		Hearing a discourse from the Masters.	
		3		Reading the written expo- sitions of the Masters.	
		ii	<i>Specialised Meditation</i> which selects some definite items of experience	1	Meditation concerned with the <i>objects</i> of experience
		2		Meditation concerned with the <i>subject</i> of experience	
		3		Meditation concerned with <i>mental operations</i>	
C	SAHAJ SAMADHI OR THE MEDITATION OF THOSE WHO ARE SPIRITUALLY PERFECT (<i>Siddha</i>)			1	<i>Nirvana</i> or Absorption
				2	<i>Nirvikalpa Samadhi</i> or Divinity in expression

The general classification of the types of Meditation has been given in the form of a table, which serves the purpose of *summarising* the results of this article. Out of the different kinds of meditation which are mentioned in this *Table of general classification*, the varied forms of 'meditation', which are the stage of the *sadhaka* (A), have been already illustrated in the beginning of this article; the different forms of *General Meditation* (B-i) will be dealt with in Part IV; the different forms of Specialised Meditation (B-ii), *along with their subdivisions*, will each be individually explained in Parts V and VI. *Sahaj Samadhi* (C) and its forms will be explained in Parts VII and VIII.

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on
The Types of Meditation

Part IV

ASSIMILATION OF THE DIVINE TRUTHS

SECTION A

Modes of General Meditation

THE beginnings of spiritual life are marked and helped by general meditation, which does not exclusively concern itself with selected specific items of experience, but which, in its comprehensive scope, seeks to have *an understanding and assimilation of the Divine Truths* concerning life and the universe. When the aspirant is interested in the wider problems of the ultimate nature of life and the universe and begins to think about them, he may be said to have launched himself upon such meditation. *Much of what is*

included under philosophy is a result of thus trying to have an intellectual grasp of the ultimate nature of life and the universe. But the purely intellectual grasp of the Divine Truths remains feeble, incomplete and indecisive owing to the limitations of the experience which may be available as the foundation of the structures of speculation. The Philosophical meditation of free and unaided thought does not lead to conclusive results; it often leads to diverse conflicting systems or views; but philosophical meditation is not without value, because, besides leading him to a certain extent in the realm of knowledge, it gives to the aspirant an intellectual discipline of mind, which enables him to receive and grasp the Divine Truths, when he happens to come upon them through those, who know.

The more fruitful mode of general meditation consists in *studying the revealed Truths* concerning life and the universe. This mode of understanding and assimilating the Divine Truths can take its start from the hearing or reading of those expositions of the Divine Truths, which have their source in the Masters of Wisdom. The discourses of living Perfect Masters or the writings of the Perfect Masters of the past are a suitable object for this mode of general meditation, because the assimilation of the Divine Truths, revealed through them, enables the aspirant to bring his life into line with God's purpose in the universe.

The Divine Truths are most easily grasped and assimilated when they are directly passed on to the aspirant by a living Master. Such personal communications of the Master have in them a power and efficacy, which can never belong to the information, received by the aspirant through other sources. *The word becomes alive and potent because of the life and personality of the Master.* Hence many scriptures emphasise the need for *hearing* the Divine Truths directly through the spoken word of the Master (*Gurumukh*). The mode of general

meditation, which depends upon hearing the expositions of the Divine Truths, is undoubtedly the best, when the aspirant has the opportunity to contact a living Master and listen to him.

It is, however, not always possible for the aspirant to contact and listen to a living Master; and it is in this respect that meditation through reading has some advantages of its own. For the generality of aspirants, meditation through reading has hardly any suitable substitute, because, it takes its start from *written* expositions, which are available to them at any time, which is convenient to them. The meditation, which takes its start from reading about the revealed Truths, has this special advantage of being *easily accessible* to *most aspirants*. Meditation through reading is, therefore, *explained* in Section B; and it is *provided for* in Section C.

**The Advantage of
Meditation through
Reading**

SECTION B

Reading as Meditation

Meditation through reading has its own handicaps, because, most of the written expositions of the Divine Truths are meant for intellectual study rather than for assimilation through meditation. The difficulties, which the aspirants experience in connection with this form of meditation, are either (i) due to the fact that the method of meditation is not adapted to the subject-matter of meditation, or (ii) due to some flaw in the method which makes it mechanical and uninspiring, or (iii) due to the unwieldiness or vagueness of the subject-matter of meditation.

**Usual Handicaps
In Meditation
Through Reading**

All these causes, which vitiate meditation and make it unsuccessful, have been avoided in the specific meditation,

which is explained and recommended in this article. This article is intended, not only to explain the manner of carrying on meditation through reading, but also to provide exposition of Divine Truths, in order to fulfil the requirements of this form of meditation. The usual difficulties, existing in meditation through reading, have been removed in this specific meditation, by (i) securing that *the process of meditation as well as the subject-matter of meditation are adapted to each other and to the conditions of intelligent meditation*, (ii) by *elaborately explaining the different phases of the meditation which takes its start from reading*, and (iii) by *providing a specially prepared brief exposition of the Divine Truths*, which would become a suitable and valuable subject-matter for meditation through reading.

The form of meditation, which takes its start from reading about the Divine Truths, has three stages:

Three Stages of the Specific Form of Meditation through Reading

(1) In the first stage, the aspirant will have to read the exposition daily and simultaneously think about it thoroughly.

(2) In the second stage, actual reading would become unnecessary but the subject-matter of the exposition will be mentally revived and thought over constantly.

(3) In the third stage, it will be quite unnecessary for the mind to revive the words of the thoughts in the exposition separately and consecutively, and all discursive thinking about the subject-matter will come to an end. At this stage of meditation, the mind will no longer be occupied with any trains of thought, but will have a clear, spontaneous and intuitive perception of the sublime Truth, which is expressed in the exposition.

Since intelligent meditation consists in *thorough thinking about a particular subject*, it follows that the best help for

meditation would be a brief and clear exposition of the subject of meditation. The following

Provision of Subject-matter for the Specific Form of Meditation through Reading concise exposition of the Divine Truths (given in Section B) comprises the whole story of creation, as well as a complete account of the Path and the Goal of self-realisation. The aspirants can intelligently read the exposition and assimilate the sublime truths, which it embodies.

This special form of meditation is extremely easy and useful, owing to the fact that the reading of the subject-matter and thinking about it have to be done simultaneously. Further, in making the exposition of the subject-matter clear and concise, the probability of any disturbance arising out of irrelevant thoughts is eliminated. It is extremely difficult to avoid the disturbance of irrelevant thoughts, while meditating upon the subject-matter of some long-drawn article or book, even if it is committed to memory; and spontaneous meditation about it, therefore, becomes impracticable. The appearance of irrelevant thoughts in the mind becomes very probable, not only in a long-drawn meditation of abstract thoughts, but also in a meditation of some concrete object of experience. On the contrary, irrelevant thoughts are extremely improbable, if the subject-matter of meditation consists of a brief exposition of the Super-sensible Truth. If the aspirants meditate upon the subject-matter of the following exposition of the Divine Truths (in the manner which has been elaborately indicated above), meditation will become for them not only spontaneous and easy, delightful and inspiring, but also helpful and successful. They will thus be taking a very important step towards the realisation of the goal of life.

SECTION C

The Divine Truths

(for meditation through reading)

The Journey of the Soul to the Over-soul

Atman or the soul is in reality identical with *Paramatman* or the Over-soul, which is One, Infinite and Eternal. The soul is, in fact, beyond the gross, subtle and mental worlds; but it experiences itself as being limited owing to its identification with the *Sharira* or the gross body, *Prana* or the subtle body (which is the vehicle of desires and vital forces), or *Manas* or the mental body (which is the seat of the mind). The soul, in its transcendental state, is *One, Formless, Eternal* and *Infinite*, and yet it comes to identify itself with the phenomenal world of *forms*, which are *many* and *finite* and *destructible*. This is *Maya* or the Cosmic illusion.

The phenomenal world of finite objects is *utterly illusory* and *false*. It has three states: (1) the *gross*, (2) the *subtle* and (3) the *mental*. Although all these three states of the world are false, they represent different *degrees of falseness*. Thus, the gross world is farthest from Truth (God); the subtle world is nearer Truth; and the mental world is nearest to Truth. But all the three states of the world owe their existence to the cosmic illusion, which the soul has to transcend before it realises the Truth.

The sole purpose of creation is that the Soul should be able to enjoy the Infinite state of the Over-soul consciously. *Although the soul eternally exists in and with the Over-soul in an inviolable unity, it cannot be conscious independently of the creation, which is within the limitations of time.* It must, therefore, evolve consciousness before it can realize

its true status and nature as being identical with the Infinite Over-soul, which is *One without a second*. The evolution of consciousness required the duality of the subject and the object—the centre of consciousness and the environment (*i.e.*, the world of forms).

How does the soul get caught up in the illusion? How did the Formless, Infinite and Eternal Soul come to experience itself as having form, and as being finite and destructible? How did the *Purusha* or the Supreme Spirit come to think of itself as *Prakrati* or the world of nature? In other words, what is the cause of the cosmic illusion in which the soul finds itself?

To realise the true status of the Over-soul which is One, Indivisible, Real and Infinite, the soul needed consciousness. The soul did get consciousness, but this consciousness was not of *God* but of the *Universe*; not of the *Over-soul* but of its *shadow*; not of the *one* but of *many*; not of the *infinite* but of the *finite*; not of the *Eternal* but of the *transitory*. Thus, the soul, instead of realising the Over-soul, gets itself involved in the cosmic illusion, and hence, though really infinite, it comes to experience itself as finite. In other words, *when the soul develops consciousness, it does not become conscious of its own true nature but of the phenomenal world, which is its own shadow.*

In order to become conscious of the phenomenal world, the soul must assume some form (as its medium) for experiencing the world; and the degree and the kind of consciousness are determined by the nature of the form which is used as a medium. The soul first becomes conscious of the gross world by assuming a gross body. The consciousness of the gross world which it has in the beginning is of the most partial and rudimentary type; and correspondingly, the soul assumes the most undeveloped form

The Organic Evolution and Degrees of Consciousness

(e.g., that of stone), with which evolution begins. *The driving force of evolution is constituted by the momentum which consciousness receives owing to the conservation of the impressions (sanskaras) left by diverse desires or conations.* Thus the sanskaras cultivated in a particular form have to be worked out and fulfilled through the medium of a *higher* form and a correspondingly more developed consciousness of the gross world; and the soul, therefore, has to assume higher and higher forms (like metal, vegetable, worm, fish, bird and animal) until at last it assumes a human form, in which it develops *full consciousness* (in all the aspects of knowing, feeling and willing) of the gross world.

The manner in which *sanskaras* result in the evolution of consciousness and the corresponding form has a useful analogue in ordinary experience. If a man has the desire to act the part of a king on the stage, he can only experience it by actually putting on the garb of a king and going to the stage. The same is the case with other aspirations and desires, which can only be worked out and fulfilled by bringing about an actual change in the entire situation and the medium through which the situation can be adequately experienced. The parallel is very suggestive in understanding the driving force of evolution, which is *not mechanical but purposive.*

The sanskaras are not only responsible for *the evolution of the form* (body) and the kind of consciousness connected with it, but they are also responsible for *the riv-*
Identification with the Form *etting of consciousness to the phenomenal world.* They make emancipation of consciousness (*i.e.*, the withdrawal of consciousness from the phenomenal world to the soul itself) impossible at the subhuman stage and difficult at the human level. Since consciousness clings to the previous *sanskaras* and experience of the phenomenal world is conditioned by the use of an adequate form (body) as a medium, the soul at every stage of evolution,

comes to *identify itself with the form* (e.g., stone, metal, vegetable, animal, etc.). Thus the soul, which is, in reality, Infinite and formless, comes to experience itself as finite, and thinks of itself as being a stone, metal, vegetable, worm, fish, a bird or an animal, *according to the degree* of the development of consciousness; and finally, *while experiencing the gross world through the human form, the soul thinks that it is a human being.*

The soul develops *full* consciousness in the human form, and therefore there is no need for any further evolution of the gross form (body). The evolution of forms,

Re-incarnation and the Law of Karma therefore, comes to an end with the attainment of the human form; and to experience the *sanskaras* cultivated in the human form, the soul has to *re-incarnate* again and again in the human forms. The innumerable human forms, through which the soul has to pass, are determined by the Law of Karma, or the nature of its previous *sanskaras* (*i.e.*, according as the *sanskaras* are of virtue or vice, happiness or misery). During these lives, the soul, which is eternal, *identifies itself with the gross body*, which is destructible.

While developing full consciousness of the gross world in the human form, the soul *simultaneously* develops the subtle and the mental bodies; but, as long as its con-

The Subtle and the Mental Bodies consciousness is confined to the gross world alone, it cannot use these bodies *consciously* in wakefulness. It becomes conscious of these bodies and the corresponding worlds only when its full consciousness turns *inwards, i.e.*, towards itself. When the soul is conscious of the subtle world through the subtle body, it identifies itself with the subtle body, and when it is conscious of the mental world through the mental body, it identifies itself with the mental body, just as when it is conscious of the gross world through the gross body, it identifies itself with the gross body.

The homeward journey of the soul consists in freeing itself from the illusion of being identical with its bodies—gross, subtle and mental. When the attention of the soul turns towards self-knowledge and self-realisation, there is a gradual loosening and disappearance of the *sanskaras*, which keep consciousness turned towards and rivetted to the phenomenal world. *The disappearance of the sanskaras proceeds side by side with the piercing through the veil of the cosmic illusion*, and the soul not only begins to transcend the different states of the phenomenal world, but begins to know itself to be different from its bodies. The Path begins when the soul tries to find itself and turns its full consciousness towards Truth (God).

At the first stage, the soul becomes totally unconscious of its gross body and of the gross world, and experiences the *subtle* world through the medium of its subtle body, with which it identifies itself. In the second stage, the soul is totally unconscious of its gross and subtle bodies and also of the gross and subtle worlds and experiences the *mental* world through the medium of its mental body, with which it now identifies itself. At this stage, the soul may be said to be *face to face with God or the Over-soul*, which it realises as being Infinite. But though it recognises the Infinity of the Over-soul which it *objectifies* it looks upon itself as being finite because of its identification with the mind or mental body.

Thus, we have the *paradox* that *the soul, which, in reality, is Infinite, sees, its Infinite state, but still continues to regard itself as finite, because while seeing it, it looks upon itself as the mind*. It imagines itself to be the mind and looks upon the object of the mind as the Over-soul; and further, it not only entertains the longing to be one with the objectified Over-soul but also tries hard to fulfil that longing.

In the third stage, the full consciousness of the soul is drawn even still further inwards (*i.e.*, towards itself) and it

ceases to identify itself even with the mental body. Thus, in the third and the last stage, (which is the **The Goal** goal), the soul *ceases to identify itself with any of the three bodies*, which it had to develop for evolving full consciousness; and now it not only knows itself to be formless and beyond all the bodies and worlds, but also realises, with full consciousness, its own unity with the Over-soul, which is One, Indivisible, Real and Infinite. In this realisation of the Truth, it enjoys Infinite Bliss, Peace, Power and Knowledge, which are characteristics of the Over-soul.

In the beginning, the soul was unconscious of its identity with the Over-soul, and hence, though a part and parcel of the Over-soul, it could not realise its own identity with it or experience Infinite Peace, Bliss, **Summary** Power and Knowledge, because it had not evolved consciousness. Even after the evolution of consciousness it cannot realize the state of the Over-soul (although it is all the time in and with the Over-soul) because its consciousness is confined to the phenomenal world owing to the *sanskaras* connected with the evolution of consciousness. Even on the Path, the soul is not conscious of itself, but it is conscious only of the gross, subtle and mental worlds, which are its own illusory shadows. But at the end of the Path, *the soul frees itself from all sanskaras and desires connected with the gross, subtle and mental worlds ; and it becomes possible for it to free itself from the illusion of being finite, which comes into existence owing to its identification with the gross, subtle and mental bodies*. At this stage, the soul completely transcends the phenomenal world and becomes *self-conscious and self-realised*. For attaining this goal, the soul must retain its full consciousness and at the same time know itself to be different from the *Sharira* (gross body), *Prana* (subtle body, which is the vehicle of desires and vital forces) and *Manas* (mental body, which is seat of the mind), and also as being *beyond* the gross, subtle and mental worlds.

The soul has to gradually emancipate itself from the illusion of being finite by (1) *liberating itself from the bondage of the sanskaras*, and (2) *knowing itself to be different from its bodies—gross, subtle and mental*. It thus annihilates the *false ego* (i.e., the illusion that 'I am the gross body; I am the subtle body or I am the mental body'). While the soul thus frees itself from its illusion, it still retains full consciousness, which now results in self-knowledge and realisation of the Truth. *Escaping through the cosmic illusion and realizing with full consciousness, its identity with the Infinite Over-soul is the goal of the long journey of the soul.*

Meher Baba

on

The Types of Meditation

Part V

SPECIALISED MEDITATIONS WHICH ARE PERSONAL

IT was seen in Part III that Specialised Meditation is of three kinds: (i) Meditation concerned with the *objects* of experience, (ii) Meditation which is concerned with the *subject* of experience and (iii) Meditation which concerned with *mental operations*. These three *kinds of meditation are mostly intertwined with each other*, because the subject of experience, the objects of experience and the different mental operations, which arise as a result of their interaction, are all inextricably interwoven with each other. So, these three kinds of meditation are not sharply defined or exclusive; but they often overlap each other. Thus, meditation, which is concerned with the objects of experience, may often have a reference to the subject of experience and also to the diverse mental operations involved

in it; meditation, which is concerned with the subject of experience, may often involve reference to the diverse mental operations and the objects to which these mental operations are directed; and, meditation, which is concerned with the diverse mental operations, may often involve reference both to the subject and the objects of experience. Yet, each kind of meditation, in a way, remains distinct because of the *predominance* of some factor. Thus, the first kind of meditation remains predominantly concerned with the *objects of experience*; the second kind of meditation remains predominantly concerned with the *subject of experience*; and, the *third* kind of meditation remains predominantly concerned with the diverse *mental operations*.

These three kinds of meditation can each be further subdivided into numerous specific forms of meditation, according to the nature of the content of the meditation

The Table of Enumerative Classification and according to the manner, in which it is conducted. Out of these numerous forms of Specialised Meditation only those, which are *representative* or *important*, need special mention. Thus, *twelve* forms of Specialised Meditation have been mentioned in the *Table of Enumerative Classification*.

*The Table of Enumerative Classification
of the Forms of Specialised Meditation*

A	Meditation concerned with the <i>objects</i> of experience	1	Meditation on the Divine Qualities of the Master.	FORMS OF PERSONAL MEDITATION	
		2	Concentration on the <i>Form</i> of the Master.		
		3	The Meditation of the <i>Heart</i> .		
		4	The Meditation of <i>Action</i> .		
	B	Meditation concerned with the <i>subject</i> of experience	5	Meditation regarding the numerous forms of manifested life.	FORMS OF IMPERSONAL MEDITATION
			6	Meditation regarding one's own bodies.	
			7	Meditation on the <i>Formless and Infinite aspect of God</i> .	
C	Meditation concerned with <i>mental</i> operations	8	Quest for the <i>Agent</i> of Action.	FORMS OF IMPERSONAL MEDITATION	
		9	Considering oneself as the <i>witness</i> .		
		10	Writing down thoughts.		
		11	Watching mental operations.		
		12	Making the mind <i>blank</i> .		

It should be noted that out of these twelve forms of Specialised Meditation, mentioned in *the Table of Enumerative Classification*, the first four are forms of *Personal Meditation* and the remaining

Personal Meditation and Impersonal Meditation

eight are forms of *Impersonal Meditation*. (See the Table of Enumerative Classification). Meditation is personal, when it is concerned with a person; and meditation is impersonal, when it is concerned with (a) aspects of human personality or (b) something which falls outside the range of human personality, as it is usually understood. The forms of Specialised Meditation, which are personal, will be individually explained within this Part; and, the forms of Specialised Meditation, which are impersonals, will be individually explained in Part VI.

Personal Meditation has some clear advantages against Impersonal Meditation. For the beginners, Personal Meditation is easy and attended with joy; while Im-

Special Advantages of Personal Meditation

personal Meditation is often found dry and difficult, unless one has a special aptitude for it. Moreover, forms of Impersonal Meditation are mostly disciplines for the mind or the intellect; but, the forms of Personal Meditation are not only disciplines for the mind or the intellect but also draw out the heart. In spiritual perfection, the mind and the heart have to be both fully developed and balanced; therefore, Personal Meditation, which helps the development and the balancing of the mind and the heart, has special importance. Impersonal Meditation is really fruitful and effective, when the aspirant has been duly prepared through forms of Personal Meditation.

Personal Meditation is directed towards *persons who are spiritually perfect*. Just as a man, who admires the character of Napoleon and constantly thinks about him, has a tendency to become like him, an aspirant, who admires some spiritually perfect person and constantly thinks about him, has a tendency to become spiritually perfect. A suitable object

of personal meditation is to be found in a *living Master or Avatar* or in *the Masters and Avatars the past*; but, it is important to have as an object of personal meditation a person, who is spiritually perfect. *If the person, who is selected for meditation, happens to be spiritually imperfect, there is every chance of his frailties percolating into the mind of the aspirant, who meditates upon him*; but, if the person, who is selected for meditation, is spiritually perfect, the aspirant has taken to a safe and sure path.

Personal Meditation is Directed towards Persons who are Spiritually Perfect

Personal meditation, often, begins by the admiration which the aspirant spontaneously feels for some divine quality, which he sees in the Master. *By allowing the mind to dwell upon the divine qualities, expressed in the life of the*

Meditation on the Divine Qualities of the Master

*Master, the aspirant imbibes them into his own being.*¹ Ultimately, the Master as he exists for himself, is beyond all qualities—good and bad; he is not bound by them. But, the qualities, which he exhibits, while interacting with life around, are all different aspects of divinity in action; and, the expression of divinity, through qualities, becomes a medium of helping those who are appreciatively responsive to them. Appreciation of the divinity, perceived in the Master, gives rise to forms of meditation, in which the aspirant constantly and strenuously thinks of the Master, as being an embodiment of qualities like Universal Love or Complete Detachment, Ego-lessness or Steadfastness, Infinite Knowledge or Selfless Action. Sometimes, the mind may dwell upon such qualities, in their separateness; and sometimes, it may dwell upon them in combinations, which reveal their inter-relatedness. This form of meditation is very valuable, when it is spontaneous; *it then leads to a greater understanding of the Master and gradually remoulds the aspirant into the likeness of the Master, thus*

¹ Meditation No. 1 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification*.

contributing towards his self-preparation for the realisation of the Truth.

Dwelling upon the qualities of the Master often facilitates *concentration* on the *Form* of the Master.² In this form of meditation, the aspirant is aware of the spiritual

Concentration on the Form of the Master perfection of the Master and spontaneously fixes itself upon the Form of the Master, *without analysing his spiritual perfection in any of its component qualities*. However, though these qualities are not separately revived in the mind, all that the aspirant may have understood of them (through the preparatory meditation concerned with the diverse qualities of the Master) constitutes the *implicit* background of such one-pointed concentration and contributes towards its efficacy and value. This form of meditation involves complete identification of the Master with the spiritual ideal.

Complete identification of the Master with the spiritual ideal is responsible for removing such barriers as might exist between the aspirant and the Master. This

The Meditation of the heart gives rise to the release of unrestrained love for the Master and leads to the *meditation of the heart*,³ which consists in constant thinking about the Master with uninterrupted flow of limitless love. Such love annihilates the illusion of separateness, which seems to divide the aspirant from the Master; and, it has in it a *spontaneity, which is hardly paralleled by other forms of meditation*. Meditation of the heart is, in its final stages, accompanied by unbounded joy and utter forgetfulness of the self.

Love for the Master leads to increasing identification of the aspirant with the Master, so that the aspirant desires to

² Meditation No. 2 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification*.

³ Meditation No. 3 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification*.

live in and for the Master and not for his own narrow self;

Modes of the Meditation of Action and, this leads to the *Meditation of action*.⁴ The initial modes of the meditation of action usually take the following forms. (a) The aspirant *mentally offers to the Master all that is in him*, thus renouncing all that is good in him as well as all that is evil in him; this frees him from the good as well as the bad ingredients of the ego and helps him, not only in *transcending these opposites*, but also in *finding a lasting and true integration of being in the Master*. (b) The aspirant volunteers himself in the service of the Master or his cause. Doing work for the Master in the spirit of selfless service is as good as meditation. (c) The aspirant does not allow the ego to feed upon any of his actions—small or great, good or bad. He does not think 'I do this'; but, on the contrary, he systematically develops the thought that, through him the Master is really doing all that he does. For example, when he looks, he thinks 'The Master is looking'; when he eats, he thinks 'The Master is eating'; when he sleeps, he thinks 'The Master is sleeping'; when he drives a car, he thinks 'The Master is driving the car'; even when he may happen to do something wrong, he thinks 'The Master is doing this'. Thus, he completely relinquishes all agency for his action; and all that is done by him is brought into direct reference to the Master. This automatically and necessarily involves and entails *determination of each action in the light of the spiritual ideal as seen in the Master*.

The four forms of personal meditation on the Master represent the four main *ascending stages*: (i) *perceiving* the spiritual ideal in the Master, (ii) *concentrating* upon the Master as an embodiment of spiritual ideal, (iii) *loving* the Master as a manifestation of the spiritual ideal, and (iv) *expressing* the spiritual ideal, perceived in the Master, in one's own life. Personal medi-

Meditation No, 4 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification*.

tation on the Master, in its different forms, ultimately contributes towards the release of *creative life of spiritual fulfilment*. Meditation on the Master is a meditation on *the living ideal* and not on the bare conception of perfection; it, therefore, generates that dynamic power, which eventually enables the aspirant to bridge over the gulf between theory and practice and unify the spiritual ideal with actual everyday action, in his own life. *To live the life, which is inspired and illumined by the spiritual ideal, as embodied in the Master, is the elimination of all the forms of Personal Meditation.*

Meher Baba

on

The Types of Meditation

Part VI

SPECIALISED MEDITATIONS WHICH ARE
IMPERSONAL

PART V was devoted to explanatory comments on those Specialised Meditations which are personal. This part will be devoted to the explanation of those Specialised Meditations, which are impersonal. It might be recalled that meditation is personal, when it is concerned with a person; and meditation is impersonal, when it is concerned with (a) aspects of personality or (b) something, which falls outside the range of human personality, as it is commonly understood. In the *Table of Enumerative Classification*, given in Part V, the first four forms of meditation are personal; and the remaining eight forms of meditation are impersonal. Like the forms of personal meditation, the forms of impersonal meditation also individually deserve separate explanatory comments.

The interest and attention of man has a tendency to be riveted on his own bodies or other forms independently of the

spirit, which they manifest. This leads to illusions, entanglements and other complications; and hence arises the need for a type of meditation, which, enables the aspirant to cultivate a *correct perspective* about the real status and meaning of the numerous forms and to develop a *right attitude* to them.¹ This type of meditation consists in getting established in the constant habit of *regarding all forms as being equally the manifestations of the same one all-pervading life and as being nothing in themselves, in their separateness*. This type of meditation is contributory to *disentanglement from the world of creation*; and it furthers the cultivation of the highest type of *universal love, which regards the whole of humanity and other living creatures as members of an indivisible whole*.

But the type of meditation, which is concerned with the numerous forms of manifested life, remains incomplete unless it is supplemented by another type of meditation which is concerned with one's own body.² One's own body—gross, subtle or mental—is, like bodies of others, a form of the one all-pervading life; but consciousness get fixed to one's own bodies by *an attachment which is so deep that it identifies itself with them*. Continued thoughts of detachment concerning one's own body helps emancipation of consciousness and the dawn of true self-knowledge; and meditation of this type is very fruitful for the aspirant. The gross, the subtle and the mental bodies are all then regarded as cloaks, which one might put on or put off.

The type of meditation, which is concerned with the numerous forms of manifested life and the type of meditation

¹ Meditation No. 5 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification* (Part V).

² Meditation No, 6 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification* (Part V).

which is concerned with one's own bodies, are both preparatory to the form of impersonal meditation,³ in which (a) an effort is made to *withdraw* consciousness from all the numerous forms of manifested life as well as from one's own bodies—gross, subtle or mental, and (b) to *centre consciousness on the formless and infinite aspect* of God. **Meditation on the Formless & Infinite Aspects of God** This form of impersonal meditation has, in the initial phases, to avail itself of some *symbols of infinity*. It is actually more helpful to start with some *image* which suggests and signifies infinity than to start with the *abstract idea* of infinity. The mind may be made steady on the image, of sky, ocean or vast emptiness; but, when once a particular chosen, the aspirant should stick to it throughout the period of meditation and not allow it to be replaced by another image. Out of these symbols of infinity complete and unlimited emptiness is difficult to imagine; but it turns out to be the best symbol if one can successfully bring it before one's mind. Even when unlimited emptiness is used for signifying infinity, the aspirant is not, in this form of meditation, supposed to arrive at complete blankness of the mind. Complete blankness involves the cessation of all mental activity and having absolutely no thoughts or ideas; but, in this form of meditation, the mind tries to understand and realise the formless and infinite aspect of God by means of a significant symbol.

There is an important variety of this impersonal form of meditation, in which the infinity, which one imagines, is not mentally externalised as if it were an unlimited stretch of something *outside* the aspirant. It is more helpful to picture the infinite as being *within* the aspirant. After picturing infinity within, the aspirant should give to himself the strong auto-suggestion about his identity

Picturing the infinite as being within

³ Meditation No, 7 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification* (Part V).

with the infinite by mentally repeating, 'I am as infinite as the sky within' or 'I am as infinite as the ocean within,' or 'I am as infinite as the emptiness within'. It may even be more useful to use the bare formula, 'I am the Infinite within' and while mentally repeating this formula, to grasp and realise the significance of infinity through the image which has been chosen. It is not necessary to repeat the formula in so many *words*; it is enough to cling to the *thought* expressed in the formula.

The 'I am infinite' meditation may lead to the merging of the aspirant into the formless and infinite aspect of God. Some aspirants merge so completely that even if swarms of mosquitoes pass by them they do not hear them. Some aspirants might become restless or might be easily disturbed. They should not keep worrying about lack of success in meditation but should tenaciously persist whether they experience merging or not. A relaxed position is helpful for merging; but a final merging is impossible except through the help of the Master.

The forms of meditation which have been so far explained, are predominantly concerned with the impersonal *objects* of experience; but some impersonal, forms of meditation are concerned with the *subject* of experience.

**Quest for the Agent
of Action**

One such important form of meditation consists in ceaselessly pressing the query, 'Who is it that does all these things?'⁴ The aspirant finds himself thinking thoughts like, 'I sleep,' 'I walk,' 'I eat,' 'I talk,' 'I see, hear, touch, taste and smell,' 'I think, feel and desire,' etc. Now the searching question with which this form of meditation is concerned, is "WHO IS THIS 'I'?". *The soul does not experience any of these things*. The soul does not sleep, walk, eat or talk, see, hear, touch, taste or smell, think, feel or desire; then who is their agent? The *source* of all these activities has

⁴ Meditation No. 8 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification* (given in Part V).

to be discovered and the mystery of all life has to be explained.

There is a power that does all these things; and one must *know* himself to be different from the power and be able to use it with detachment. The aspirant *thinks* that he walks; it is really his *body* that walks. The aspirant *thinks* that he sees, hears, thinks, feels or desires; it is really his *mind* which does all these things through some convenient medium. *As soul, the aspirant is everywhere and really does nothing.* But it is not enough to think that as soul he is everywhere and really does nothing ; he must *know* this.

Knowledge of the soul may also be aimed at through a slightly different form of meditation (about the *subject* of experience), in which the aspirant tries to realise

**Considering One-
self as the Witness** himself as merely a *witness of all physical and mental happenings.*⁵ After a person wakes from his dream, he realises that he was not a real *Agent* of the actions in the dream but that he was merely a *Witness* of these actions. If the aspirant consistently and persistently cultivates the habit of considering himself as being nothing but a witness of all the physical and mental happenings, which he experiences in wakefulness as well as in dreams, he soon develops *utter detachment*, which brings freedom from all the worries and sufferings connected with worldly events. This form of meditation is intended to lift the aspirant *out of the bonds of time* and to secure for him an immediate relief from the fret and the fever, connected with the diverse expressions of limited energy. *As a witness, the soul remains aloof from all events in time; and the results of actions do not bind it.* All this has to be *experienced* and not merely thought of.

The forms of meditation, concerned with the subject of experience, however, suffer from the handicap that *the true*

⁵ Meditation No. 9 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification* (given in Part V).

subject of experience can never be the object of thought or meditation, in the ordinary sense; these forms of meditation, therefore, can at best take the aspirant very close to self-knowledge, which can only dawn, in its full glory, when the domain of the mind is completely traversed. Some impersonal forms of specialised meditation are, therefore, concerned with mental operations; and they ultimately aim at making the mind still.

One of the requirements of acquiring control over thoughts is to become fully conscious of what they are. They have to be attended to before they are controlled.

Writing down Thoughts ordinary introspection it is often not possible for the beginner to devote adequate attention to all the shadowy thoughts, which pass through his mind. It is, therefore, helpful for the aspirant occasionally to write down all his thoughts⁶ as they come and then to inspect them carefully at leisure. This process is different from writing planned articles. Thoughts are here left without any direction or restraint and are allowed to appear as they come, so that even repressed elements from the subconscious mind have an access to the conscious mind.

In a more advanced stage, an intensive awareness of mental processes can take place while thoughts appear in consciousness and writing becomes unnecessary. The

Watching Mental Operations watching of mental operations⁷ should be accompanied by critical evaluation of thoughts. Thoughts can not be controlled except through the sense of their value or lack of value. When the diverse types of thoughts, which assail the mind, are critically evaluated, and the internal stirrings of *sanskaras* are faced, understood and

⁶ Meditation No. 10 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification* (given in Part V).

⁷ Meditation No. 11 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification* (given in Part V).

taken for what they are worth, the mind is freed, from all obsessions and compulsions in relation to them.

A way is thus prepared for the meditation, which attempts to make the mind blank.⁸ Making the mind blank is one of the most difficult things to achieve. *The mind is without any ideas during sleep; but consciousness is, then, in abeyance; and, if while consciousness is not in abeyance, the mind takes the help of any idea for becoming blank, the mind is really thinking about that idea and is far from being blank.* But this difficult trick of making the mind blank becomes possible by an *alternation* between two incompatible forms of meditation so that the mind is *caught between concentration and distraction*.

Thus the aspirant can concentrate on the Master for five minutes; and then, as the mind is getting settled on the form of the Master, he can get his mind steadied, for the next five minutes, in the impersonal meditation, in which the thought is 'I am Infinite'. The disparity between the two forms of meditation can be emphasised by contrast in respect of the other attendant circumstances. For example, in the meditation on the form of the Master, the eyes might be kept open; and in the impersonal meditation the eyes might be closed. Such alternation helps towards making the mind blank; but, if it is to be successful, both forms of meditation have to be taken seriously *at the time when they are intended* to be pursued. Though, after five minutes, there is going to be a change-over to another type of meditation, there should be no thought about it, when the first type of meditation is going on. There is no distraction unless there is concentration. But when a change-over is effected, there should be no thought of the first type of meditation. The distraction has to be as

⁸ Meditation No. 12 in the *Table of Enumerative Classification* (given in Part V).

complete as previous concentration. *When there is a quick alternation between concentration and distraction, mental operations are, as it were, cut through, by means of a saw, which goes backwards and forwards; and, the disappearance of the mental operations of all types is contributory towards making the mind absolutely still, without allowing consciousness to fall into abeyance.*

All thoughts, which appear in the mind of the aspirant, are forms of perturbation of the mind; and they have their origin in the momentum of stored *sanskaras*.

Truth is Reflected in the Mind which becomes Tranquil The perturbed condition of the mind can disappear only when the aspirant can so control his mind that all thoughts can, at will, be ruled out.

Only in complete internal silence is Truth found. When the surface of the lake is still, it reflects the stars; so *when the mind is tranquil, it reflects the nature of the soul, as it is.*

Meher Baba
on
The Types of Meditation

Part VII
SAHAJ SAMADHI

THE different forms of meditation which a man practises before consciously entering the Path, as well as the different forms of General and Special Meditation, which ***Sahaj Samdhi stands by Itself*** he resorts to, after becoming an aspirant, are all preparatory to the attainment of the highest state of *Sahaj Samadhi* or Spontaneous Meditation, in which the aspirant gets permanently established, when he realises the ultimate goal of life. The *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Siddha* or God-realised person is *continuous* with all the prior forms of meditation and is a *culmination* of them all; and it is, in a sense, the completion and fulfilment of all prior meditations. But it is, at the same time, in many ways, different in kind and belongs to an *entirely different order*.

The spontaneity or effortlessness of *Sahaj Samadhi* must be carefully distinguished from the pseudo-sense of spontaneity,

which is present in the usual 'meditations' of the worldly man, who has not yet entered the Path. The mind of the worldly man gets engrossed in the object of sense or in other worldly objects and pursuits; and he experiences no sense of effort in all the 'meditations' concerning these objects. His mind dwells upon them because of its natural interest in them and not because of any deliberate effort on his part. The sense of effort arises, not in allowing the mind to dwell upon these diverse worldly objects, but in trying to dissuade it from them. So the pre-spiritual forms of 'meditation' seem to have some similarity with the culminating *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Siddha*, in having a sense of spontaneity. But this resemblance between the initial phase of meditation and its final phase is only superficial, since *Sahaj Samadhi* and pre-spiritual 'meditations' are devided from each other by vital differences of great spiritual importance.

The sense of spontaneity, experienced in the pre-spiritual 'meditations' concerned with worldly objects and pursuits, is due to the interests created by *sanskaras*. *The pre-spiritual 'Meditations' are the working out of the momentum of accumulated sanskaras of the past; and they are not only far from being the expression of true freedom, but are actually symptoms of spiritual bondage.* At the pre-spiritual level, man is engulfed in unrelieved ignorance concerning the goal of infinite freedom; and, though he is far from being happy and contented, he gets so deeply identified with *sanskaric interests*, that he experiences gratification in their furtherance. But the pleasure of his pursuits is conditional and transitory, and the *spontaneity which he experiences in them is illusory*, because, through all his pursuits his mind is working under limitations.

The mind is capable of genuine freedom and spontaneity of action only when it is completely free from *sanskaric* ties and

interests, and this is possible only when it is merged in the state of the *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Siddha*. It is, therefore, important to note that though there may seem to be a superficial resemblance between the *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Siddha* and the pre-spiritual 'meditations' of the worldly man, this resemblance really hides the important difference between illusory spontaneity and true spontaneity, bondage and freedom, fleeting pleasure and abiding happiness. *In the pre-spiritual meditations, the movement of the mind is under unconscious compulsion, and in Sahaj Samadhi, mental activity is released under conscious and unfettered initiative.*

The different forms of Meditation, which characterise the life of the spiritual aspirant, stand *midway* between the pre-spiritual 'meditations' of the worldly man and the final *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Siddha*; and they constitute the joining link between them. When man's primary acquiescence in *sanskritic* interests is profoundly disturbed by set-back, defeat and suffering, or is shaken by an imparted spark of spiritual understanding, he becomes conscious of his bondage and the falseness of his perceptions; and *all the different forms of meditation, which are resorted to by the aspirant, arise as parts of his struggle towards emancipation from the bondage of the deceptive desires of the worldly man.* The forms of meditation, which are spiritually important, begin, when a person has become an aspirant or *Sadhaka*.

The meditation of the aspirant, in all its forms, is *deliberate*, in the sense that it is experienced as counter-acting some given instinctive or other tendencies inherent in the mind. The aspirant takes to different forms of meditation as a means to an end, *i.e.*, because he looks upon them as avenues to the Truth. They are not a working out of some given impulse, but are parts of an intelligent and deliberate

effort. But, though these forms of meditation may be deliberate to start with, the mind gradually gets habituated to them. The mind is also interested in the various aspects of the Truth, which the different forms of meditation try to cease upon; and this interest often makes even these forms of meditation increasingly spontaneous. In none of the meditations of a *sadhaka* is the element of spontaneity more pronounced than in those forms of personal meditation, which give scope for and require the expression of love. But, utter spontaneity and true freedom remain unattained until the goal of meditation is achieved; till then, there is usually a mixture of a sense of deliberateness and a sense of spontaneity. The reaching out towards spiritual freedom is throughout accompanied by a sense of effort, which persists in some degree, until all obstacles of false perceptions are overcome. *Though effort may vary in its intensity, it never disappears entirely except when it is swallowed up in the tranquillity of final attainment.*

In *Sahaj Samadhi* there is no effort because there are no obstacles to overcome or objectives to achieve; but there is the *infinite spontaneity of unfettered freedom and the unbroken peace and bliss of Truth-Realisation*. Progression towards *Sahaj Samadhi* consists in a transition from a state of unquestioned acquiescence in the momentum of *sanskaras* to the state of desperate struggle with *sanskaric* limitations and finally to the state of complete freedom, *when consciousness is no longer determined by the deposits of the past, but is active in the undimmed perception of the eternal Truth.*

The *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Siddha* is different from the Meditation of the aspirant, not only in respect of freedom and spontaneity of consciousness, but also in respect of many other important points. All the different forms of Meditation in which the aspirant might be engaged, directly or indirectly, aim at securing a complete merging of the mind in the infinite Truth. But they only succeed in partial merging

Only in Sahaj Samadhi is the Individual Mind merged

and fall short of the total annihilation of the individual mind. They represent varying degrees of approximation towards the spiritual goal, but not its realization. On the other hand, in *Sahaj Samadhi*, there is the realization of the spiritual goal, since the limited mind is completely annihilated and has arrived at a total merging in the infinite Truth.

The aspirant's Meditation, in its higher flights, does often bring to him a sense of expansion and freedom, as well as the joy and illumination of the higher planes; but, neither the sense of expansion and freedom, nor the illumination, which he experiences, are abiding in their duration, because, *in most cases, when the aspirant comes down from his exalted, state of Meditation, he is again what he was, viz., an ordinary person, who is held up in the unyielding shackles of sanskaric limitations.*

The incompleteness of the different *Samadhis* of the aspirant may be illustrated by the story of one *Yogi* from Gwalior. This *Yogi* was very greedy; but through *yoga*, he had mastered the art of going into *Samadhi*. One day he sat opposite to the palace of the Raja and, before going into *Samadhi*, thought "I must have a thousand rupees from the Raja". Then he went into *Samadhi* and remained in that state for full seven days. During this period he took no food or drink, but only sat in one place, completely wrapt up in *trance-meditation*. People took him to be a saint; and when the Raja came to know about him, he also went to have his *darshana*. The Raja went near the *Yogi* and happened to touch him on his back. But that light touch was sufficient to bring down the *Yogi* from his *Samadhi*: and, as soon as he woke up from his *trance-meditation*, he asked the Raja for a thousand rupees.

Just as a prisoner, who looks out of the window of his prison and gazes at the vast expanse of the sky, may get lost in the vision of the unlimited space, the aspirant who enters into

the trance-meditation, may temporarily forget all his limitations while he is immersed in the light and bliss which it brings. But, though the prisoner may have forgotten the prison, which holds him, he has not really broken through it: in the same way, *the aspirant, who is absorbed in the trance-meditation, has lost sight of the chains which hold him to the world of illusion: but he has not really broken through them.* And, just as the prisoner again becomes conscious of his bondage, as soon as he turns his gaze to his immediate surroundings, the aspirant becomes conscious of all his failings, as soon as he comes down to the normal consciousness. The ascending forms of trance-meditation may bring to the aspirant increasing occult powers; but, they do not bring to him the unending state of knowledge and bliss, which is continuously accessible, in the *Sahaj Samadhi*, to the *Siddha*, who has attained final emancipation by breaking through the chains of *Maya*.

There is still another important difference between the trance-meditations of the aspirant and the *Sahaj Samadhi of the Siddha*. The trance-meditation of the aspirant is usually *sustained by some phenomenal object*, capable of exercising irresistible attraction. The lights, colours, tastes, smells and sounds of the *subtle sphere* have their own part to play in helping the mind to withdraw itself from the worldly things, to which it may have been attached, and in alluring it into the lull of trance-meditation. Thus, the trance-meditation of the aspirant is not self-sustained; and it is mostly dependent upon the object, on which the mind fastens itself.

In contrast to this, *the Sahaj Samadhi of the Siddha is self-sustained and is in no way dependent upon any object of the mind.* The trance-meditation of the aspirant is, in some respects, like the *stupor of intoxicating drugs*. The intoxication of the drug lasts only as long as the effect of the drug lasts; so, the trance continues to exist as long as the mind is

under the sway of the object by which it is sustained. *Sahaj Samadhi*, which is free from the domination of the object, is, on the other hand, *a state of full wakefulness, in which there is no room for ebb and flow, waxing or waning, but which has the steadiness of true perception.*

The different forms of general and specialised Meditation resorted to by the aspirant are *useful and valuable within their own limits.* They must not be looked

**Those who are in
Sahaj Samadhi are
Proper Objects for
Meditation**

upon as having the same value for all or as being equally necessary to all. They are among the ways, which lead the aspirant towards his divine destination. For the few, who are in advanced spiritual state, most of the ordinary forms of meditation are unnecessary. In the same way, for those who are in direct contact with a God-realised Master, many of the special forms of meditation are often not necessary. It is enough for them to be under the guidance of the Master, and to have love for him. And, those rare beings, who have attained self-realization and are always in the state of *Sahaj Samadhi*, do not only not need any forms of meditation, but *themselves become the object of meditation* for the aspirants; for, they are then able to give their best help to those who meditate upon them.

Meher Baba

on

The Types of Meditation

Part VIII

THE ASCENT TO SAHAJ SAMADHI AND
ITS NATURE

WHEN the mind is rightly tuned to the object of meditation, it merges in the Truth and experiences *Sahaj Samadhi* or a state of spontaneous enjoyment of uninterrupted self-

Sahaj Samadhi is a Culmination of the Earlier Forms of Meditation knowledge, in which the aspirant loses his limited individuality, to discover that he is identical with God, who is in everything. The

Sahaj Samadhi must be looked upon as a *culmination* of the earlier forms of personal and impersonal meditation and not as their *product*,

All the forms of meditation, which are followed by the aspirant, as well as all the other spiritual efforts of his, have, in spite of their differences, only one aim, viz., to speed up the fruition of his longing to be united with the Infinite. When this union is effected, the *Sadhaka* (aspirant) becomes *Siddha* (one who has attained the goal). The union with the Infinite, which the *Siddha* achieves is referred to by the Sufis as '*Vas'*'. It is this state of union with God, which is described by Christ in the words: "*I and my father are one.*" Many have written about this highest state of consciousness; but it remains essentially indescribable. It cannot be expressed in words, and, therefore, it cannot be adequately explained. But, *though it can never be explained by any one to another, it can be experienced by every one for himself.* This highest state of the *Siddha* is called the state of *Sahaj Samadhi*.

To dwell in *Sahaj Samadhi* is to experience the *God-state*, in which the soul knows itself to be God, because it has shed all the limiting factors, which had hitherto contributed towards false self-knowledge. The *God-state* of the *Siddha* stands out in clear contrast with the *body-state* of the worldly man. The worldly man takes himself to be the body and dwells in the state, which is dominated by the body and its wants. His consciousness is linked up with the body and all the time centres round the body. He is concerned with eating, drinking, sleeping and the satisfaction of other bodily desires. *It is for the body that he lives; and it is with the body that he seeks fulfilment.* His consciousness cannot extend beyond the body ; and when he thinks of anything, it is in terms of the body. He cannot think of anything, which has no body or form. When he thinks of anything, there is always some reference to the form or body. *The entire sphere of his existence is comprised of forms;*

and the theatre, in which he lives and moves and has his being, consists of space.

The first step towards the *God-state* of *Sahaj Samadhi* is taken when the body-state is transcended. The shedding of the body-state means entering the sphere of existence, which is comprised of energy. The soul then dwells in the state, which is no longer dominated by forms or bodies. It is lifted up to the domain of energy. *Body or form is a sort of solidification of energy; and to rise from the world of forms to the sphere of energy amounts to an advance towards the more primary and purer state of being.* The *energy-state* is free from many of the limitations, which obtain in the world of forms. In this state, consciousness is linked up with energy and all the time vibrates in and through energy. In the energy-state, the eating and drinking of the body-state are paralleled by the absorption and assimilation of energy. The soul, at this level, acquires full control over energy. It is through the use of energy that he seeks fulfilment. But his actions, howsoever energetic, are still within the domain of spiritual limitation. He can see, hear and smell many things, which are inaccessible to him, in the body-state; and he can perform many things (*e.g.*, producing light in the dark, or living for thousands of years only on the drinking of energy), which seem to be *miracles* for those, who are in the body-state. But, the entire sphere of his existence is comprised of energy; and the round of his life is dominated by energy. All that he can think of or do is in terms of energy and is achieved by means of energy. The energy-state is the state of the spiritually *advanced Souls*; but, it is far from being the state of perfection, which expresses itself through the *Sahaj Samadhi*, of the *Siddha*.

The second important step towards *Sahaj Samadhi* is taken, when the soul transcends the domain of energy and enters the domain of the mind. *All energy is ultimately*

The Life of the Mind *an expression of the mind*; therefore the transition from energy-state to the *mind-state* constitutes a still further advance towards the *God-state* of *Sahaj Samadhi*. In the mind-state, consciousness is directly linked up with the mind. Here consciousness is in no way fettered by the domination of the body or energy; but is mind-ridden. The *saints*, who are in the mind-state, have full control over the body and energy; they can read and influence the minds of others and even raise the dead. However, the mind-ridden state is still within the domain of duality and illusion; and it has to be transcended before the attainment of union with the Infinite.

The entire advance, from the very beginning, consists in gradually curtailing and transcending the working of the individual mind. The mind is functioning

The Minds Veils the Truth even in the body-state and in the energy-state. But, *in the body-state, the mind thinks in terms of the body; in the energy-state, it thinks in terms of energy; and in the mind-state, it thinks in its own terms*. However, even when the mind thinks in its own terms, it does not yield the knowledge and the realisation of the Infinite, because it itself becomes the veil between its thought and the Truth. Though the mind may be unencumbered by the life of the body or the life of energy, it is still limited by separative consciousness; and it might be compared to a mirror, which is all covered with dust. The mind has, therefore, to be completely merged and dissolved in the Infinite, before it is possible to experience the *God-state* of *Sahaj Samadhi*. *Form is solidified energy; energy is an expression of the mind; the mind is the covered mirror of Eternity; and Eternity is the Truth, which has thrown off the mask of the mind*.

To throw off the limiting mind is no easy thing. The chief

difficulty lies in the fact that the mind has to be annihilated through the mind itself. One indispensable condition of

The Crossing of the Mind requires Intense Longing and Infinite Patience crossing the mind is the having of the most intense longing for being united with the Infinite Reality. But it is equally necessary to have infinite patience during the process of crossing the mind. One Master told his disciple that in order to attain the highest state, he has to be bound to a wooden plank, with his hands and feet thoroughly tied, thrown into a river, and then strive to keep his garments dry all the time. The disciple could not understand the inner meaning of this injunction. He went from place to place, until he came to another saint and asked him the meaning of the injunction given by the Master. The Saint explained that the injunction meant that in order to attain God, he has to long for the union with Him, intensely, as if he could not live another moment without it and yet to have the inexhaustible patience, which could wait for billions of years. If there is lack of intense longing for uniting with God, the mind lapses into its usual *sanskritic* working, and if there is lack of infinite patience, the very longing which the mind entertains sustains the working of the limited mind. *It is only when there is a balance between infinite longing and infinite patience that the aspirant can ever hope to pierce through the veil of the limited mind; and this combination of extremes can only come through the Grace of the Master.*

To dwell in *Sahaj Samadhi*, is to dwell in Truth-consciousness. This state cannot be grasped by any one, whose mind is working. The *God-state* is beyond the mind;

The Self-Knowledge of Sahaj Samadhi is sustained by Effortless Intuition for, it dawns when the limited mind disappears in the final union with the Infinite. The soul now knows itself *through itself* and not through the mind. The worldly man knows that he is a human being and not a dog; in the same way, in *Sahaj Samadhi*, the soul just knows

that it is God and not a finite thing. The worldly man does not have to keep repeating to himself that he is not a dog but a human being; he just knows himself to be a human being, without being required to make any special effort. In the same way, the soul, in *Sahaj Samadhi*, does not need any artificial inducing of God-consciousness through repeated auto-suggestions; it just knows itself to be God through *effortless intuition*.

He, who has *Sahaj Samadhi*, gets established in the knowledge of the soul. This knowledge is not something which comes and goes; it comes to stay permanently. In

The Life in Eternity the state of ignorance, the aspirant looks upon himself as a man or woman, as the agent of limited actions and the receiver of joys and pains; but, in the state of knowledge, he knows himself as the soul, which is not in any way limited by these things and which is untouched by them. Once he knows his own true nature, he knows it for good and does not any more get involved in ignorance. This state of God-consciousness is infinite in every respect; and it is characterised by unlimited understanding, purity, love and happiness. *To be initiated in Sahaj Samadhi is to arrive at the endlessness of the life in Eternity.*

Sahaj Samadhi has thus two forms: (1) *Nirvana* or absorption in divinity, and (2) *Nirvikalpa* state or divinity in expression. When consciousness is withdrawn entirely

Two Forms of Sahaj Samadhi from all the bodies and the world of creation, it leads to *Nirvana* or the *beyond state*; but, when consciousness is again made to function through the bodies without attachment or identification, it leads to *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* or the *Sadguru-state*, in which, though consciousness is attached to the bodies as instruments, it is detached from them inwardly by non-identification. The piercing of the mind amounts to the complete withdrawal of consciousness from the universe and its total absorption in

God. This is the state where the universe becomes a zero ; this is *Nirvana*. Most persons, who attain *Nirvana*, never come back again to the consciousness of the universe. Those few, who descend to the consciousness of the universe, also experience it as nothing but God, and remain constantly in the *Nirvikalpa* state. *Nirvikalpa* state means a life, where the mental activity of false imagination has come to an end, and where *the oscillations of the limited mind are all stilled in the discovery of the unchangeable Truth.*

The *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Nirvikalpa* state comes to the souls, who descend from the seventh plane. It belongs to the *Sadgurus* and the *Avatars*. The poise and harmony of this state remains undisturbed even while giving energetic response to the changing circumstances of life. He, who has this state, sees God everywhere and in everything; and he sees nothing but God. His God-state is, therefore, in no way toned down, while dealing with the mundane things of this world. While drawing the bow or using the sword in the battlefield, while flying in an aeroplane or talking to people, or while he is engaged in other activities, which require the closest of attention, he is still, every moment of his life, in the conscious enjoyment of the immutable Truth.

The state of *Nirvana* and the *Nirvikalpa* state are like the state of *Mukti* or *Moksha*, in representing the merging of the individual soul in God and in yielding the eternal bliss and infinite knowledge of super-consciousness. But *Mukti* or *Moksha* is experienced *after* the soul has dropped its bodies; and the state of *Nirvana* as well as the *Nirvikalpa* state can both be experienced *before* giving up the bodies. However, though the state of *Nirvana* and the *Nirvikalpa* state are like each other in respect of retaining bodies, and though they are also fundamentally the same in essence, there is a slight difference between the two,

When the soul comes out of the ego-shell and enters into the infinite life of God, *its limited individuality is replaced by unlimited individuality*. The soul knows that it is

The Difference between the State of Nirvana and the Nirvikalpa State

God-conscious and thus *preserves its individuality*. The important point is that individuality is not entirely extinguished; but it is retained in the spiritualised form. However, though the unlimited individuality of the soul is, in a way, retained in the Union with the Infinite, *it may remain eternally quiescent in the experience of self-contained divinity*. None comes back to the world-consciousness from this state of *Nirvana* or absorption. In very few cases, however, the soul, which has just entered the infinite life of God, *establishes its unlimited individuality through the release of dynamic divinity*. This is the *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Nirvikalpa* state.