
Sahaj Marg Study Group

Some Common Questions Answered

Set 1, Handout 4 (Radio Interview. Yatra. Volume I. Pages 62-74)

Q: What is the purpose of a human being, of human existence?

Master: The purpose is only Realization, or to realize one's own nature which is Divine.

PR: The purpose of human life, my Master says, is to realize the Divine nature in man, and his teaching is developed to make it possible in this life itself. You see, normally in yoga we take it as a means of evolution. Now it is true that evolution goes on for millions of years and, maybe, we will see the fruit or result of that evolution someday. But yoga is a short cut to achieve in this life itself what we will ultimately achieve. This is my Master's teaching.

Q: But to realize God, or the Divine nature, is that to *be* God?

PR: No, nobody can be God. There is only God and nobody other than Him can be God. But we can be God-like.

Q: What are we supposed to do?

PR: The basic thing is that mind is itself the vehicle through which we have to develop ourselves. The mind is also the instrument of degeneration or fall. According to our system of raja yoga called Sahaj Marg, my Master says the only way to do it is to give a new direction to the mind and orient it towards its proper goal, which is the divinisation of man. That is, what is necessary is a diversion of the mind from its present trend or tendencies to its proper trend.

Q: How do you think it will all end? It may sound silly, but how do you think it will end for civilization?

PR: Well, we find that civilization can have many meanings. For instance, here in the West you don't understand, by civilization, what we understand by the same word in the East. In the East, civilization means culture, it means many things. It is very clear. Everybody knows about it. But civilization, as it is understood today in the West, seems to mean the acquisition of material wealth, comfort, a happy life, enjoyment, sensual pleasures—things like that. Today this is what is going under the name and garb of civilization, whereas in terms of our understanding, my Master's understanding, civilization should mean divinisation.

Now, society is after all composed of individuals. You can't change society as a group, *en masse*. You can only change it by changing the individuals belonging to it. And when the bulk of the individuals are changed, we say that society has changed. So we start from the individual and try to change society. Society is not our aim. Our aim is always the individual. But when you change or transform individuals you cannot but help change society. So in a way this system of human transformation will cross national boundaries, social boundaries, racial boundaries, and ultimately it should

lead, if this is successful, to a world society which recognizes the real values of life, and what civilization should really mean.

Q: The real values of life—what are these?

PR: Well, I think there is already a change in the West away from the material values of life. There is a fumbling search to try to ascertain what are the real values of life. You know, only when people have become completely saturated with material life do they begin to realize that material values have no meaning. Why is there such a drastic change in social values and moral values? There is an effervescence of change in the whole of Europe today, and it is a negation of material life.

So the people themselves are coming to understand that these material values are not the real values. Then what are the real values? Well, we say it is divinisation; it is the possession of a balanced mind; it is the correct performance of one's duty. Or as my Master puts it, saintliness is the proper functioning of all one's faculties. Proper functioning, mind you! No exaggeration, no suppression.

Q: And now can you tell us something about transmission?

PR: Transmission is something we believe to be unique to our system. Master defines transmission as the utilization of Divine power or energy for the transformation of man. This is made possible by the discovery of his own Master that a human being **can** transmit to another provided he is in contact with the Ultimate source of all energy. And my Master is doing this work. And, apart from his doing it himself, he has made it possible for people called preceptors, teachers, trainers, to also transmit this same energy under his control, under his guidance and directions.

Q: Is it physical, this energy that is transmitted?

PR: It is not physical energy. We believe it to be the Ultimate energy which is not physical, which is not chemical—in short we don't believe it is matter at all. Of course science recognizes matter and energy as two divisions, but in energy you can have grosser energies and subtler energies. We believe what is transmitted to be the subtlest of all energies. You can call it Divine energy; you can call it Ultimate energy; or you can call it the subtlest consciousness. It can be called by many names but my Master's own words are, "Using the Divine Power for the transformation of man."

Q: How does this transmission work on you? Can you explain it a little?

Master: It brings out the Divine energy into you, and then it works. When Divine energy of that nature is coming into you it will function.

Q: But how does it work on *you*?

Master: You mean on myself?

Q: Yes.

Master: Well, in myself it brings me to the balanced state of mind. Unbalanced character is lost. These are the effects of the transmission.

Q: Can you feel it?

Master: Yes, if we are sensitive we can feel it. And suppose you do not feel it, the changes that occur will convince you of the effects of the transmission.

Q: Yes. I understand. And now may I ask you another question? It may be a silly question too, but can you explain who you are?

Master: I am what I ought to be! [Laughter]

Q: Yes, but can't you say something more?

Master: More and more, and less and less, these things have no value.

Q: Are you a guru, for example?

Master: I don't think like that. I think myself to be only one of the associates of my own associates.

Q: But I think that many people regard you as the guru or the Master.

Master: Well, they will have to use some word when referring to me. They prefer this word, which I don't like.

PR: I will clarify this. My Master once said that suppose you are the president of a corporation. You are a president to all the other employees, but to yourself you are not the president. To yourself you are Michel. Isn't it? So, no man is to himself what he is to others. To us, my Master is a guru of course. But what is he to himself? [Laughter] I mean this seriously. It is a serious subject.

Q: Do you recognize him as a Master?

PR: Yes, we recognize him as a Master. But one of my Master's important teachings is that the Ultimate guru or Master is only God. But there are people who function under the direct guidance of God, using the power of God. So they function in His capacity but they don't function as God. Like, for instance, we preceptors function on behalf of our Master, but I cannot say I am a Master. But certainly the work goes on; and maybe there are people to whom we are preceptors, but for myself I am a disciple of my Master, and for himself he is himself, and as my Master himself told you, he himself is what he ought to be.

Q: But I am what I am, how is it different?

PR: It is a good question. As you correctly said, we are what we are, but we are not yet what we ought to be. That is the difference.

Q: Is your Master an authority on yoga?

PR: On this particular yoga, yes. We consider him to be the authority. This system of raja yoga, called Sahaj Marg, which means the natural way of Realization, was discovered by his Master, also called Shri Ram Chandrajii, but belonging to a different place, Fatehgarh. He rediscovered—I say rediscovered because this power of transmission was there many many centuries ago according to my Master, but this faculty of transmission was lost—he rediscovered the possibility of transmitting the Divine energy into the hearts of persons so that they grow, not by their own power, which is after all limited however strong or powerful a person may be, but by the Divine energy which is poured into them. And my Master is now following this tradition, this practice. This is unique. And therefore it is correct to say

my Master is an authority on this yoga. It is a practical yoga. It is not philosophical or metaphysical. It does not need these foundations.

Q: The words 'freedom' and 'to be free'— what do they mean?

Master: Freedom—when you are free from freedom, then that is the real freedom.

Q: Free from freedom?

Master: Yes, that is the real freedom—when you are free from freedom.

PR: It can be explained like this. Real freedom is that state when you are not conscious of either freedom or bondage. Because when we say we are free, we associate it or compare it with a previous state of bondage. So it is a comparative state. But the absolute state knows neither freedom nor bondage.

Q: Master, why have you come to Denmark?

Master: To give a good thing to my associates here. They are also human beings. Otherwise we have a good field in India itself. But since this is a good thing, and the people here are also human beings, they should also partake of it. So I have come to Denmark.

Q: What do you feel about Denmark? I mean in relation to the rest of Europe?

Master: Every country is good provided the people follow the natural laws. If the people of Denmark follow the natural laws, then Denmark will be a better country than others.

Q: Yes, but haven't you got any predictions about Denmark?

Master: No, I don't think of it. If it comes automatically then it is correct. I do not think of it. This is not my work.

Q: No? But I have read some record of your visions in your book.

Master: Yes, when I was in that state I wrote about them. Or when the things come down direct to me, then I write about them. I do not try for visions or predictions.

PR: You know those were written when Master was in a state of super-consciousness, which he does not normally like to call or bring down upon himself for this sort of work, because there is the danger that it may degenerate into cheap forms of astrology or prediction. His fundamental work is the regeneration, the transformation, of man. While in the process of doing his work, sometimes he feels the super-conscious state coming on, and then he writes these things. It is not that he seeks for things to predict, or for ideas of the future. That is not done.

Q: But haven't you got any visions about Denmark?

Master: Well, now you have given me the idea. After some time you may ask me about it. [laughter]

Q: How did you begin this work that you are doing now?

Master: My Master ordered me to do it, and so I started it.

Q: Your Master? Who was it?

PR: His Master was also called Shri Ram Chandraji, and this Mission is named after him. It is a coincidence that both my Master and his own Master are called by the same name. Now in India, we have a system of offering fees to the teacher or guru when the course of study is completed. We call it the *guru dakshina*. Our Grand Master, we call him Grand Master, told my Master that his guru dakshina would be the propagation of this yoga throughout the world for the benefit of mankind. So that is why my Master is traveling over half the world, in his old age too. Originally this yoga was restricted to India, but as my Master has said again and again, yoga is not the monopoly of the Indians but is the birthright of all humanity. So he is now trying to help those who seek it. We offer it only to those who seek it—we don't thrust it on anybody.

Q: But how was your own origin with the Grand old Master? How was the beginning, I mean? How did you meet him?

Master: It was accidental. I had the idea that I must get a good Master, and I prayed for it, and I got my Master.

Q: When did you meet him?

Master: I think about forty-five years ago.

PR: About fifty years ago, when my Master was twenty-two years old, he came in contact with his Master.

Q: And what did he teach you all?

Master: What we are doing here now, that is what he taught us.

Q: But it is not every human being who can be a Master. Isn't it?

PR: No. But my Master was selected, from among all the disciples the Grand Master had, as the proper person to carry on this work. He was given the necessary power to do it. This is true of any hierarchy. For instance if you are a king your son becomes a king. It is by birth. Some things come by birth, by inheritance. Certain things come by transfer of power. Certain things come by endowment. I endow upon you property, and immediately you become a propertied man. In spiritual life or in spiritual hierarchies it is not necessary that the son becomes the spiritual descendent—I mean the blood son. There may be spiritual sons who carry on the tradition entrusted to them by their own Master.

Q: And what about karma, the laws of karma, reincarnation, how does that work?

PR: You can see from all the books that are published that karma is a very well discussed, and a much written about subject. Simply put, karma means the effect of the past on the present. I don't think we can dispute it. The dispute comes only when we talk of a past life or a future life. Certain religions don't believe in a future life. Certain religions believe in reincarnation.

Now there may be room for a certain logic to make it necessary that there was a past life. And once you accept a past life logically, a future life seems to follow, also logically. Karma really means the effect of past impressions arising out of our own actions. We do something, and that action leaves an impression upon us. This impression governs or conditions our future action.

The sum total of all such impressions put together is grouped under one word, 'karma'. In our Mission we call karma by another word, 'samskara'. It is not only the bad actions which lead to karma, it is also good actions. Good actions give rise to a good future, whereas bad actions give rise to a bad future. But our idea of spiritual development is to have no future life at all. I mean this sort of life, in the physical plane of existence. We don't want it at all. Nor do we seek to live in other planes. The idea is to be liberated.

Q: But what is good action, and what is bad action?

PR: Well, as traditionally understood. You know the general norms. For instance, charity is considered to be a good action. But we can take the meaning as traditionally understood. It doesn't make any difference.

Q: It doesn't make any difference? How? Does it not depend on the feeling you have of what is good and what is bad?

PR: I am telling you what karma really means. Karma means all actions put together—the impressions of such actions. Some people misunderstand karma as applying only to the effect of evil actions, let us say murder, robbery, rape, etc. But in India we believe that the sum total of all impressions constitutes karma. A particular act or action may be good according to you, it may be bad according to me—it does not matter. There is always a sum total of impressions.

Q: Yes, but an evil action can just as well be a good action.

PR: Well, that is something you can't debate here you know. It all depends on circumstances. For instance, you kill an enemy soldier in war. Under moral law it is bad, but under national and patriotic laws it is good. So it depends on from which level of human existence you are looking at a particular thing.

Q: Yes, but how does it work?

PR: The law always works from its absolute level, the highest level. The rest are our interpretations. For instance, take the case of conscientious objectors in the last war, people who refused to fight because it is evil. They were put in jail. So you can say that if you refuse to kill the enemy, you will go to jail. At least that would appear to have been the cause and effect relationship for those particular people.

Q: I was told that when you are trying to receive this transmission you have to meditate on the heart. Is that right?

PR: Yes, we meditate on light in the heart. My Master says that the heart is the most suitable for meditation because it is the heart that is the seat of life. It is also the seat of emotion. And, traditionally in all religions, God is supposed to be seated in the heart. There are other points for meditation but my Master says they have only limited effect, mainly physical, as against the total **spiritual** effect of human transformation that we seek in our Sahaj Marg Yoga.

Q: But isn't the point between the eyes more suitable?

PR: Well, it is certainly more popular and well known because even in the Bhagavad Gita that point is mentioned—the *ajna chakra*. But according to

my Master the ajna chakra is the point of distribution of power to the human system. So, by meditating on that point we may acquire power, but not spiritual growth. There is also another interpretation, that the ajna chakra is a point suited to, and meant for, the *sannyasi*, the ascetics who renounce life, but it is not suited for the householder.

Q: Master, what is your opinion about *sannyasa*?

Master: Sannyasa is not necessary.

Q: Why not?

Master: Because when they go to the forest they often think of their families, their children and so on. Then why should we go there? We should remain here, discarding what is happening, discarding attachment. There is no need to run away. When we can get God cheaply why should we go to all these troubles?

PR: There is another aspect to be considered. God cannot be **only** for those who renounce life. If God is in everybody, in everything, then surely God is for all of us. So if there is a way for the sannyasi, surely there must be as effective a way for the householder too!

Once somebody questioned my Master about celibacy. Is celibacy a necessity for spiritual progress? That is what he wanted to know. Very bluntly my Master said, "God is not a fool to create two sexes if one was enough." [Laughter]

Q: Are you able to see in a human being how far he has developed?

Master: Yes, as much as my work needs, that much I can see.

Q: Do you have any more incarnations left?

Master: Well, that I cannot answer. Only one who is not willing to take an incarnation can reply to that.

PR: What my Master implies is this. He has no objection to being incarnated again, or to not being incarnated again, as the Divine plan may need.

Q: But when a human being reaches a certain point is there not an end?

PR: You see, there are two ways of looking at this. We recognize two ways of rebirth. One is the karma tradition where you are reborn under the compulsion of your karma. You have no choice in the matter. You are reborn at a specific time, in a specific environment, under specific conditions, so that the future is worked out according to the foundation laid in the past. The others are the so-called liberated souls, Masters who descend into the physical plane of their own free will to help humanity to develop from time to time. Now I believe we are all compulsive reincarnations. But if my Master should reincarnate again, it would be purely voluntary. It becomes something on which karma has no bearing. So it is not possible to say whether he will reincarnate again or not, because it will depend on cosmic circumstances. If humanity needs his presence on the physical plane he may descend again, otherwise not.

Q: How do you select preceptors?

Master: When there are four or five things before you how do you select one from

them?

Q: Yes, I see. But why do you prefer one person to another?

Master: For qualities. If a man has good qualities he is preferred. A man can also be made to have good qualities.

Q: What kind of qualities do you mean?

Master: Sympathy, charity, service, thinking good thoughts—these are some.

PR: I will explain one thing to you, Michel. There are people in our Mission who are very highly developed but who are not preceptors. And there are preceptors who are practically on the first rung of the ladder of spiritual development. So a person's spiritual level has no direct bearing on his qualifications to be a preceptor. What I personally believe—you have heard what the Master has said—to be really necessary in a preceptor is dedication to the spiritual cause. If this is there, Master can create the other qualities by his power. I believe this dedication to be a fundamental quality in a preceptor.

Q: Do you feel any contact with the Grand old Master?

Master: There is contact always.

Q: How?

Master: In the way in which it should be! [Laughter]

PR: That is, spiritual contact. The Grand Master is no longer in the physical plane. He passed away into *mahasamadhi* in 1932. But there is continuous contact between him and my Master. We have seen it. My Master seems to receive guidance from him from time to time. He tells us about it. What the relationship is I don't know, because it is from one plane of existence to another.

Q: Have you any visions of how Western civilization shall end?

Master: The base will be changed. The base will become highly spiritual.

Q: But how shall it change?

Master: By following the method. By having good thoughts. I am telling you it is the work of the Divine. Some Divine hand is working for this change because some ten or fifteen years ago this was not the case. But I am feeling it here now, in Europe. Some change is taking place. The people are fed up with the life of materialism. So they naturally cling to that which has the base as spirituality.

Q: Is it all to be destroyed—I mean the West?

PR: No. No. It is not like that. In any endeavour those who co-operate are taken along, while those who oppose or do not co-operate are not taken along on the path. You may call this destruction, but it may be that they are transferred to another plane. So what does not co-operate with the Divine plan changes until it co-operates. This change you may call destruction, you may call it conversion. When you split an atom is the atom destroyed or is it converted? Both are correct. So what we normally call destruction may be conversion for its own good. A child is converted into a man. Is it destruction

of the child? It is a transition from one phase of human existence into another. And when the man becomes old his youth is destroyed, in a sense. But we don't consider this to be destruction because we see the transition from stage to stage. When we don't see, or cannot see, the successive stages in a transitional continuum, we perceive the end of each phase as destruction of that phase.