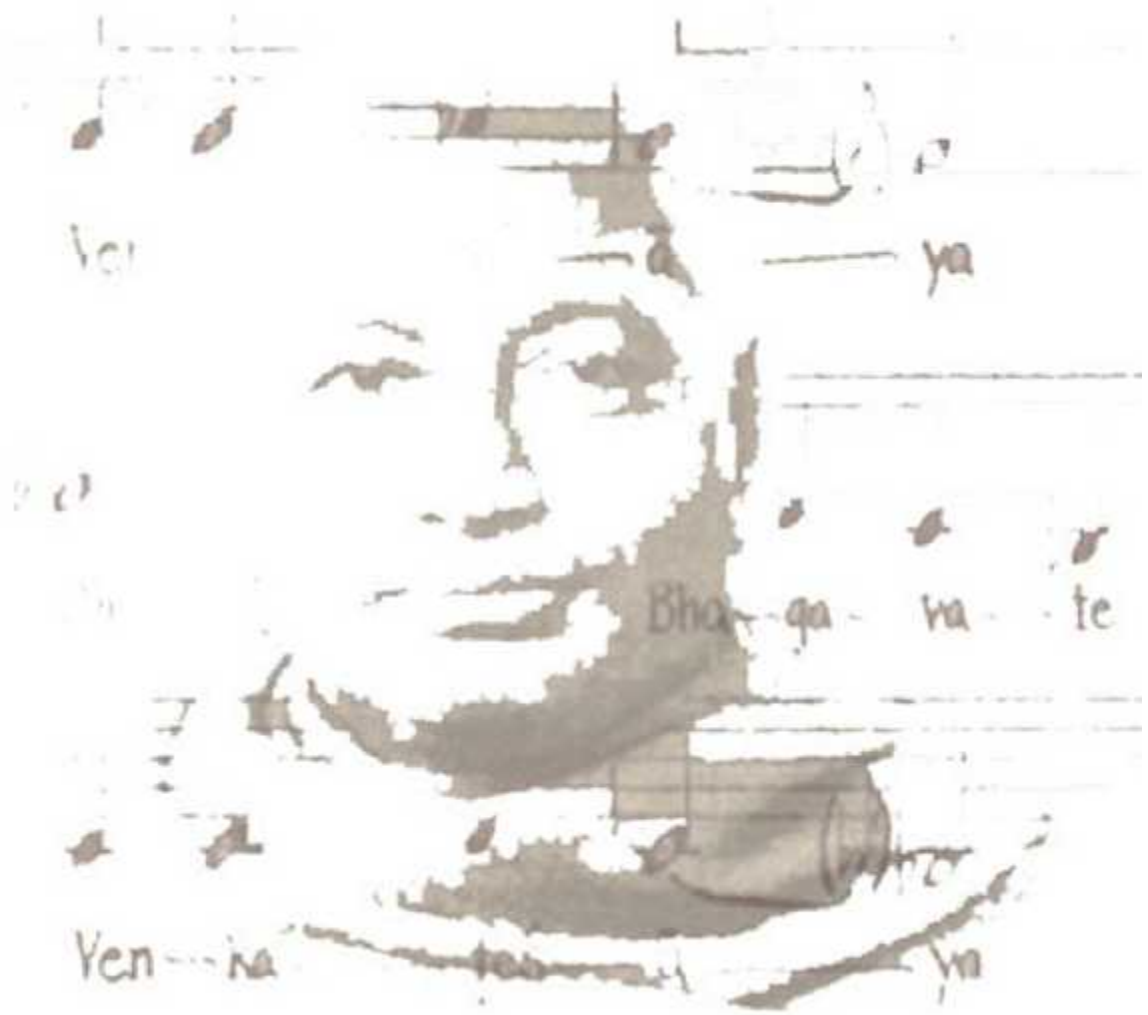


LECTURES ON
RAJA YOGA

(SECOND, REVISED EDITION)



By SWAMI VENKATESANANDA



Om Namah Venkatesaya
Om Namah Shivaya

Raja Yoga

Swami Venkatesananda

1964

published by The Chiltern Yoga Trust
PO Elgin 7180
South Africa

Raja Yoga

During my five-month stay in Madagascar early in 1963, the members of the Tsimisaramianakavy asked me to give them a few lessons in Raja Yoga. Every Sunday we used to assemble and study Raja Yoga.

As I mentioned during the classes themselves, the knowledge conveyed in these talks, has its source in the Lotus Feet of my Gurudev Sivananda, at which I humbly offer this booklet.

This is not a text-book for study at leisure, but a handbook which contains just enough material to help an eager student take up the practice of Yoga in earnest.

Mauritius, 3rd July 1964.
Swami Venkatesananda.

Contents

Blessings from the Vatican
Foreword
Introductory Prayers
1. Definition of Yoga
2. The Cause of Unhappiness
3. The Law of Karma
4. Need for a Guru
5. The five Divinising Agents
6. Aids to Yoga
7. The Reward of Virtue
8. Practical Way to Self-Purification
9. The Self, the World and God
10. Posture for Meditation
11. The Miracle of Life
12. Big Profit for Small Investment
13. Formation of New Healthy Habits
14. A Brief Analysis of Mental Modifications
15. The Mind-Stuff and its Control
16. The Yoga Attitude to God and Fellow-Man
17. The World Within You
18. Try these Mental Disciplines
19. A Glimpse of the Goal
20. Synthesis of Yoga
Concluding Prayers

Blessings from the vatican

I had the pleasure of meeting twice in Rome, at a few years' interval, the master of Raja Yoga Swami Venkatesananda. We conversed together on that which is our common quest: to seek for oneself, and to help man find the Divine. I could only admire how much we were in accord on many points, particularly on those concerning the Path, despite deep differences.

When the Swami asked me for a word of introduction for the reprinting of the books written by Him on Integral Yoga, I willingly accepted this invitation; and this is the purpose of the few words that follow.

We Christians learn in the Bible that God made us for Him and made us in His image, that this image is engraved like a seal on our heart, and that though this image has been veiled by sin, there is just enough revelation of it to orientate ourselves towards God, as the fulfilment of our existence and the absolute goal of our search for happiness. As St. Paul said, God has created us "to look for the deity, to reach it, if possible, as a blind groping person would" (Acts 17:27), and St. Augustine expresses His own experience as follows : "You have created us for You, Lord, and our heart remains restless until it rests in You." And, the Swami, speaking of the origin of Raja Yoga, tells us that it gushes simply from the hunger for God which each man feels : "When he hungers for God, he develops his own technique, and that is Yoga".

In fact, this pain of separation from God, this hunger for Him, is felt by all people, and each one has looked, in his own manner, for a remedy to this hunger. But India is, perhaps, the country where during the course of the past thirty centuries, incalculable generations of sages did not want to give their lives any goal other than this : viz., to search for the Path and its integral transmission, to obtain the peace of the heart by mastering the senses, to purify and simplify the spirit by the rejection of vain desires, and to concentrate the spirit in austerity. They also teach us, in their way, that "The Kingdom of God is within" (Luke 17:21), that you can get it by sacrificing all the rest (Matthew 13:46), and that "our eye should become pure so that our whole body is enlightened by it" (Matthew 6:22). If the points of departure and arrival of our research seem different according to our intellectual categories, in the view of God, Who sees the entire universe, there is unity. We know that the natural law, the Mosaic law, and the evangelic law, in perfecting one another, do not cancel one another, and remain fundamentally one-looking within ourselves, in order to reach Him, if possible, in Himself.

We should not be surprised by the analogies (which also illustrate the Path) to which the Swami resorts by citing the scriptures that he knows so well. It is possible (and helpful) for everyone to utilise the treasure of psychological and spiritual experience for his own progress, and to enable him to understand God better. Speaking of another Indian method of quest, which is Dhyana, or the Zen of the Japanese, a master of this discipline said to a Catholic missionary, who

wanted to expound Christian Zen as a method of spirituality more adapted to the Far East : "Zen is a method; it is like a railroad track on which you can launch all the trains that you want." One could say as much or even more, of Raja Yoga, the discipline of sages who have renounced everything to devote themselves solely to the Divine. These sages have noble and useful lessons to give, not only to the Christians of their own race, but also to all our modern societies, which see no more than the form and the technique, and seem to have forgotten the true reason for the existence of Man, which is the key to his happiness.

We would be mistaken, however, if we think that we shall find an easy way in Raja Yoga. As in the Christian spirituality, one obtains facility through a long and arduous struggle, by renouncing everything which is not the Absolute. But, then, as in our case, the initial struggle is compensated by the inspiration of continuously growing divine love.

To know all these ways, and to use them when necessary, is also a better way of understanding the deep fraternity of Man. It will promote mutual understanding, respect, and mutual help among the people. For this, too, let us be thankful to Swami Venkatesananda, for placing so excellently the noble treasures of Hindu spirituality within our reach, through His books published in our languages.

P. Humbertclaude.
Secretary-General, Secretariat for Non-Christians.
From the Vatican. June 11, 1970.

Foreword

Swamiji is intimately known to me. He has visited our ashram and has also spent some time with us. He is well-versed in Indian Philosophy. He is a true yogi, with an insight into the inner Self. He is a man of arts and a disciplined spiritual seeker.

Yoga should be practised by all men and women. It is not the exclusive property of any particular community, sect or country; it is a noble discipline, revealed by God and propagated by Seers. It transforms an aspirant, leading him to that ideal state of absolute peace, joy and bliss, by attaining which he looks upon his previous life as unreal as a dream. Though this book is meant for the modern youth, yet its subject - the technique of Yoga - is ancient, true and perfect. It would be impossible to introduce any new modification into it. Any attempt to modernise Yoga, just because it is an age-old system, will meet with failure. It will not admit of any new reforms, as it is beyond time. In spite of its being age-old, it is such a complete system that nothing can be added to or subtracted from it. Though ages have passed since, the science of Yoga was conceived and perfected, yet it is meant for all times, and deserves respect from all. Many modernised youngsters think that everything should be new in this new age. Regardless of the element of novelty in their outlook, whatever there is of importance seems to us to be old. The different directions - east, west, north and south - are the same today as they were ever before. The earth is also ageless. The art of cultivating foodgrains that we eat was developed ages ago. The structure of the human body is the same today as it was when it was first created - we cannot see anything new in it. The marks of masculinity or femininity have not changed. Changes may come about on the surface of life - fashions may change, but the basic components such as the hair, the skin, the cotton of which our clothes are made, are all old and unchanged. The elements of earth, water, air, fire and ether have remained the same right from the beginning of time. It is only we who are born now. The Gita and other Yogic scriptures have held that the soul is beginningless. Likewise Yoga is as ancient as all other fundamental features ; it remains the same today as it was before.

Yoga is a marvellous discipline, attended with a host of miraculous powers, big and small. There are eight constituents of Yoga - Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. Each of these promotes man's happiness. Pranayama (control of prana) and dhyana (meditation) are, however, most important. For the practice of these, a steady posture is essential. According to the saying, 'sariramadyam khalu dharma sadhanam', the body is a foremost means of achieving the highest good. What can a man achieve in the world, what inner happiness can he enjoy, if his body is not well-built, his muscles are without strength, his eyes without radiance, his voice is without power, if he cannot digest his food easily, or evacuate his bowels without medicine, if he cannot sleep without narcotic drugs. Therefore, a healthy body which is immune from disease, a pure and tranquil mind, and a perceptive intelligence, are of great importance for man. These blessings cannot be obtained

through factories, nor wealth, nor through disruptive politics. For their attainment, one has to turn to dedicated practice of Yoga.

There are some who harbour the wrong notion that Yoga is meant only for those who have renounced the world. It is unfair on the part of worldly people to appropriate all the objects of enjoyment for themselves, and to reserve Yoga for renunciates. Yoga must, as a matter of fact, be practised with reverence by all the worldly people - old and young, high and low. Just as a good bath, beautiful clothes, good food, and good health, saving for the future, each has his proper place in life. So also, we must give some place to Yoga. Just as we need a family doctor, a family pleader and a family adviser, similarly, we should have family Yoga. Daily practice of Yoga should matter as much to us as our daily earnings.

The strife which afflicts the world today, the injustice of man towards man, of country towards country, of party towards party, has arisen because our hearts are impure. The fire of Yoga purifies and strengthens our body, our mind, and our nervous system, and fills us with a new vitality, a new inspiration, which turns our attention towards our inner being or God. From this inspiration there arises a feeling of universal brotherhood which will ensure peace and equality in human society. He, who is afflicted with bodily weakness and mental dullness, is good for nothing, even in the worldly sphere. It is said, *nayamatma balahinena labhyah*, a weak person achieves nothing in the world. A weak nation, too, is equally ineffective. By strength I do not mean the strength or power of machine, but the strength of soul; as the nations, which rely heavily on gadgets, have not grown stronger; they are, on the contrary, degenerating and meeting with defeat instead of success.

If a man is just able to sit still in the lotus or some easy posture for an hour or two, his postural steadiness will purify all the 72,000 nerves, which constitute what he calls his body. When the nerves get purified, the vital force (*prana-shakti*) flows through them in a greater measure; with the result, one does not grow prematurely old, or rush to a physician every now and then. It is wrong, therefore, to think that the practice of Yoga is not meant for worldly people, that it is far-fetched.

In some way or other, Yoga plays a role in all the activities of the world. Take for example a painter. Can he paint the exact likeness of a subject without concentration of mind? Can a student gain proficiency in mathematics, or some other subject, without cultivating unwavering attention, i.e. the practice of Yoga in some form or another?

Yoga has been defined as "restraining the thought-waves, continuously modified in the mind." The idea carried by some people that a still mind is of no use is absurd. On getting tranquil, the mind becomes sharp and agile, and is endowed with artistic and poetic talents. By dint of such a mind alone, one can master difficult subjects, like engineering and medicine, or make one's mark in the field of learning and earn doctorate's degree. Without a strong mind, a man has little

value. Everyone, regardless of his age or status, should practise Yoga, as this practice is quite easy.

In the ancient times, the practitioners of Yoga, by their power of Yoga, could see with their mental eye, distant objects and sights which are seen today on TV or by a telescope; they could also hear with their subtle ear distant sounds which we hear in the present age over the radio. Such is the potency of Yoga. Yoga ensures that its seeker will never lose his peace of mind. It makes him active and dynamic. All men and women can practise Yoga with equal ease. They should remember that the Yoga was developed mainly for worldly people. For research in mathematics and all other subjects, a very keen and penetrating intellect is required, and Yoga sharpens the intellect greatly.

All the people long for happiness. For its attainment they make every possible effort; yet they do not find it. The idea that one can gain happiness from outer activity is merely illusory, as happiness does not lie there. You will understand it clearly from an example. Take the case of a fabulous millionaire. He is probably able to make several lakhs, by his hard work from morning till evening. But what is his condition at the end of the day? He is complaining of fatigue, isn't he? As the day's hard work has been too much for him, he would like to retire for sleep early. He puts all his income in a safe, removes even the most valuable adornments, takes leave of the outer world and goes to sleep. During deep sleep, he is poised in a place where there is no outer activity, no excitement of a dance, club life, the cinema house or some other distraction, where there is no food, no pleasing sight, nothing to acquire. Yet he covers himself with an ordinary sheet, and prefers the inactivity of sleep to anything else. If he is able to have a few hours of good sleep, he feels completely refreshed on waking up in the morning; all his fatigue has vanished! He feels a new energy, a new life coursing through his veins. He exclaims with delight, "Oh! What a wonderful sleep I enjoyed!" What I have just said is neither a myth, nor am I employing scriptural reasoning. This is a truth of every day life, experienced directly by every one that, whereas a day-long exertion produces fatigue, inactive and undisturbed sleep removes it. I call deep sleep the Yoga of sleep, if not the Yoga of meditation. Even though during sleep the mind does not attain the nirvikalpa state or contemplate God, yet it becomes inert, giving up all external activity. This state of inactivity of the mind, lasting just for a short while during sleep, injects a stream of new energy into all the senses, induces a fresh equilibrium, a fresh vitality in all the limbs, and imparts a fresh capacity for day-long work to make fresh evenings. This indicates the possibilities of Yoga, and turns our attention to the abode of repose. From this you can form some idea of the possibility of finding supreme peace within by calming the mind, by stilling all its thought-waves. Yoga should therefore be our family asset.

Neither does Yoga take us away from our near and dear ones, nor from our factories. It does not ask us to give up our earnings. It does not invite all sorts of diseases, acute or slight. That was why Lord Krishna directed Arjuna, 'tasmāt yogi bhavarjuna', 'Arjuna, you should become a Yogi'.

The ancient Yogis, while meditating, visited all the other higher worlds, like those of the moon, the deities and different heavens. They have described what they saw in their writings. We are today trying to see by mechanical devices what they did by Yoga. Yoga is indeed the closest and dearest friend of man. It regulates our daily life. All of us know how to sit; Yoga teaches us how to sit with greater ease and firmness. All of us take food; Yoga teaches us how to regulate it. Similarly, we learn from Yoga how to govern other activities, like sleep, waking, and so on.

Yoga can also be defined in scriptural terms as recovery of what has been lost. In other words, to bring back to us what we have lost, namely a strong body, a calm mind, and perceptive intelligence, is Yoga. Yoga is a sure method of transformation. Just as Kalpa Shastra (Indian alchemy) transforms copper into gold, similarly, Yoga elevates man from the human to the divine level. Every one should therefore invariably practise Yoga. No one should get scared by the term 'Yoga'. In simple words, Yoga means a disciplined mode of life - maintaining regularity in matters of food, relaxation and activity - keeping the mind focussed all the time on one object, namely, God or the Atman.

The aspect of Yoga which is called meditation, is of the greatest importance and glory. As an aspirant starts meditating with success, his inner Shakti is awakened. Besides, he comes to gain in course of time a new divine insight, by means of which he can get beyond the reach of suffering and sorrow. I have already said that Yoga helps to regain our lost paradise. It reunites us with the inner joy, the inner peace, and the knowledge of our innermost nature, which are at present inaccessible to us. It is regarded as the celestial cow and the divine tree which fulfill all wishes.

In times of yore, the Indian yogis achieved through Yoga what is considered to be impossible today. They rose to Godhood from jivahood. Our body is, as a matter of fact, constituted as proclaimed by the Yogic texts. It is a conglomeration of 72,000 nerves of varying sizes, which perform different functions, some controlling blood-circulation, some assimilation of food juices, some flow of prana and so on. It is prana which governs their activities. The prana gets divided into various parts which control all the bodily processes, like digestion of food, its division into different parts; carrying vital juices to different limbs at right times, making up the deficiency of a particular part of the body, or reducing overflow. Though prana is one, yet it gets divided into prana, arana, samana, udana, vyana, which get further subdivided into ten branches. The other five are called naga, kurma, devadatta, dhananjaya and krikari. Prana is the chief force in the body. It endows the foetus in the mother's womb with consciousness or life. When it leaves the body, the latter is considered to be dead or a corpse. Its strength, steadiness, and power, determine a man's strength, intelligence, radiance and valour. It makes even the inert and lifeless body active and dynamic with its vitality. When it combines with the mind, the latter will lose consciousness of happiness as well as misery, and also the power of understanding of self and of

others. Therefore, Prana is most important and deserves utmost respect. It has been many times glorified as God in the Upanishads: Prano brahmeti vyajanat, worship prana as God. Yoga is worship of prana; it is worship of God. Prak samvitprane parinata, the universal consciousness itself turns into prana. By the control of prana, a Yogi can easily achieve the eight major miraculous powers, and perform amazing miracles in the world. The truth is that all the activities of the universe, whether big or small, are governed by prana. It is by means of prana that we open our eyes or close them, that we speak through vocal chords and the tongue, that we evacuate our bowels, that we digest our food. Hence, the calmer, the steadier our prana is, the stronger, the more vigilant and radiant we shall be. It is necessary to steady the mind, so as to strengthen the prana. And steadiness of mind is what is called meditation. And meditation is only another name of Yoga. Dhyane dhyane svarupata, one can realise one's divine nature at any time through meditation. Meditation removes all the impurities of the inner man.

*Dhyanena papa suddhisca dhyanena vimalatmata,
Nijatmataiva dhyanena dhyanena paramatmata.*

So mighty is its power. It enables one to realise God in one's own soul.
A Seer has said,

*Yadi sailasamam papam vistirnam bahuyoganam,
Bhidhyate dhanayogena nanyo bhedah kadacana.*

Meditation enables a Yogi to make his mind clean and pure soon. It is very necessary. A seeker, with his mind purified by meditation, while sitting in one place, can see distant countries, hear distant sounds and visit distant places. This may appear to be fairy tale but it is not so. Modern science has actualised these possibilities. By means of the radio, you can hear in a moment the news being broadcast from a distance of thousands of miles. By means of TV, you can see what is happening in a particular place in America. Similarly, a mind, purified by meditation, acquires the power of travelling over enormous distances and seeing objects. When such a pure mind, on penetrating the depths of the heart, perceives the marvels of the inner spaces, it realises the value of the human being. He alone, who has been able to descend into the depths of the inner being, through meditation, can discover how much superior and better are the visions seen within, as compared to the sights seen without. It is true that the heart is the seat of the glorious Divine Effulgence, the direct experience of which is a surety of jivanmukti (liberation while living in this body). In the vast spaces of your Sahasrara (the thousand-petalled lotus), situated inside the head, there shines forth such a mighty, bliss-giving, divine flame, as compared to which, the sun appears to be just a tiny ray. Such divine light can be perceived, not by any instruments, however fine they may be, but by meditation alone. It is thus possible to have most extraordinary experiences through Yoga.

Every student of Yoga should read 'Raja Yoga' by Swami Venkatesananda. After having studied it carefully, you should translate its ideals into practice. As long as Yoga is not practised, it does not yield any results - it does not inject a new zest, a

new enthusiasm, and a new wakefulness into us. When the inner Shakti is aroused as a result of constant practice, Yoga is said to have become dynamic or active. This process is also called Kriya-Yoga, by means of which, a Yogi, while staying in the one place, comes to pervade the entire universe. He gets beyond human limitations. The Yogi, who is established in this Yoga, is emancipated from sorrow, from physical limitations while existing in a body, from the conflicts of the world while living in the world. For him, this very earth, as it is, turns into a veritable heaven.

Realise therefore the immense value of the mind. Realise the importance of prana. Don't consider them trivial. By the control of prana and mind, man can travel faster than electric current. That is why, in the Gita, Lord Krishna has addressed a Yogi as His own self. Yoga should spread in all the countries of the world. If people start valuing Yoga as they value their possessions, this very world will turn into a school of Yoga. Practise Yoga, always and everywhere, for happiness, for steadiness of mind, for supreme peace, and for the glory of mankind.

May this book benefit all its readers! May it make them happy! Such is my earnest hope.

With good wishes and blessings,
Your own. Swami Muktananda.

Introductory prayers

Om Om Om

Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha Pahi Mam
Sri Ganesha Sri Ganesha Sri Ganesha, Raksha Mam
Jaya Sarasvathi Jaya Sarasvathi Jaya Sarasvathi Pahi Mam
Sri Sarasvathi Sri Sarasvathi Sri Sarasvathi Raksha Mam

Sivananda Sivananda Sivananda Pahi Mam
Sivananda Sivananda Sivananda Raksha Mam

Anjaneya Anjaneya Anjaneya Pahi Mam
Hanumantha Hanumantha Hanumantha Raksha Mam

Om Jesus Om Jesus Om Jesus Om
Om Allah Om Allah Om Allah Om

Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Hare Hare
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare

Ganesh is the Deity who protects us against failures and troubles.
Sarasvathi is the Goddess of Wisdom.
Sivananda is my Guru.

Anjaneya or Hanumantha is the name of the Hero of Ramayana : the patron god
of gymnasts and devotees.

Jesus, Rama and Krishna are incarnations of God : and Allah is a Name of God.

Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnur Gurur Devo Maheshvarah
Guruh Sakshat Param BrahmaTasmai Sri Gurave Namah

The spiritual teacher is the Creator and the Protector of my spiritual aspiration
and the Destroyer of evils and He is truly the Supreme Being Himself. Hence I
bow to Him.

Dhyanamulam Goror Murtih Pujamulam Guroh Padam
Mantramulam Guror Vakyam Mokshamulam Guroh Kripa

The Guru's form should be meditated upon,
His Feet worshipped, His Words should be regarded as gospel,
for His Grace will lead us to Liberation.

1. Definition of yoga

With salutations to God and Guru, we begin our study of Yoga. I think we should know what Yoga is, and what Yoga is not. There is a lot of confusion about it in the popular mind. Many people think that Yoga is magic. This is not so. Yoga does work a great miracle: but it is not the usual stunt associated with miracle. Can there be a greater miracle than self transmutation, transmutation of our nature, transmutation of the heart? What does it matter if I can fly in the air or walk on water, if I am a wicked man? I am not even a human being if I am wicked, vicious and harmful. Yoga teaches you how to be human.

Look within yourself. Sometimes you are an animal only: you behave like an animal. Yoga enables you to be and to behave as a human being - that is the greatest miracle. To be human is a miracle. To become a good man is an even greater miracle. The greatest of all these is to realise God. That is what Yoga teaches you and enables you to do.

Yoga tells you how to kill the animal in you. The animal nature in you will have to go, to be sacrificed. Even the human nature will have to be sublimated, transmuted into divine nature. Then you will become godly, divine, a walking divinity on earths. You will live and behave like God. Yoga enables you to do this.

Sometimes, just as Moses, Jesus, Krishna and Buddha did, Yogis perform miracles, in accordance with God's will, in order to create faith. But, performing miracles is not the aim of Yoga. In the scripture called Bhagavad Gita, there is a statement that Yoga is inner equilibrium, tranquillity or peace. To be ever peaceful is Yoga. The mind should not be disturbed or excited at all - that is Yoga. If we are not slaves of our mind and emotions, if we are tranquil within, we shall be happy; thus, Yoga enables you to be happy while living here. It is perhaps not quite correct to say that Yoga enables you to be happy; by the practice of Yoga you realise that you are happiness itself. If you are happy now, it is possible for you to be not happy later, but if you are happiness itself, then unhappiness is just not there for you.

For the practice of Yoga, you do not require anything except yourself, neither springs, bars, etc. (as in a gymnasium), nor a special place (as a temple, church or mosque). You can practise Yoga wherever you want to - in a temple, in a church or in a mosque, or outside it. Nobody can prevent you from practising Yoga, and nobody can practise Yoga for you. You have only one friend, and you have only one enemy in this world. The friend or the enemy is your own mind. If the mind is pure, it is your best friend. If the mind is impure, it is your worst enemy. If you are the master of your mind, it is your friend. If you are the slave of your mind, it is your worst enemy. Yoga enables you to master the mind.

No one in this world is happy. Go to the richest man; even he is not happy. Even the king or the Prime Minister of the most powerful country in this world is not happy. Many of them cannot even sleep without drugs. They are haunted by fear,

worry and anxiety. Yoga enables you to be happy, because it enables you to live in your own world within. You live in God or Bliss within your heart, and at peace with your neighbours. That is Yoga.

We do not know how and where Yoga originated. I fully believe that the knowledge of Yoga is inherent in all beings. When one is hungry, one eats, even if one has not been "taught" to do so. When the soul is hungry for God, it evolves its own technique or method, to appease that hunger, and it is Yoga.

A careful study of all the prevailing major religions of the world will reveal that this art and this science of Yoga that we are going to study is common to all of them.

If, therefore, I introduce you to the study of a particular scripture, in a particular language, with a particular (Sanskrit) title, it is only because I am familiar with it, not because it is not found in your own religion. If I give you a picture with an Indian backdrop, it is only because I am familiar with it; you can visualise a similar setting suited to your own back ground and temperament and faith.

Thousands of years ago, some people sat in the forests, on the slopes of the Himalayas, and contemplated the age-old question : "How can man find happiness, true happiness, the happiness that will not come to an end, and that is not tainted by fear of losing it?"

Their investigation was extremely scientific. What does scientific investigation insist on? It should be based on facts, and not fancies, nor opinions, and that those facts should be examined without prejudice, sentiment and emotion. Unfortunately however, what we call scientific nowadays, very often lacks this approach. But that is not our theme here.

Let us see how the ancient teacher approached this problem scientifically. He discovered that, if the mind was controlled, man could be happy. 'Controlled' - not in the sense of suppressed, repressed, restrained or transformed, but understood, with the Awareness watching it all the time. How did he come to this conclusion? He saw that during sleep (deep sleep - and not the dreaming state or nightmares) everyone was happy. This experience is uniform and universal. A king sleeping in his palace on a golden bed, and a beggar sleeping outside that very palace on bare and cold ground - both of them have the same experience in deep sleep (dreamless and nightmareless).

What happens in sleep? You live within yourselves, or rather within the Self. During the waking state your mind is working; in fact you are not aware of yourself at all. You are only what your mind allows you to be. The mind is full of desires and cravings, and therefore, in certain conditions it is happy, and in certain other conditions it is unhappy. It is common knowledge that most people are more unhappy than happy, during most of their waking time.

But you cannot go on sleeping! How to be happy when the mind is awake? How to reproduce the "deep sleep" conditions during the waking state? That is the problem of Yoga. Those "men in the forests" pursued their logic and their contemplation to their conclusion, and discovered that such a state of consciousness, in which you are awake and yet enjoy the benefits of the deep sleep state, is possible. Just as beneath the turbulent waves and cross-currents, as also beneath the calm surface of the ocean, there is the same mass of ocean-water, there is within you, during your waking state, dream state, and deep sleep state - deep within you - an undisturbed consciousness or "intelligence", which has variously been called in our scriptures as the Self, Atma, Jiva, Image of God, etc. It is not the name or the title that is important; rather, these names may even distort (if not totally prevent) your vision of That. If it is possible for you to dwell in That, you will enjoy the peace and the happiness of the deep sleep state, whether you are awake, dreaming or asleep. You will then be like spiritual jet-planes, and fly far above the sphere of turmoil, overflying all the troubles and worries. You will not be asleep (nor is a jet-plane asleep), but you will enjoy the fruits of sleep in the waking state itself. That is Yoga.

Those wise men found that the principle involved in this procedure was this: when you are conscious that the undying and eternal spirit you are, you will be happy, but when you forget it, and identify yourself with the fleeting phenomena, you can only be miserable (even if there is a little joy, it quickly passes anyway). It is like this: the sun does not set at night, but one half of the earth turns away from the sun. The wise men evolved a practical method of keeping the face of the mind always turned towards the Indwelling Spirit (what you call it does not matter at all), so that you shall live in the eternal value, and not get lost in evanescent values.

The psychology of man was closely studied by these wise ones of ancient times. They did not have all the fanfare and publicity that their modern counterparts (and how feeble they are in comparison!) have, but their theories were sound. Their principles and practical applications have endured the test of time, and are valid today, whereas the theories and practices of modern psychologists vary every decade.

How does your inner consciousness turn away from the spirit, the Centre, and get involved in the evanescent values? The mind "goes" outside to the world, through the senses. The Yogi is able to control them, and his mind does not run outside. He is calm, because his mind is turned in, into the depths of his spiritual being. And, they evolved a practical and practicable method for it.

When the mind thinks of (or comes into contact with) something, it takes a picture of it, and the whole mind is temporarily transformed into that object. There arises in the mind an intense desire to possess it. In turn, that desire possesses the mind: the person is "mad after" the object. This is what happens to everyone a thousand times a day. Hence you are restless. You are helpless, because you have slipped away from the spiritual Being - the Centre.

But the Yogi is self-possessed, enlightened. He is rooted in the Centre. He is self-controlled. He is not a glum-faced, gloomy kill-joy, who suppresses his desires and feelings every minute of his life, but he is a master, and therefore very cheerful and peaceful all the time. The Yogi might look at an attractive object, but he will not helplessly desire it. His mind is turned to wards his spiritual Being - God. Seeing from that Centre, he sees only the essence in all objects i.e., the same Image of God in the other person or object, too. He is never carried away by a craving, but his actions are prompted by wisdom. That is the secret of the Yogi's happiness.

Now, you have perhaps understood why Yoga is both a specific system of psychophysical exercise, and also the art of life. You have got to turn the mind towards the Inner Spirit, God. Your mind must be trained to think of Him. Then, throughout your daily life you should remember Him. Then you will become Yogis.

The first principle in Yoga is, therefore, Yogaschittavritti Nirodhah - Yoga is control of the mental modifications. All thoughts must be controlled, not suppressed, but regulated and expressed wisely. This is the second "Sutra" or aphorism of Patanjali, the author of the scripture on Yoga which forms the basis of our study.

Here is a picture. Imagine that your mind is a big lake. Thoughts are like waves. Your mind should be absolutely calm, then you will perceive what is within. The waveless state is itself calm, peace and bliss. Watch your mind now : it is full of waves, and therefore, restless. Why is it so? Because it is full of desires and cravings. By the practice of Yoga, the mind will become placid like the calm surface of a waveless lake. That is the first definition of Yoga. When the mind is "thoughtless" you will see God, your own Inner soul, the Image of God within you, your Centre, hidden deep within you. You will be "aware."

Suppose you have dropped a gold watch in a lake. If there are waves on the surface, you will not see the watch. If the surface is calm, you can see it. God is within you. But, because the mind is always disturbed, you are not able to see Him. When the mind is calm, you can see Him. This is achieved by the practice of Yoga.

When your mind is calm, you will be able to think, and you will not be worried; and whatever problems you have in life, you will be able to solve them, you will have good memory and power to learn. You will be successful in life. These are some of the benefits of Yoga. We shall realise God and will not be born again.

2. The Cause of Unhappiness

The philosophy of Yoga (which is almost the same as another philosophical system called Sankhya) is rather complicated; and I shall only give you here as much as is necessary for our practical purposes.

As we saw, the ancient wise men had discovered that happiness is within; and peace and power also are within us. This is the simple and direct inference which the wise men drew from the universal experience of deep sleep. In deep sleep, you are happy, peaceful, and you rejuvenate yourself, without any external contact. Happiness, peace and power are within you. But why is it you are unable to use this power and enjoy that peace or happiness at will.

This power is sometimes made available to you accidentally. When you are "dead tired" at night, and refuse to sit up in bed, to receive a visitor, ... if a robber points a revolver at you, you get up and run a mile. This power was within you, but you did not know. God is within; you do not know. (The scientist tells us that the adrenal glands poured adrenalin into the blood stream and so you ran. But, the energy must have been there - somewhere - for these glands to have released it. Why were you not able to make conscious and voluntary use of it? Who governs, stores and releases this reserve power-supply? You do not know.)

This ignorance (Avidya) is the root-cause of all your suffering. Because you are not aware of the inner Spiritual Being, your Centre, Self or God, and His Omnipresence, you feel "I am" - a limited ego - as opposed to "these are". From Avidya (ignorance), Asmita (ego) is born. All the radii become one at the Centre, whereas at the other pole (the circumference) they are distinct and separate. In God-Consciousness we are all one: what a great joy, peace and power we derive from this! This is what we learn from the deep sleep experience too. It is an experience of homogeneity, oneness or unity. Hence the happiness, peace and power. If consciously you know that you are one with the universe, you will be blissful, peaceful and powerful.

But when this unity is forgotten, and when, as a point on the circumference, you isolate yourself from all others, you do not see the universe as one, but as a mad house of many people, each grabbing what he wants, and where might rules. You become selfish.

You try to grab those things that give you pleasure, and so you like - this is called Raga. You avoid those things that do not please you, and so you hate - this is called Dvesha. Because of these (Raga Dvesha or desire and hatred), you go on doing righteous and unrighteous actions here, which return to you as pleasure and pain (according to the Law of Karma), and thus you are bound to this wheel of birth and death.

Because of ignorance, egoism, selfishness, lust and hatred, you cling to what you have, and cling to life itself - you are afraid of losing it, and afraid of losing what

you have. There is "fear of the unknown". Though you know that this life itself is full of miseries, you still cling to it, for the simple reason that you imagine that life after death is going to be something dreadfully worse. (Also : the Indian Philosopher or Vedantin infers from this universal unwillingness to die the great truth that man is immortal, and cannot die - a fact which he expresses by refusing to die). This is the last link in this chain of causes of misery - Abhinivesha (clinging to the body and to the present worldly life).

But, do not forget the main cause is ignorance - (Avidya). If you remove Avidya, all the others will also go - fear, lust and hatred will vanish and you will realise His Omnipresence and be happy forever. It is important to realise that all these factors that we discussed above are not absolute and real, unalterable and permanent. If they are, there can be no hope of overcoming them. Relatively, I say: "I am a man", by which I mean "I cannot become a dog". But, when I say, "I am a sick man", I do not mean that "I cannot become well". The expression is defective. In the same way, from the higher point of view, even the expression "I am a man" is defective; for "man" refers only to this present state of my being, which is not permanent, eternal and unalterable. Even the expression "I am" (as an individual egoity) is similarly defective. Even that is conditioned, a state of being, not Being Itself. There "I am": not as an individual, but as the Cosmic Being. The little "I" has not been created truly; even that individuality is not eternal, unalterable and permanent. If it were so, it cannot be overcome, and we can never realise the One, Self or God. That little self and the mischief it gives birth to - attachment (attraction) and aversion (repulsion), and clinging to life, world and body - are all the products of Avidya or ignorance.

Yoga teaches us how to get rid of this darkness of ignorance. In daytime there is sometimes darkness on earth. Why? Because the sun is thickly veiled by a dark cloud. The sun has not set, but is veiled. Even so, the God within us has not gone away, but is veiled by the mind and this ignorance. This is Avidya. On account of this Avidya, and because of their natural tendencies, the mind and the senses always stray outwards. You cannot see your own eye, but can see outside; similarly, you cannot hear your own heart-beat, but only outside sounds. Therefore, you do not search for happiness within.

An old lady was searching for a needle on the road. A young man tried to help her and asked her where she dropped it. She replied, "In the kitchen". "But, why do you search for it here?", the young man asked. "Because it is dark in the kitchen," said the lady. "Because the mind cannot "see" within, we look for happiness outside us, where it is not.

What is this mind? In very simple words : mind is nothing but impurity and thought-waves. The impurity has been accumulated in past (animal) births. And, the mind is restless by nature; in other words, there are always some thoughts in the mind.

If we drop a ring into a swimming pool, if the water is hidden by dirt or leaves,

and if it is full of waves, we cannot locate the ring. Remove the dirt and then make the water steady, and you will at once see the ring. This is Yoga, which enables you to purify the mind and steady it.

3. The Law of Karma

I shall briefly describe the Law of Karma, though it is not explicitly referred to in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, because it is very important to bear in mind, if we are to progress in Yoga.

Karma means action : anything that we do is Karma. Every action that you do has, mainly, two, effects. I shall give you a simple example. When you jump into a swimming pool, two things happen : (i) waves arise on the surface, (ii) your body becomes wet. One effect is outside you, and the other is on you.

Similarly, for instance, when I hit some one, an action has taken place. As a result, two reactions follow. I have harmed him - a result outside - and that bad action returns to me as misery (on the simple scientific principle, "Every action has equal and opposite reaction"). Within me, an impression is formed. I become a cruel man. A habit of cruelty is formed in me. (In the study of Yoga, we are concerned only with these two main aspects of the Law of Karma).

If we are wise, we can very easily overcome the first (external) effect. Suppose I injured someone in the past, I suffer injury in this birth. If I take it calmly, knowing it to be the effect of my own past misdeed, the account is balanced. But because of the tendency or cruel habit formed in me by the former action, I do not take it so calmly. Instead of keeping quiet, I retaliate again. So this wheel of Karma is kept revolving. If you wish to realise God through Yoga, you should (i) patiently bear sufferings (not pessimistically and cowardly), knowing that nobody can trouble you, unless you yourself have been responsible for it by your own action in past birth, and also knowing that, whereas he can return the pain caused by you in a past birth, he cannot make you fight now (and this is how the Yogi wipes out external Karma), and (ii) react (nay, act) in a saintly way, thus wiping out the internal effect of the past action.

A story is told of Lord Vishnu, a Member of the Hindu Trinity. He is resting. A man comes there and kicks him on his chest. What does Vishnu do? He gets up and, shampooing the other man's feet, says: "Oh, you kicked My chest : did it hurt your foot?" That is the attitude of a Saint. This vital factor is emphasised by all religions and prophets.

It is through this that we can wipe out the habit or tendency. For you and me, the tendency or habit formed by the Karma is more troublesome than the "external" reaction. It does not matter what happens to us : but we should be careful about our own present reaction. As a matter of fact, the Yogi does not react at all - his actions are not inspired by what others do to him. He becomes fully aware of every situation, and he acts - his action being the spontaneous expression of his own inner nature, suited to the particular situation.

You will never blame anybody else for your suffering, if you understand the Law of Karma. It is not fatalism; make no mistake about it. I do accept what falls to

my lot; but I realise that the way I react to every situation in which I am placed, the way I act now, is entirely left to my own freewill at the moment. In the Bhagavad Gita the Lord commands us to act, for which we have an inalienable right, without expecting any rewards or results. It means, "Do not stretch action to include reaction". It goes like this : "I have a farm, which I wish to irrigate, what must I do?' Pray and build a dam! "I have prayed and I have built a dam." Well done! "But, there is no rain, no water in the dam!" It is a fact, there was no water in the first place. Keep praying and digging! On account of our inveterate habit of comparison and rivalry, we assume that our prayer would be more effective than the neighbour's, and get frustrated if the contrary proves to be the fact. I have the freedom to react in the right way. I have thus a right to shape my future. And the placid acceptance of my lot helps me here. It enables me to think calmly and therefore clearly, instead of fretting and fuming about my lot. Grumbling is waste of time. We should be up and doing, not so much to alter the present circumstance (though this is not ruled out), but to shape the future. Therefore, I must behave well now. I must love those who are "responsible" for the working out of my own Karma, and I will be happy hereafter. I am the architect of my own destiny. That, in essence, is the law of Karma. (There are various other theories about "collective Karma", etc., with which we shall not bother ourselves now). Other "forums" of karma have been described in some texts, like "mass karma", suggesting that it is possible for one to suffer the consequences of the actions of others. And this view is supported by the logic that the voters are responsible for the sins of the rulers, and every tax-payer partakes of the sins of the government. It is for you to see and understand the law of karma. I feel, however, that there is perfect Justice in its operation, and that no man is punished or rewarded for the actions of others.

This (external) Karma is divided into three parts :

(i) Prarabdha : the Karma that has given rise to this body. (ii) Sanchita : the collection of all the Karma of all our past births. Out of that collection, a little has been taken up for this birth.

The difference must be understood. There is a magazine inside the revolver, containing a few bullets. These are like the Sanchita Karma. If a man fires the revolver, the bullet that has left the gun is Prarabdha. Once the bullet has left the gun, it cannot be taken back, it has to do its work. But, if the man does not want to fight, he can throw the other bullets (in the magazine) away. That part of the Karma which is responsible for this birth cannot (and need not) be changed. It has got to be endured; and patient endurance takes away the unpleasantness of even that Karma, which then is quickly worked out. Even saints and sages have, therefore, had to endure sickness, poverty and persecution.

(iii) Agami : the present Karma that we are doing now. This will be added to Sanchita, and will fructify in due course. But the Yogi does not perform any new Karma. It does not mean that he remains idle. He has radically changed his inner attitude. He does not feel "I am doing this", but "God does everything." When you

really know in your heart, "It is all God who does everything", then you are not doing anything at all! (It must come from the heart and not from the lips.) Thus, there is no present or new Karma. God takes over that Karma, because you have realised that He does it.

As regards the other two. Prarabdha has got to be endured - or, more correctly, understood, for right action to change even Prarabdha is not ruled out. The Yogi performs a magic here. Karma affects only your body to which it has given birth. You can, if you wisely condition your mind, prevent it from affecting "You."

There is a humorous proverb in an Indian language (Tamil). It is said of a good wife who, when the husband hits her, says, "He wiped my cheek". That shows that what happens to your body, need not necessarily affect your mind. You can enjoy even pain. Take another instance. If you and I are asked to sleep in the cold outside, we will say it is painful. But the mountaineer enjoys it. The physical experience is the same. The mental attitude is different. You and I do not want the cold. He wants and enjoys it. What you want, you will love and enjoy. What you do not want, you will reject; if it cannot be rejected, it will hurt you. Take yet another example. You love your son. When you want him, and he comes to you, you are happy. But suppose you want to sleep, and therefore you do not want that child, and he comes to you; in spite of your love, you will push him away. It depends upon your mind. That is exactly what the Yogi knows. He does not reject any experience - whether it is called pain or pleasure. He regards them all as Karma and without reacting to it, carries on with his present saintly life. In this way he changes all experiences into delight. So, for instance, when a saint gets a disease, he is as happy as when you get a motor car. To him that means, "My Prarabdha is finished". That is how he more or less wipes out even Prarabdha.

Because he realises God through Yoga, he does not take birth again. He has become one with God. Ignorance and ego have vanished. Perhaps you have seen a big tree to which every day a number of birds come to rest. If on some day, the tree is cut when the birds are away; they will return, but, not finding the tree, they will fly away. In the same way, if I become one with God, that bundle of Karma (Sanchita) has no chance to come back and harass me.

I am liberated from Karma.

All this is not so important to you, students of Yoga. What is most important to you is the impression, tendency or habit. It does not matter what happens to you, but you are only interested in how you behave. That conditioning in your mind, which interferes with your present intention to behave well, must be removed. Yoga helps you here. By not being emotional, by being able to control the mind, by being able to look within. As you go on with the practice of Yoga, you will actually 'see' anger arise in you, you will see your thoughts - whereas you are now driven by your own mind, and you automatically get angry - and you can control that tendency.

The Yogi has a method. It is called in Sanskrit "Pratipaksha Bhavana", or contemplation of the opposite. Suppose you have a bad temper. Now you feel that you must become loving and patient. Meditate on a symbol of God, or the picture of a saint or Guru, all the time feeling "God is Love, God is Patience". "As you think so will you become", is a psychological law. When you thus go on contemplating God as Love and Patience, you will also grow in love and patience. Anger will disappear. In the same way you can conquer any evil tendency. If you worry too much, meditate upon God, and feel that He is the Supreme Power in the World, and "He is within me, I have nothing to worry about. He is the one who created me, protects me and knows what is good for me. Let me sit in the back seat of the motor car. I do not have to worry about the road. The driver knows the road. God is the driver of my life." In this way, whatever be your problems, you can wipe them out. It is for this purpose that Yogis meditate on a form of God, or of a Yogi, or of a Master. You feel that the quality you wish to develop is in Him. You enthrone Him in your heart, and thus instantly fill it with those qualities. God is Perfect and, therefore, He possesses all the divine qualities. Whatever evil you want to remove, the opposite good quality is in Him. If you meditate on God, you will grow in that divine quality, and the evil quality will automatically disappear. Eventually, when you realise God, all the evil qualities or Karmas will be wiped out. You will not suffer now, because God is with you. Since you will not take birth any more, there is no more Karma for you.

It is important that this or any other method suggested should not be treated as a dead ritual! For the method to be effective, you have to be aware of the harm that the evil is causing, and "with all your heart and soul" - which is God - bring the goodness into being.

4. Need for a Guru

The practice of Yoga enables you to realise God. And, it liberates you from Karma and rebirth. You do not take birth again. This is possible only if you actually realise God, not just rationalise about Him.

God is omnipresent. He is infinite. It is not possible for your small mind to understand Him. Yogis say that, when you open your eyes, you actually see God, and the seer within you is God, too. But, because the eye has no power to see God, you see the world. Here is a flower. If a man who is born blind touches this, he will only feel that it is a soft object. He does not have eyes to see; he cannot see the colour, the shape, etc. Take this miniature globe; you see it as a globe with the countries of the world marked on it. But a born-blind man will only feel that it is something round. In the same way, people are all born-blind spiritually. The mind is blind, so far as God is concerned. So long as you try to understand God with the mind, you will fail.

We are caught. We have two propositions before us. "I must realise God." "I cannot understand Him." What shall we do? When you reach this stage, you go to a Master. Study a scripture. The Master and the scripture are like your two eyes. With these only you will be able to realise God.

But, before you go to the Master or study a scripture, this is important : you must want to realise God - that desire must be there, very strong and intense. A woman knows that if the husband is hungry, he will relish the food she serves. If he is not, even the best dish will not be relished by him. Unless you are spiritually hungry, and you want to realise God, no Guru can do anything to you, and all scriptures will be unpalatable to you.

First of all, you must realise - know - that this world cannot give you permanent happiness, that this world is not your permanent abode or your destination, and that your home or destination is God, in Whom alone you can find permanent happiness. You must have this firm conviction. With this, if you go to a Master, you will be benefited. Otherwise, even if God Himself comes to you, you will doubt Him, and drive Him away - He cannot help you or teach you.

Even with this desire, your own mind cannot understand God. Only the Master can enlighten you. His teachings are found in the scriptures. Scriptures often need explanation. I will tell you a short story to illustrate this.

A son was born to a very rich man, late in his life. A fortune-teller told the father that "this fellow would spend all the money and would become poor." The father was worried. He thought, "My son will squander all his money and become poor. How can I prevent this?" He put a lot of gold in a big pot and buried it. When he was about to die, he gave that boy a small box. And he told the boy, "My son, when you become very poor, open this and you will find some help." At that time, the young man had plenty of money, and did not open the box. The money was soon spent and he became poor. One day he remembered the box. He opened it

and found a small piece of paper. On that paper the old man had written : "In the dome of your house there is money. But take it at 3 p.m. on the 1st January." It was sometime in December. The boy thought : "If the gold is there, it should be there even now. Let me take it now." He started breaking the dome. An old man asked him why he was doing that. The boy showed the paper. The old man said: "You fool, the money is not there. Don't break it. Come to me on 1st January. I will tell you where the money is." On the 1st January, at 3 p.m. the old man pointed to a place on the ground and said, "Dig here". There was the big pot of gold. The young man asked him, "How did you know ?" He replied, "This note mentions 3 p.m. on 1st January. There is obviously some meaning. It means : on the 1st of January at 3 p.m. the shadow of the dome falls on the ground at a certain place, and the gold is hidden there." That is how often we find truths hidden in our scriptures. Only a Master can unveil this for us.

Without a Master, it is difficult to understand even a scripture. Usually, when we mention the word "scripture", people remark: "All this was written thousands of years ago, and it is out of date." We should not do that. The scripture is like the navigational chart which the captain of a ship uses. If the captain says, "No, I have got my brain. I shall not follow the chart", instead of going to his destination, he might go thousands of miles off-course. The scripture tells you what to do in order to realise God. Especially when you are confused and cannot think, it is only the scripture that tells you how to live, and where to look for the Truth, and how. The scripture is usually interpreted or made clear by the Master.

This is very important. When you approach a Master, leave your own knowledge behind. Otherwise you will go to him with a closed mind. Why do you go to a Guru? Because you have not understood God. If you go to the Guru, and start arguing with Him, you are not sincere? To enquire is healthy, but to argue is foolish. To question is healthy, but to doubt is not. The guru disciple relationship is a delicate one, and needs clear understanding. The guru points the way; He who points the way is the guru. The guru does no more than illumine the path; He who illumines your path is the guru (whether he comes to you in person, or in His writings or in any other form). You will have to do the "walking" yourself. Of course, unless you are spiritually mature, you may not approach or recognise the guru, and will not be benefited by His teaching. In the world, we have had to learn even how to prepare a cup of tea. If someone comes to you, wanting to know how to prepare a cup of tea, and goes on arguing with you, you cannot teach him. That should not be the attitude of a student. You must be prepared to receive. Later on, you can (and should) reflect over it, and come to your own conclusion. If the teachings of someone appeal to you, accept them. If they do not appeal to you, go your own way. It is like marriage. You see a girl. If you like her, you marry her. If you do not like her flat nose, you are not going to lengthen it. If you do not like it, go your own way. In the same way, if you like the teachings of a particular Guru, accept Him. If you do not, go away and find your own Guru.

If I want you to write something, I will show you only a blank paper, not one which is fully written on. In the same way, present the Guru with a clean, fresh and receptive mind. He will write His teachings thereon. Otherwise, He will be unable to impart His teachings to you. You will not be able to receive anything

from Him.

Guru is very important in Yoga. In India we literally take the Guru to be God. That is the meaning of the verse we usually chant at the beginning of our meditation or Yoga-practice.

Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnur Gurur Devo Maheshvarah
Guruh Sakshat Param Brahma Tasmai Sri Gurave Namah
Guru is God and therefore I fall at the feet of the Guru.

In the Bhagavad Gita, it is said: if you want to know God, go to the Guru, fall at his feet, serve Him and ask Him - he will teach you.

When we pray to God, "O Lord, I am living in this world of pain and death. I want to see You", it is His Mercy that comes to us as the Guru. God Himself comes to you in the form of the Guru. So, regard the Guru as God Himself.

Do not consider the Guru as a human being at all. For example, take a handful of charcoal and put it into to fire. The charcoal is black and cold. A few minutes after you put it into the fire, you cannot even touch the coal. It has become fire now. It is not black, it is red. It is not cold, it is burning. It is not charcoal. It is fire. In the same way, when the Guru realises God, He becomes God. What comes to you to teach you is not Mr. So-and-so, but God. That is most important. And I believe that is the attitude of true, pious Christians who regard Jesus Himself as God, and, what is more, that Holy Man whom they have chosen to follow as Lord Jesus Himself (according to the teachings of the Early Christian Fathers). If you do not do that, you will not be benefited.

Having reached the Feet of the Guru, serve Him. Some people do not like this. They ask, "I respect Him; but why should I serve Him?" Their devotion is insincere. Are you sincere? Then show your sincerity, not to impress Him or to win His favour, but to prove to yourself. How? By serving the Guru. This is the only way. If the wife tells her husband "You are my life", but does not give him food, what sort of love is that? In order to satisfy myself that I sincerely love my Guru, I serve and worship Him.

Surrender yourself completely to the Guru. Serve him. Then, if you ask Him, with sincerity and faith, "Teach me of the nature of God", He will enlighten you, by enabling you to understand the unreality of the ego.

It is not difficult to know God, but it is extremely difficult to subdue, conquer, or "kill" this ego. You can even keep a picture of the Guru and learn the Truth, if you have the necessary faith and sincerity. That picture itself will speak to you from within you. The most important point here is complete annihilation of egoism.

In Sanskrit, 'Gu' stands for "spiritual darkness or ignorance", and 'ru' for its "remover". Guru, therefore, is the Spiritual Light that removes ignorance. In the French word "Maitre" is perhaps hidden another truth. Guru is the Mother (Matr in Sanskrit). Even as the child does not know who the father is, and only the mother can reveal him, the disciple who is unable to know God is taught by the Guru, the Maitre or the Mother or the Matha. Guru is our spiritual Mother. We cannot, and should not, argue with the Mother (regarding the identity of the father), not with the Guru (in regard to spiritual truths), nor doubt Him.

5. The Five Divinising Agents

As we proceed you will find that even a student of Yoga naturally turns away from the world. If at heart you are still attached to the world, you cannot reach God; God and the world are the same, but different poles.

I once saw in a film a type of terrible torture. There is a big wheel. The hands of the man to be tortured are tied to the wheel. His feet are tied to the ground. Someone starts turning the wheel. You can imagine what happens when the hands are pulled up and away, and the feet are fixed to the ground. It is terrible torture.

Unconsciously, that is what people are trying to do. God is constantly pulling them up. Their own worldly desires are dragging them down. That is why they are suffering. If you want to free yourselves from this suffering, and if you want to realise God, give up attachment to this world.

This does not mean that you must run away from your home or your work. You may go to a forest and may still think only of your wife and children. On the other hand, you may stay at home, and not be terribly attached to them. You need not run away, but must turn away from craving for worldly pleasures.

Today we actually begin the study of the eight limbs of Yoga. You know already that Yoga is ultimately realisation of God. But the Indian sage does not expect you to become Yogis all of a sudden. It is not possible. It is not impossible to realise God, and you have got to. But, for everything there are stages. For instance, your child is going one day to become a big, learned and wise man; but now he has to go to a primary school. If he says today, "Well, I am also a young man, I want to become the President of Madagascar today", he is foolish. Gradually you will evolve and become Yogis.

The Yogis of India have, therefore, constructed a ladder of eight steps. Though one is encouraged by the masters of Yoga to view these as steps, to forewarn the seeker that he cannot think of concentration and meditation before equipping himself with virtue and ridding himself of all evil, it is good to remember that even Patanjali regards them as "angas" or limbs. No one can be "practised" at the expense of, or to the exclusion of others - all of them should "be born" in you at the same time. Cultivation of virtue, eradication of evil, and meditation, should go hand in hand. Here the steps will refer to the degree of purity attained and the depth of meditation experienced. Also, one should discriminate between good conduct and virtue. Good conduct is determined by religious precepts, metaphysical speculations, social traditions, and clan-rules. Virtue springs from Viveka-Vairagya (discrimination and dispassion) - when the Inner Light lays the ghosts of obsessions, cravings and passions, virtue manifests itself. The first step is called Yama. It consists of discipline, of developing five virtuous divine qualities. These five are meant to curb the animal nature in us, and to sublimate even the human nature. Let us at the very beginning remind ourselves that, unless we become godly, we cannot realise God. Milk can mix with water.

Because, both are liquid of the same nature. Honey, though it cannot immediately mix with water, can do so, if you stir it well. But if you throw a hard rock or stone into water, it will never mix. A perfect man or Yogi is like milk - he immediately mixes (realises) God, because his nature is divine. You who want to become Yogis, who are students of Yoga, are like honey. You can realise God, but it will require a little stirring, beating, or discipline. But, the man whose heart is totally undivine or devilish, whose heart is full of animal and undivine qualities, is like a stone, and cannot realise God (till, by His Grace, he evolves in the natural way, perhaps after many births). He has to take many more births to become like honey.

So, the first step in Yoga is to see that you have divine qualities in your heart, and you grow in the image of God. That is called Yama. Here is something which is interesting. This word "Yama" in Sanskrit also means "the deity presiding over death". Yama means self-control, and Yama also means the deity presiding over death. I think it suggests that selfcontrol or divinisation of man's nature itself, is death to the vicious animal nature in him. That is the real meaning also of animal sacrifice : not the murder of innocent animals, but the killing of the animal nature in man. All the animal qualities - like hatred, anger, envy, egoism, selfishness - must be removed from your heart. So, this Yama is death to the animal in man.

This Yama consists of five qualities. Ahimsa is the first. Ahimsa actually means non-injury. Whatever else you do or do not do, on this occasion, make up your mind, that in thought, word or deed, you shall not injure anybody. For God is the Father of all beings. He is the indweller of all beings. In the heart of even an ant, God exists. Your heart must become so soft that you will not even scold or use abusive words even towards a dog. Then you are fit to realise God. You want to become one with God : you must treat all His creation, as your own Self.

This business of animal sacrifice prevails even in India and all over the world. But, you who want to become Yogis, should ask yourselves (let others do as they will) : "Will the mother be pleased if we, catching hold of her own child, say, 'to please you, we have killed your child?'" Will any mother be pleased by such conduct? No. God cannot be pleased by animal sacrifice. So, in your case, your heart must become softer and softer. I do not demand this immediately; but I know that if you develop this attitude, you will gradually give up meat-eating. Gradually, you will become vegetarians. Some people ask a question : "Vegetables also have life; how can you eat them ?" If you use your commonsense, you will readily see that in God's creation or Plan, we and vegetables form one circle. Whatever we throw out is food for the vegetable; even the expired breath. Whatever they yield is food for us; even the oxygen they "breathe out". There is thus this God-ordained connection between vegetable and human beings. In other words, God Himself has willed that we should depend upon plants, not on animal food. The popular notion that without animal food, we shall all fall ill for lack of protein is foolish. We derive a lot of proteins from other sources, like milk, and specially nuts. It is the fear generated by wrong advice of doctors that makes people fall ill when they give up meat-eating. On the contrary, by giving up meat,

you will grow healthier. If you see how the animal suffers when being slaughtered, whose meat you eat, the next time you look at meat, you will become "sick in the stomach". In a country where vegetables and fruits are available in plenty, it is entirely unnecessary to eat meat.

Ahimsa is the first step. Start somewhere. Start saying, "I will be kind and loving to all human beings". Step by step, expand your love to all beings - even to the vegetables eventually. That is most important. The next is Satyam. It is truth. Truthfulness has also been defined as speech that is pleasant and also beneficial. A story is told in one of our scriptures. A pious man had taken a vow that he would speak only truth. So, he had gone away from town and was living in a forest. One day, as he was bathing outside, he saw a man running. Behind him was a robber. The first man took one of the branch roads and ran away. The robber came to the pious man and asked him, "Which way did the man go?" The pious man who had vowed to speak the truth, told him the truth. The robber also took that road, killed the man and took his money. The pious man, when he died, was taken to hell. He protested : "Why are you taking me to hell? I am a truthful man and must go to heaven". The chief there - the divine magistrate - said : "No, you are not a truthful man." The man asked, "When did I tell a lie?" The divine magistrate replied : "When you told the truth to the robber, with its help, he caught hold of the other man, killed him and robbed him. That is equal to a lie." Sometimes people do like this. Someone tells you a great secret. I ask you about it. You immediately divulge the secret to me, because you want to be truthful. It can be harmful. So, it is not truth. Remain silent.

If the truth can offend or injure anybody, do not utter that truth. Remain silent. Even if you think that somebody is a rascal, do not tell him, "You are a -rascal". It will wound his heart. What is to be done? Keep quiet. You do not have to utter an unpleasant truth, nor should you utter falsehood, in order to please someone. Your speech must satisfy these three criteria - truthful, pleasant and beneficial. Only then it is truthful.

There is a higher meaning to this: to see God everywhere is Satyam. What is Truth? God alone is the Truth. What I am seeing is falsehood. It is only a form, a show, an illusion. Inside each form there is God, Who is Truth. To be always devoted to Him, and to be constantly aware of Him, is Satyam.

The next is Asteyam. It is "not to steal". Are we all thieves? Is Asteyam such a difficult virtue that it is given such a place of prominence in Yoga? In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna says that he who enjoys wealth, intelligence, and other blessings of God, without sharing them with others, is a thief. If you have something which your neighbour needs badly, you must give; otherwise, you are a thief. There are two types of thieves. One is a man who takes your coat away from you. The other type of thief buys it from the shop when he does not need it and keeps it in his house. He does not need it; you need it, but you do not get it. He has thus robbed you of what you need. Accumulating things unnecessarily is theft. Often your own foolish wicked mind deceives you. When you look at a

dress, you think "I want it, I need it, I must have it." But you do not actually need it. I used to ask some rich people to do this : "Tonight go home and open all the boxes and note down how many things you have got now and how often you have used them." There are people who have tons of clothes in their wardrobes, unused. They like something in the shop and take it home. They may wear it for a day, and then they run after another fanciful thing. They are thieves. There are others who need these clothes, and they cannot have them. Thus Asteyam, though negatively put, actually means a complex of contentment, simplicity and charity. Even Ahimsa actually means compassion towards all.

The next is Brahmacharya. It has been translated as celibacy. It is correct, because sex is one of the most powerful urges in human beings. Next only to food, we are driven by sex. The sex-urges can often make us completely mad. In English the God of Love is called cupid. I often make fun (and pun) saying that he is called cupid because lie makes people stupid. When people are attacked by cupid, they do not know how they behave. In Sanskrit, this god is known as Manmatha. It literally means, "the churner of the mind". When the sex-idea enters the mind, it is churned. Supposing you are placed on a turn-table (merry-go-round) and turned. When you jump out of it, you will not know in which direction you are going. In the same way, when you are driven by sex, you do not know in which direction you go. That is why celibacy is regarded as important. If a man is able to control this, he will be able to control the mind.

But Brahmacharya literally means : living and moving in God. It is not only the control of the sex impulse, but of all the other senses. But because the sex-urge is regarded as the most powerful, it was given prominence. If you catch hold of the king, the whole country is yours. If you control the sex-urge, you will be able to control all the other senses. It is not as though the Yogi is asked to suppress his sex instinct or other sense-functions. On account of his higher aspirations, they do not dominate him, and there is a natural loss of interest in them! All his energies flow towards God.

The last is Aparigraha. It means, not accepting or not desiring anything that belongs to somebody else. It means removal of greed. It looks easy. But if you closely look at it, you will find it is very difficult. The mind should not even think of desiring something which belongs to somebody else. Here again, the real meaning of Aparigraha is to become desireless. It is not as though I should not ask you for something, but even the desire for what you have should not arise in me. The mind must constantly be told, "No, no, in these things of the world you will not find happiness. You will find happiness only in God." Aparigraha means becoming more and more desireless. It is possible only if the mind constantly lives in God. It will make you independent in your inner spirit, for you will not be obligated or indebted to anyone, and hence the service you render them will be free from the taint of selfishness or profit-motive.

These five are called Yama, collectively.

You see how the cultivation of these qualities themselves will make you better human beings. Your heart is gradually purified. You are made less and less of an animal, and you are made more and more divine. So, when you meditate upon God, it is profound, deep and fruitful. You will immediately see why often your efforts at concentration become futile. You have neglected the first step. You have dropped a stone in water, and you want it to mix with water.

Yama must be observed as much as possible. Even here, not even the greatest Yogi expects you to become perfect in one day. So, he tells you, "Meditate upon God, feeling that in Him you have perfect Ahimsa, Satyam, etc., feeling that He is the abode of all virtues. Then you will also gradually grow in those virtues." Meditation and our life must go together. Perfection is possible only by practice and by God's Grace. All that our Yogis ask of you is "When God's Grace lifts you, do not let desires drag you down". They want that you should not suffer the torture I described earlier.

One practical help in the cultivation of these virtues is maintaining a diary. In it, note down how many times you got angry, how many lies you told, and how often desires arose in your mind, contrary to the practice of these five Yamas. Do not worry. Do not brood. Just note them down. You will discover that miraculously those evil tendencies become gradually less and less. The desires in man's heart are terrible. The bull which is being taken to the slaughter-house, is eager to eat some grass on the way. Even on the death-bed, you will want to eat some chocolates. Such is the force of desire. But if you strive sincerely, it is possible to control it.

These two methods are very effective : (a) maintain a diary, and (b) meditate on God, feeling that He is full of all these divine qualities. So, you see how, even when you are on the first rung of Yoga, you can still practise meditation. Our master used to say, "If you wait till you become perfect in Yama, before starting to practise meditation, you will never meditate". Sometimes, people say, "My heart is impure, how can I meditate ?" No : one will help the other, and so you must attempt to meditate. Therefore, cultivate virtues, and meditate at the same time.

6. Aids to Yoga

Last time we discussed the first step in Raja Yoga, Yama. We saw that Yama consisted of five great virtues - Ahimsa (compassion), Satyam (truthfulness), Asteyam (not-stealing or charity), Brahmacharya (purity, living in God) and Aparigraha (not being greedy, or being desireless). These five are Yama, the first step in Raja Yoga.

The second step is called Niyama. Not so difficult perhaps as Yama, but equally important. Again Niyama also is fivefold. We shall take them up one by one.

The first is Saucha. It literally means purity. Purity is very important - both internal and external purity. External purity is observed by keeping the house, surroundings, and also the dress clean - a little closer, by keeping the body clean. The house, the roads, our clothes, and also the body must be clean. Only then it is possible for the mind and the heart also to be clean. Perhaps, it is difficult to explain this - if you experiment, you will understand it. One day sit for meditation without washing the face; another day after washing the face; and a third day after a bath - and see the effects yourself. You will yourself understand the difference. One day sit for meditation in a clean room; another day sit for meditation in a dirty place - you will feel the difference.

Coming to physical cleanliness, we have a number of duties. First : as soon as you wake up, you must brush your teeth and wash your mouth. Then wash your face, hands and legs. And a daily bath to clean the whole body is necessary. After meals, cultivate the habit of washing the mouth, hands, legs and the face. This again is an Indian custom; but if you try it, you will discover the benefit. You will find that this practice promotes digestion and assimilation. It seems to have a wonderful effect on the nerves. This is because water contains Prana. That is why, for instance, on a day when you are fasting or when you feel fatigued, if you have bath, you feel refreshed. You imbibe Prana from the water. We can remain without food for a long time; but not without water. A good mother asked me a very pertinent question : "Will it do if we just bathed, or should we also feel that we are receiving Prana from the water?" It will of course do, even if you washed or bathed. You will doubtless receive the benefit. But, if the proper mental attitude is also there, the benefit is doubled. Even if the mother feeds the child indifferently, the child's hunger is satisfied; but if she feeds the child with love and affection, the food becomes nectar; and in addition to the material benefit, the child derives an inexplicable spiritual benefit from the milk. As you wash your face or bathe, if you feel that the water is pouring Prana into your system, you will soon be charged with vitality.

So much for external purity. Now let us turn to internal purification. The mind must be pure. No bad or evil thoughts should arise in the mind. As Jesus has said in the Sermon on the Mount : sin is not what you do, but sin has its root in the mind. The motives must be pure. The feelings must be pure. I can boldly say that all of you are wonderful. It is because of your inner cleanliness you enjoy God's Grace. Body, mind, heart and soul - everything must be clean.

The next is Santosha, the second of the Niyama. It is "contentment". Again, I do not even have to explain this to you. You have it. I have not seen elsewhere a whole nation of people who are content with what they have. He who is satisfied with what he has is a happy man. This contentment can arise in a heart only if you have faith in God. We do not know why people run after the material objects and accumulate them. Even a multi-millionaire who has a huge palace, sleeps only in a small bed. Even the owner of a bakery takes only a small piece of bread every day. Even if you are a multi-millionaire, you cannot eat gold and drink silver. You also have to take the same bread and rice, and drink the same water. Whether you eat with your hands, or with an ordinary spoon, or a silver spoon or a gold spoon, the food you eat is the same. I told a rich man here one day : "This is my bed-room, meditation-room, study, drawing room, everything. In what way am I inferior to the man who has one room for sleeping, another for study, meditation and eating and so on. He only has more work sweeping all these!" If you keep this idea in the mind : "the less I have, the less worried I will be," you will be happy. This contentment can come only if you have faith in God. You need not accumulate food that you require next year. You need not accumulate clothes which you need for a life-time. God Who has created you, knows when you require what. There is a saying in Hindi, that on each grain of rice is written the name of the man who is going to eat it. If it is meant for you, nobody can take it away from you. If it is not meant for you, nobody can make you eat it.

I will tell you something which happened in our Ashram. There was an old Swami. He was sick. A doctor treated him and also prescribed diet. He was dying. One day, his tongue wanted tasty food. He was cooking some rice and curry. I passed by his room and looked in. I went somewhere else and returned to his room twenty minutes later. He was dead. The rice was still boiling, but the man was dead. His name was not written on it, it was not meant for him. To me it had a very great lesson. We who believe in Karma, feel that what we deserve will automatically come to us. Pleasure and pain, happiness and misery, poverty and riches - they will come to us, without our seeking for them. The yogi says: "You are not working for misery, and yet sometimes you are miserable. You do not want to become sick. But yet you become sick. It comes to you, because of Karma. In the same way even happiness, prosperity, wealth, food, will come to you, without your working for them." So, the Yogi, with contentment, does his duty. Santosha or contentment is very important. Desire is the root of all our sufferings. You cannot practise any Yoga if the mind is full of desires. Of course, even life will be miserable if you are full of desires. Contentment or Santosha is very important in a Yoga student. It is highly interesting that in French "content" means "happy": truly, contentment is happiness.

The next in Niyama is Tapas. I shall explain this to you on another occasion. Here let me say, Tapas is simple life. To lead a simple life, without show, without pride, is Tapas. In your dress, personal appearance, food, in the way you live, in your thoughts and feelings - in all these, to be simple is Tapas. Sometimes, very rich people wear a single dress costing thousands of pounds. There is no sense in

it. You need dress : whether you wear a simple cotton dress or one costing a million pounds, you are only covering your dirty body! The more the luxury, the more lazy you become. The more the luxury, the less able you become to live a happy life. You are afraid of thieves. If you are accustomed to sitting on sofas and chairs, you cannot sit in Padmasan. If you learn to sit on the ground, you can sit on the ground, and you can sit on chairs also. But if you are accustomed to luxury, you cannot lead a simple life - you become a slave. Tapas, mainly, means leading a simple life. This naturally means that you have self-control. The mind wants luxury, the senses want luxury, and you want to control them. When you thus control them, a psychic fire is produced. It is a fire which burns vanity, egoism.

The next is Swadhyaya, which means study of scriptures. It also means Japa, repetition of God's Name. Without regularly studying some scripture, the spiritual ideal cannot be kept before you. I pray to you, especially the mothers, to cultivate this habit in the children. That is how we were trained in our boyhood days. Otherwise, even what you know you will slowly forget. You think you know : but somehow Satan enters the heart and you forget, you do not practise. You have all read the Sermon on the Mount, but you do not practise. Why? Because it is forgotten. If every day you read the same thing again and again, one day the idea will arise : "I must practise". Every day, you must read some scripture - Bible, Gita, Quran, etc.

The last is Isvarapranidhana. It is devotion, surrender, to God. The author of Yoga, Patanjali, himself gives a very great place of importance to devotion. For the main feature of Raja Yoga is meditation. You cannot fix your mind on something which you do not love. Here is a plastic cover : God dwells in this. If you can meditate on this, you will realise God. Try. Your mind will not be steady. Why? You can't love this plastic cover. So, choose some object of meditation which your heart can love. When you place a picture of Lord Jesus in front of you, you love Him. Even so with a picture of your Guru. Unless your heart and your mind love the object of meditation, you cannot meditate. Do you know the Star (or Shield) of David, the Holy Symbol of the Jews? It is two intertwined triangles. In Judaism, as well as in Hinduism, this is a holy symbol. Amongst Hindus there are some people called Tantriks, who actually meditate upon this and get psychic powers. Try to do this. You may find it difficult; it has no strong emotional appeal. You know what the Hindu did? He put a human figure into the same symbol. Into the top angle, he put His head. Into the bottom angle, he put His feet. Into the other four, he put His Four hands (most of the Hindu gods have four hands). The mystic symbol was thus converted into, or filled by a human figure. Now, It smiles at me, It talks to me, and I love to meditate on Him. I call him Vishnu, and when I think of Him, I can absolutely calmly, with all my heart, mind, and soul, meditate on God. In the same way, you can meditate on the Holy Cross; but very few can do it. If you take a crucifix with the figure of Jesus on it, your mind will immediately become concentrated, because you see the Lord Himself, and your heart will immediately say, "Lord, I am Thine." Even though Hindus, Jews, Christians and Muslims, we all believe that God is everywhere, we

adopt a special form to worship Him in - the symbol or the object which we choose to represent God must be loved by our heart. Then it is possible for us to meditate and to realise God. There is of course the great danger here of hallucination and also stagnation, which was probably why their use was sternly prohibited, thus leading up to other extreme, a vacuum. A wise seeker will make the proper use of these symbols, and with their help, cultivate inner awareness.

7. The Reward of Virtue

For the last two weeks we have been studying 'Yama' and Niyama. We saw the Yama and Niyama consisted of developing certain virtues, and living a disciplined, simple life. Today I will tell you what Maharishi Patanjali, the author of this scripture on Yoga, says about the benefits of practising Yama-Niyama. Before I do so, I must say this, that we do not practise Yama-Niyama in order to get these benefits. Later on, we shall study that the practise of Pranayama, concentration and meditation will bestow on us psychic powers. But, we do not practise Yoga in order to get these powers. They are mentioned in the scripture, because sometimes you will encounter those powers, and you will not know what they are. So, Patanjali mentions : "If you practise meditation, you might develop these powers. Don't use them. They are dangerous. They will take you away from God." Your goal is to realise God. In the same way, these Yama-Niyama will give some benefits. As I go on, I shall tell you how it is important that we should know this.

First is Ahimsa, love or compassion. If you are perfect in the practice of Ahimsa, even in front of you, people will forget their enmity. You have heard of aura. You will build such an atmosphere or aura around you that, in your very presence, people will forget their enmity. It is said that even animals will be influenced by your aura. So that, for instance, a tiger and a lama might sit in front of you, and forget to fight each other. Now, it is good to know this. You can use your influence in spreading love. If your heart is full of divine compassion, you can walk into a place where people are beginning to fight, and you will see that people will stop fighting. When you know you have this power, you can radiate love and bring about unity.

The second is Satyam or truthfulness. It means, what you say must be truthful, pleasant and beneficial. It is said that if you speak the truth for twelve years, you will develop what is known as Vak-Siddhi (what you say will come true). Here again, if you know that you have this power, you can wish others well, and avoid cursing people. A Yogi always blesses. He always wishes well, and not even in play, not even when he is annoyed, does he curse other people. Always wish well, and never let a curse escape your lips.

The next is Asteya. I told you it is non-stealing, and it also means "charity". If you are established in this virtue, you will get all the wealth of the world. It is quite simple; especially amongst you good people, we can feel it - if you do not want to take anybody else's property, if you are contented, then everybody wants to help you. All the wealth of the world is yours. I am a fakir. I have no house. I have no purse or car. But, because of that all, the people help me. I can travel in anybody's car and live in anybody's house. The less you have, the more is your "property"! The more you have, the more the trouble. So, Patanjali says, the man who has charity in his heart possesses the wealth of the whole world.

The next is Brahmacharya. In its limited meaning, it means celibacy. And, in its

wider sense, it is control of all the senses and the mind. The mind always lives in God. If you are established in it, you will get tremendous energy. This energy is not merely physical energy, but also vital and mental energy. You can easily understand this, because when the mind constantly thinks of God and does not play in the objects of this world, then all that energy in it is preserved. There are some people who practise celibacy. But they are not interested in God, they are after money. They don't want to marry, but they don't want God either; they want only money. You think they are Yogis, but they are only repressing their desires to get more money. They are very energetic and work a lot, but work only for money. In the same way, I have seen some people who are gymnasts. They also are celibates, but are not interested in God. They are interested in their muscles. They think that if they get married, all the muscles will go and so remain celibates. They get the energy, but do not know how, and for what to use it. Here again it is very important that we must know that "now I am practising Brahmacharya, I have the energy, and I should know how to use it". We must use it in the practice of Yoga. Then that energy will be put to proper use.

The next is Aparigraha, and I explained to you that it not only means not accepting what belongs to other people, but also not desiring. When a man is desireless, his heart is calm, his mind is tranquil, and so, Patanjali says, he will know the cause of birth and death? "Why was I born here? Because of desire, and now that I am desireless, I will know. Oh, desire is the cause of birth." So long as we are driven by our own desires, we don't even know why we have taken birth. Only when the desires have become silent, when the heart has become desireless, then we know, "Ah, this is why I have been taking birth again and again. It is desire that has made me take birth again and again. And now, no more rebirth."

Coming to Niyama, we saw the first is cleanliness. Here, Patanjali divides cleanliness into two - internal and external. External cleanliness includes cleanliness of body which is "outside". Here, Patanjali has something humorous to say to us. If you are regular in keeping all these clean, he says, you will soon become disgusted. You go on washing your body; again it becomes dirty, again you wash; and you begin to feel, "It is dirty. I don't want this body." In the same way you clean the house again and again, till you become disgusted, and you want to go to the forest! Internal cleanliness or having a clean mind, pure heart - gives you a clear mind. "Chitta Prasada" - it is difficult to translate it : if your heart and mind are clean, he says, you will experience God's Grace in your own mind, the blessings of God in your own heart and mind.

The next is Santosha or contentment. There is a proverb, "A contented mind is a continuous feast". Patanjali says that if you have contentment, you will have happiness. It is quite easy to understand. Suppose I am not contented with what I have, I am unhappy. If I expect a lot, my happiness is less. If I come to your house expecting to be worshipped, to be fed, and to get plenty of money, even if you receive me nicely, I am not satisfied, I am unhappy. But, if I do not expect anything, and you give me a little, I am overjoyed. If a man is contented, he is always happy. If a man is not contented, he can never be happy.

The next in Niyama is Tapas-austerity, simple life or burning the senses. Patanjali promises that we shall develop occult powers by practising Tapas. Tapa's is the fire in which the senses are burnt. What is the business of fire? Fire burns and purifies. People who melt gold know that, when gold is melted in fire, it becomes pure. In the same way, if you burn the senses and the mind in the fire of Tapas, they will become purer, and therefore they will have wonderful powers. In a lighter vein (in order to enable you to understand), let me explain : with the nose you can smell. If the nose is clean, you smell well. If somebody burns incense half a mile away, you will smell it. If it is full with mucus, you cannot smell even what is near you. In the same way, if you purify the senses by Tapas, you will develop occult powers.

The next is Swadhyaya - study of scriptures, and also Japa or repetition of God's Name. Patanjali promises that if you do these two, regularly, you will see God. It is only in a limited sense : it does not mean God-realisation, but you will see God in the form in which you are worshipping Him. For instance, if you are regular in your Bible-study, and if you regularly take the name of Lord Jesus, you will get a vision of Lord Jesus. It is not actually God-realisation or self-realisation - that is far away. But even having a vision of Lord Jesus is not a small achievement. You will have greater encouragement to realise God. Here if you know, "If I study the scripture and do Japa, I will have God's vision", you will want to do more. Since, here, a Maharishi gives you the guarantee, you will not give up the practice. It is only in foolishness and ignorance that people give up the practice of Yoga, saying, "I repeated God's Name, studied the Bible and tried to meditate. Nothing happened. So, I have given up." I tell them, "Suppose you take two pieces of bread and are not satisfied, do you get up and go. No, you eat more. But, if God does not come to you after 10 years of Japa, you give up : no, you must do more." Go on till you have the vision of God.

The last is Isvarapranidhana, devotion or Surrender to God, by which you enter into Samadhi. This is quite easy to understand. It is only your egoism which prevents you from entering into Samadhi. When you surrender your ego to God, then immediately you will enter into Samadhi. But this surrender is not very easy. People always say, "Lord, I am Thine!", but worry about their supper. Their surrender is not real and genuine. They only pray with their lips, not with their heart. Here, when Patanjali says, "Surrender to God and you will enter into Samadhi", and you sit and find you are not getting Samadhi, it means your surrender is not real. Sometimes, people doubt and criticise Lord Jesus for saying, "Believe in me and all your sins are forgiven." About the doctrine of atonement, that Jesus, by suffering on the Cross has suffered for our sins, and that if we believe in Him, our sins are forgiven - people say, "He lived two thousand years ago, and how did He know what sins we will commit today, and do you mean to say that He died on the Cross for the sins I commit today? It is absurd." But the meaning is this: if you surrender your whole heart to Lord Jesus and say, "Lord, I believe you have suffered for my sins," it means, you surrender your ego to Him, and the ego is the sinner. When the ego is not there, there is no

sinner no sin. After all, who is it who commits sins? Your body cannot commit sins. When you are asleep, you do not sin. Even the most wicked man is most innocent when he sleeps. And, when the life has gone, you can commit no sin. The soul is pure. It is absolutely pure, because it is one with God. Then, where is sin, who is the sinner? It is the ego surrounded by the mind. When you take that ego, pluck it and throw it at the feet of Jesus, you are free. The body is only an instrument, and the soul is pure. The body will not act, unless it is pushed by the mind or the ego. That is the meaning: if you surrender yourself in full faith, "You have suffered for me, I have surrendered myself in full faith", the individual ego is gone, and at once you become pure and free. But, because of your own imperfections, you do not know what this surrender actually means. So, you go on saying, "Lord, lord, lord", and your life continues to be sinful. If the surrender is complete, Samadhi will come at once. If Samadhi does not come, it means the surrender is not real, and you must do more, more, and more - surrender - increase your faith and devotion.

Next week I shall give you some details of what Tapas means. It is important to know. Because, even among Christian mystics, there was the fashion merely to mortify the flesh. Trying to stand on one leg, or stand in freezing water etc. - in India there were Yogis who indulged in such foolish austerities. I saw one man who for some years had never sat down; always standing or walking. He had no home and he was wandering about. He carried a gadget (a tall canvas table), and used it for eating and resting or sleeping. His legs had become like an elephant's legs and he had no knee-joint. He did not use it! He thought he was doing Tapas. That is foolish mortification. It does not help one in Yoga or spiritual life. Such practices are not encouraged by Patanjali or Sri Krishna. It is obvious that no Yoga-practice whatsoever is effective without right understanding; and all Yoga-practices are of great value if they spring from right understanding. They have physical, mental, moral, psychic or spiritual value. I believe that is also the meaning of what Lord Jesus said in the Bible, "Don't demonstrate your devotion to God. Don't show off your devotion or that you are a Yogi. This practice of Yoga is something like a very intimate relationship between the soul and God. You know that even in Christian mysticism the human soul is regarded as the bride of God. In India also this belief is common, that my Jiva is the bride of God. This relationship of my soul's love for God is extremely sacred and personal to me - not for demonstration. All that we do, the prayer, the Tapas, the meditation, must all be done in secret for the soul's love of God. It is something between the bride and the bridegroom, not for the public to see. And, one of the most important practices is Tapas, and what that is I will explain next week.

8. Practical Way to Self-Purification

Tapas is very important in spiritual life. It is Tapas or the fire of austerity, which burns the impurities of the heart. As I explained to you last time, according to Patanjali Maharishi, Tapas burns up the impurities of the senses and the mind, and so you might develop occult powers. Please don't forget that the ultimate goal of Yoga is to burn egoism. Therefore, our Master Swami Sivananda regards bearing insult and injury as the highest Sadhana or Tapas. The same thing was expressed by Lord Jesus, when He said : "Blessed you are when you are persecuted for My sake." Because there you go straight to the root of the problem, and burn the ego itself.

Tapas means burning. Think and tell me what is more painful - suppose you are thrown into fire, is that more painful, or, supposing a big public meeting is held, and you are placed there, and somebody stands in front of you and goes on insulting you - which is more painful? The second one is more painful. If the body of a man is thrown into the fire, it is all over, it is finished. But to insult him is like burning him inch by inch. So, even in the Bhagavad Gita you will find, "to be insulted is more painful than even death." There is a proverb in an Indian language, which says "You can take a red hot iron rod, and burn one's hand, it will heal up - but the injury that you make with your tongue does not heal." So, insulting a man or injuring his ego does not heal as quickly as an injury done to his body.

Take it from the other end. If you bear that insult, the ego is burnt. That is the greatest Tapas. Visualise the position in which Lord Jesus was when He was persecuted by His opponents. Thousands of people worshipped Him as God. And here, there were a few people who insulted Him publicly. Place yourself in His position, and realise what a tremendous fire would be generated in your heart. If you, in such position, behave as Jesus did, feeling "Nothing happens to me," and keep quiet, then the ego is burnt. When Jesus said, "You are blessed when you are persecuted for My sake", and our Master says, "Bear insult, bear injury", it is not because you are weak that you bear injury. No. You must be capable of fighting back, but you must keep quiet. Then it proves to be the greatest Tapas. Your ego itself is burnt.

Our Master Swami Sivananda gives us some useful hints. When you are insulted, think, "What does he insult? He is looking at this body and he is saying, 'You are a fool'. He is insulting this person Mr. So-and-so. I myself want to feel that I am not this body or Mr. So-and-so, but I am the Atma or the Self. He is insulting something which I myself want to disown. This is a product of ignorance. I want to forget it, that I am Mr. So-and-so, and I want to remember that I am the Self. This man is not insulting my Self, which is the same as his Self. He cannot insult my Self, because he is my Self." If you reflect on those lines, you will feel grateful to the man who insults you - you have swept this house and kept the dirt in a corner and someone comes and takes it and throws it away - will you not be grateful to him? In the same way, by insulting you, he has helped you to

throw away the ego. You must be thankful to him. It is like someone removing a dirt sticking to your shirt - you must be thankful to him. You have a boil on your hand, and the doctor cuts it away - you are not angry, but you are thankful to him. In the same way, when one insults you, he is helping you by cutting away the ulcer of your ego. If you intelligently bear insult and injury, you burn your ignorance or the ego itself. Thus our Master goes to the root of the problem. He calls it the greatest Sadhana or Tapas.

In the Bhagavad Gita, we have the same Tapas described very beautifully. There, Sri Krishna, the author, says that Tapas is very important in spiritual life. If you want to lead a spiritual life, or a life of Yoga, Krishna wants you to remember three things - Yajna, Dana and Tapas. Even if you have realised God, or you are the greatest of saints, you should not give up these three - sacrifice, charity and Tapas. In a minute I will show you that even sacrifice and charity rest on Tapas.

What are the ropes with which you are bound to this world? Why do you feel that you are weak human beings, when, in reality, you are divine? The two ropes are egoism and mine-ness. The first feeling : "I am"; then, "I am different from you". The second feeling : "This is mine, not yours". All our problems arise from this I-ness and mine-ness. In the world, people fight and experience misery, only because they feel that "this is mine and I am different from you." In order to remove mine-ness, the sense of possession, we are asked by Krishna to do charity. See something funny here : today I feel "this is mine", and if it is lost I am miserable. Supposing I give it (say, a watch) to him in charity today, and a week later he loses it : I do not care. Why? When I think it is mine and it is lost, I am miserable; but when I feel it is somebody else's and it is lost, I don't care. So, I do not feel miserable because this is lost, but I feel miserable only because something which is mine is lost. If you give charity, then you will begin to see that these things are not "mine". "This can be mine today and it can be his tomorrow." If you remember this formula, then you will never feel miserable. How to develop this feeling? By charity. That is called Dana. If you go on giving, one of these days you will completely overcome the feeling of mine-ness.

Yajna is sacrifice. Sacrifice is not the sacrifice of the animal outside, but an animal inside. What is that animal? - the animal of egoism, the feeling that "I am different from you". Here it is even more difficult. When I give him something, which I think belongs to me, it is charity. When I am prepared to give my life itself to him, it is sacrifice. Something which I feel "it is myself" - when I give it to somebody else, humanity or God, it is Yajna. In our scriptures there are some stories to show how extremely poor people have attained God-realisation, by merely giving away food which would have saved their life, but which somebody else needed. A poor man is on the brink of death from starvation; he gets some food, and when he is about to eat it, and save his life, somebody else comes to him, hungry, and the poor man gives the food away. He says, "Let me die, but you must live." He goes to the Kingdom of God. That is called Yajna.

Both Yajna or sacrifice, and Dana or charity, depend upon austerity, burning the

desires in the senses and the mind. If your heart is full of desires, you will never give charity. If you are full of ignorance, you will never be able to sacrifice. Tapas is like the Foundation for spiritual life, for charity and sacrifice. Let me tell you what Sri Krishna has to say about Tapas. He divides it into three parts. We always refer to thought, word and deed. All the three must be burnt and purified by Tapas. Our actions, our speech, our thoughts must be purified by Tapas. Then our entire being will be pure.

First the physical Tapas, or Tapas of the body, with which we perform physical actions. You will see that Krishna has actually taken parts of Yama and Niyama, and included them under Tapas. "To worship God, priests or holy men, wise men and Guru" - to be respectful towards them itself is Tapas. You will remember that among Niyama there is Isvarapranidhana or worship of God. Krishna continues his list : Saucham or cleanliness, which we have discussed at great length. Then straightforwardness in action. Some people will tell you something, and do something else! The opposite of that is Arjava or straightforwardness. Then, Brahmacharya - it is also physical Tapas. Ahimsa is also physical Tapas. We have discussed these already. All these constitute physical Tapas.

The second is Tapas of speech. This is very important. I say something and you get angry - who is at fault? Krishna says I am to blame. Why? I said something which annoyed you, I caused the anger in you - so I am responsible. The speech of the Yogi should be such as will not cause annoyance in others, too. Your speech must always be sweet like honey. It should never, never irritate others. Then, Satyam - truthful speech. Priyam (pleasant) and Hitam (beneficial). Then practice of study of scriptures and also, repetition of the Lord's Name. This is called Tapas of speech by Krishna. Again you see that Krishna has combined parts of Yama and Niyama, added some of his own, and made it Tapas.

Now comes mental Tapas. To have a pleasant, cheerful, serene and calm mind (Manaprasadah) is Tapas. You should never be disturbed. In Tapas of speech, Krishna says, "You should not disturb others." Here he says, even if others try to disturb you, you must be calm. Next, Saumyatvam, which means goodness, which is very difficult to translate. You have sometimes felt it : when you go near a man, you feel, "He is a good man". If somebody asks you to explain, you will not be able to do so. "When I go near him, I feel he is a good man." That is Saumyatvam. Next is Mounam - the vow of silence. But don't forget that this is given under the list of mental Tapas. Some people - you will see many of them in India - observe the vow of silence, but their mind is very very talkative, and it is talking all the time. That is not Mouna; he does not talk with his tongue, but talks with the mind. The mind must be silent. The mind can be silent only if there are no desires. The mind can be desireless only if it rests in God. When it rests in God, all the desires will be burnt. What we need is provided by God, and what God does not give us, we do not want. Thus, the other Yamas and Niyamas, like Santosha, Aparigraha, etc. are all brought into the category of Tapas by Krishna. The next is Atmavinigraha, which is the Brahmacharya of the mind and senses : complete control of mind and senses.

I might as well explain here that control does not mean suppression. For instance, suppose a man is driving a car and I say, "Oh, he has good control over the car", it does not mean he has stopped the car. If you reflect over this example, you will understand what is meant by control -Brahmacharya or Atmavinigraha. Self-control does not mean starving or taking no part in life. You should not be made mad by somebody else. Somebody else must not delight you or depress you. You should not say, "Somebody said something, and I lost my temper." You should not say, "Somebody gave me liquor, and so I did something foolish." All your senses, your heart and your mind should be under your control; what you want they should think, feel or do. Then you will adopt the wonderful middle path or moderation that Krishna advocates in the Gita. In the matter of eating, sleeping and righteous enjoyment of worldly pleasures, you will adopt the middle path - neither complete repression nor indulgence. That is Atmavinigraha. You think it is very easy, but when you try to practise it, you will find it is more difficult than going to either extremes. Suppose you like some dish or fruit. It is easy to avoid it - not to eat it at all. It is easy to eat too much. But it is very difficult to take just a little. You can apply this to other things also. It is very difficult to enjoy anything in moderation. That control is called Atmavinigraha.

Then comes something still more interesting - Bhavasamsuddhi, which means, the motive, the idea and the attitude with which you work in this world must be pure. In whatever you do - office or household work, in your relation with your wife, children and other people - your mental attitude must always be pure. This is something funny again : the moment you begin to watch your mind, it will become pure and calm. Any emotion - lust, anger - you can control, if only you know how to watch the mind. Try it in your own life; it is very interesting. When you get excited, turn within and ask your mind, "What is happening now ?" - and the whole thing will collapse with a sigh. Only, you must learn the art of watching the mind. When I begin to watch my mind, and to ensure that my motives are pure, all excitement is taken away. It does not mean that I become cold and lifeless. A husband might still love his wife with all his heart. He will continue to be a very good husband. If he watches his mind, his attitude and his motives towards her, he will be a good husband, but will not be a brute or an animal. Now you have a clear idea of what Bhavasamsuddhi is. Suppose you are a businessman, and I come to you as a customer, you will make your profit on what you sell, but you will watch your mind, motive and attitude, and you will not be greedy, and you will not cheat me. Now you have understood what purity of motive means. All these constitute Manasic Tapas, or Tapas of the mind. Here again we see that Krishna has condensed Yama and Niyama of Raja Yoga and in His own way made it Tapas.

What are the evils in the mind ? - desire and excitement. You control them. Desire is moderated and excitement is finished. The mind is burnt and made pure.

In the same way, in speech, you try to be truthful, pleasant, beneficial and

sweet, control it and devote it to study of scriptures, and repetition of His Name. All the evils of speech are burnt. In the same way, all the physical excitements and impurities are burnt in the physical Tapas, and the entire body is used for the worship of God. In this manner, body, mind and speech are purified, and this Tapas brings us truly near to God. Yama and Niyama are condensed into one word "Tapas" by Krishna. If we are regular in the practice of these three - Tapas, charity and self-sacrifice - we shall very soon enter into Samadhi.

These three - Tapas, Swadhyaya or study of scriptures, and repetition of His Name, and Isvara pranidhana or surrender to God - constitute what is known as Kriya Yoga, according to Patanjali. These three themselves can take you to God-realisation.

9. The Self, the World and God

Last week we discussed Tapas and all that it means. Tapas is universal. It is insisted on in all religions—Christianity, Islam, Judaism, all of them insist on Tapas. Tapas is necessary. In religious literature, Tapas is often described as atonement, which is made to sound as one word. To atone for one's sins is to suffer voluntarily for one's sins. If for instance I have cheated you in business I do some charity to the poor and thereby atone for my sin. One might wonder if there is such a thing as "sin" other than the dictates of tradition and social prejudices. What is "natural moral law" (dharma). It is that state in which one's whole being is whole, as is revealed when one observes oneself. This is holiness; this is health. Its opposite is fragmentation of oneself. This fragmentation also causes confusion, conflict, distress. This is removed by constant, vigilant and alert observation, which restores order within (which is virtue and which is dharma) and an inner transparency in which the Inner Light shines unobstructed. Now the fragmentation has gone—and at-one-ment restored. We forget the origin of a word. Atonement is really at-one-ment, which means "to become one"—one with God. To become at-one with our Self is what is meant by the word. Now I am not at one with my Self, I do not know what my Atma is and I am identifying myself the outside world.

Yoga is that state - Tada drashtuh svarupe avasthanam - "Where the Self rests in itself". As it is we identify ourselves with all kinds of outside things. When I see him, I feel he is my friend. He looks at her and feels "She is my wife." In that manner, the mind takes the forms of the various objects of the world. That is referred to as - Vrittisarupyant itaratra - or, when the mind is not in Yoga, it takes the forms of other objects of the world. It is important to understand this clearly.

I see this object. The Light falls on that and it strikes my eyes. The impressions or vibrations are carried to the mind. Then, I suddenly feel, "Oh, this is Ramananda, my brother." The Self which was resting in itself suddenly jumps and identifies with him. Everything in this world is related to us in this manner. We identify other things in relation to what we desire.

Take another example : there is a young woman ... It is just one form - 5'-4" tall, 120 lbs in weight. When she comes in, someone says, "She is my daughter." Raza says, "She is my friend." That young man says, "She is my wife". The child looks at her and says, "She is my mother". If a tiger looks at her, it will say, "She is my lunch". Now, what exactly is that?

Is this a daughter, a friend, a wife, a mother, a sister, or a dish to serve as lunch? If you think on this, you will clearly understand, it is the Self that identifies itself with the various ideas and the world is presented to the Purusha. That thought which arises in the mind is called Vritti.

I do not want you to waste your time. But, try this sometimes. Look at this flower. Do not let the impression create a thought in your mind. Immediately you look at this, the mind will say, "It is flower" - no, no, remove this thought. It is

Vritti. "It is pink", "It is round" - remove all these Vrittis. Is it possible to look at this without a thought in your mind? Try. You will know how difficult control of mental modifications (Vrittis) is. That shows that the Purusha is never at rest, but identifies itself with these mental impressions, so that everything that is brought in through the senses is identified by the Self with Himself. That is the trouble. You do not see the world as it is at all. Except for a Yogi, it is impossible. You always see what you want to see. The outside world is made of your desires. If the inner desires are not there and the Vrittis are not there, then you will see the world as it is. That is when you will see that everything is God. That is the truth.

It is because of this difficulty that Yogis do not say a word, but remain silent. Anything that you see, hear or say is false. When you look at me and say, "This is a man", "He is a Swami" - it is wrong; it is own mental projection. If a tiger looks at me, will it say, "He is a Swami"? You say I am a Swami, it says I am a piece of meat. Who is right? Neither. You think I am a Swami because you feel I am here to teach you. The tiger thinks I am a piece of meat because it wants to eat. You are projecting your desire and the tiger its desire outside. There is no truth. That is why those who are devoted to truth, especially the Yogis or saints, keep quiet. The mind can never know the truth. What is truth? When the Purusha rests in itself, that is the truth. That is the goal of Yoga.

What prevents that state of Yoga? The mind and the senses always flowing out. You open your eyes, see the outside objects. You hear only outside noises. The moment the eye comes into contact with this, the mind says "flower". So we start with the very difficult process of burning the desire to see the outside world, to experience the outside world. That is the purpose of Tapas. The purpose of Yama and Niyama is to make the whole being Sattvic. This word "Sattvic" must be very carefully understood. Sat-va comes from Sat. Sat means Truth, the Self or God. In Sanskrit this suffix "va" is used to denote quality "pertaining to". Sattva is "the nature of God."

People usually ask us, "How do they know what God's nature is?" In our scriptures there are any number of descriptions of what a saint should be like. They have adopted a very simple method to arrive at these descriptions. They have watched a Yogi or a sage and whatever his nature was they have described as Sattvic nature. The same thing you have in the Gospels. The way Jesus lived and behaved is Sattvic. "This is how Jesus lived, this was his nature - it is Sattva". Afterwards you take Bhagavad Gita and take the chapter in which Sattva is described, you will find the same qualities there! Sattva is the quality that takes us close to God. These qualities are given in Yama-Niyama. Suppose in a big house, this child Ernest knows in which room his mother is. If he wants to rest with the mother, he will open the gate and the other doors and enter and get close to the room in which the mother lives. Afterwards he will only have to call out and the mother will come. Similarly, if we develop Sattva, and then call upon God in prayer and meditation, God's Grace will lift us out of this world.

On the one hand, we try to prevent the mind from getting entangled in the

world. On the other, we develop those qualities which are close to God, so that he will liberate us. So long as the Purusha identifies himself with the thoughts, he cannot have rest, peace of mind or happiness.

Just visualise the Atma or the Purusha residing in the heart. Do not think that God is so small that you can put him into your heart. It is only to help meditation. Visualise God in the heart and the mind in the head. The power of thinking is the mind. The mind is not the same as the brain, but the brain is the house of the mind. The world is received through the senses into the brain or the mind. The Purusha at heart is always looking at the mind. That is perfectly all right, for that is how God made the whole world, and that is how we understand the world. But, what happens actually is the Purusha jumps into the head on account of desire.

When you see a stranger, somebody for whom you do not care, whom you do not love or hate, look at that man, watch your mind - your heart is in your chest and your mind is in your head. Now, look at someone whom you love. And, watch your mind. You will find part of your heart in your head, and your heart will be palpitating. Look at someone whom you hate, the same thing will happen. That is what happens to us more or less throughout the day. That is called e-motion or movement outside.

I was watching a son part from his mother today. I could see that part of the mother's heart went up to her head and her eyes and out with the young man. A couple of tears flowed down her eyes. And, when he comes back to her, her heart will again jump into her eyes to receive him. It is very interesting to watch.

The Purusha does not merely watch the mind, but gets into the mind. That is called "identification". You may also be able to get a glimpse of this process of "identification" when you sit for meditation and watch your mind. Very soon and very easily, you can distinguish two types of thoughts (vrittis) - one that arises in the mind and which moves on, giving rise to another, and the other that you think. The former does not disturb your mind, the latter does. The former leaves you where you are, in peace; the latter carries you away, in turmoil. The latter is "identification". Identification with a thought or Vritti is the trouble. It is not easy to understand intellectually, but if you apply this process to your daily life, you can have what you want - health, peace, happiness, etc., and an understanding of the cause of your illness and miseries. Take a simple example again. It is cold. What is cold? The temperature has dropped. The skin feels the cold wind. The impression is carried to the mind. The mind is only a telegraph officer in the post office who receives all kinds of telegrams-good or bad - from everywhere. He is not concerned. Even so, the mind receives all the impressions. But the Purusha who is watching it, suddenly jumps into the mind - "Oh, it is cold." If he is merely watching, nothing happens. Look at that pool of water - you do not feel cold. But, get into it, you feel cold. In the same way, so long as the Purusha is watching the mind, there is no trouble. But when the Purusha gets into it, he gets into trouble. When the Purusha identifies himself with the cold in the brain or mind, then you start shivering. I will also tell you how it is a matter of identification and nothing

else. This mother is very much affected by the cold. Suppose her son slips into that pool. This same mother will throw away her coat and jump into the water. What happened to her cold? In the mind, first there was the Vritti of cold. The Purusha identified himself with that Vritti of cold. A little later, another Vritti arose : "My son is dying". Again the Purusha identifies himself with that Vritti. The cold has gone, and she is prepared to plunge into the pool. If you analyse in this manner, you will discover that the whole world is made of Vrittis. Because the Purusha identifies himself with the Vritti there is suffering.

If we can separate him and let the Purusha be a mere witness, there will be no trouble. I will not worry, you with too many philosophical terms. All the senses and the mind are called Prakriti or Pradhana. The human soul is called Purusha. The Purusha is naturally in love with the Prakriti, whom he is seeing all the time. Yoga recognises that it is not easy for the Purusha to be unaffected without some other help. Moreover, you are like someone who has slipped into mud. It is difficult for you to come out of the mud without some help. You have not got lost in the mud the head is still above. The mud is only mud, and you are powerful. But unfortunately it is not easy for you to come out without some other help. Therefore, in Yoga, Patanjali asks us to have faith in Isvara, God. You will understand the speciality here only if I tell you that there was another system of philosophy which said, "Where is the need for a separate God? If you understand that the Purusha is witness of Prakriti, you will never suffer." It is true. But, as I told you, it is difficult for the Purusha who has so long been in the mud, to get out of it by his own unaided effort. That is why Patanjali asks us to believe in God. This God of Patanjali is called Isvara and He is described as Purusha-visesha. He is also the same type as your soul (Purusha), but He never gets into the mud. He is like a strong man who is standing outside the pool of mud who is able to help you out of it. When you are in trouble and want to get out of it, you hold out your hand - pray, meditate. In other words, all that you do is to hold somebody's hand in order to get out of this mud. You have to turn away from the world and unless there is somebody tempting you from behind you will not do it. That is why it is said that God calls you, and when you turn to Him you forget the world. That is the process of Yoga.

Through Yama-Niyama and Tapas, you have burnt the senses and made them powerless. Now you have to make the Purusha meditate upon Isvara and realise God. Step by step you shall go to that ultimate goal. Today I will only indicate what those steps are. First, when you look at a friend, you feel "I love you". The Purusha identifies himself with the friend. As you struggle to restrain yourself, you begin to feel, "This is the nature of the mind to think so, I am only a witness". Then, you begin to watch yourself and ask "What am I? What business have I to say I love you?" When you completely disconnect yourself from the world and fix the mind on the Purusha, reverse the whole process, you have a hazy idea, "This is I". Then, when you begin to meditate, you feel this I is with God. When you enter into Samadhi (it is not correct to say you will realise "I am God"), your "I" will go, and God alone will remain. Because language is imperfect, we usually say "I am God" (Aham Brahmasmi), but it is not literally correct. "I" actually goes and

God alone remains. It is not even true to say, "I have become one with God". Take this common example : with salt you prepare a toy. Take it back to the sea and drop it into the sea. What has happened? Has the toy become one with the ocean? It came from the ocean - the salt. Or, if you take a bucketful of water from the ocean and pour it back into it. It is ocean water and it continues to be ocean water. Nothing has happened. When God alone is, there will not be someone to say "This is God". One of the Upanishads declares that you will not even know "I have realised God". For, if you are able to say so, it means the ego is still there, and where is God? There are not two thrones in the Kingdom of God : either "I" remains or God remains. If "I" is there, God realisation is still far away. If God has been realized, I will not be there to say "I have seen God". That of course is the ultimate goal which, I hope, is a little far from us. I say I hope because I do not think you will really like if you go home and suddenly realise God now. From what little I have explained, you will realise that the fight itself is interesting - the control of the mind, and the watching of the mind themselves are very interesting. It is true that ultimately God is the goal, but even the path is interesting. Such is Yoga. The goal is of course grand and wonderful. But even the path is wonderful.

Please do not get worried at all if the mind does not become steady immediately and you are not able to meditate. Even in the process of struggle, you will get wonderful experiences. I think now I am a good man, and when I sit for meditation, I am surprised, I wonder from where do these funny thoughts come to me? Watch. Even that watching is interesting. Do not get frightened or desperate. Enjoy even the disturbances. In Yoga one should not be frightened of failures. Because, the goal is certain. Of course, you do not know now what that goal is. You only see the confusion, conflict and contradiction within you; you only see that there is restlessness and unhappiness in you. The removal of these is your goal. Faith in Yoga is simply faith in the possibility of their removal. The faith may be directed to your own self, the wholeness, where these contradictions do not exist or to some conceptualised "image of God" in whom they do not exist. This faith may be necessary for the vast majority of people, though it is not absolutely essential. Even in their case, the faith transmutes itself into knowledge. We have God to realise God. Keep the goal in front and go on. If you fall a thousand times, never mind: get up again and go. If all this struggle is put into the practice, then you will enjoy the fruit. I will give you a common example. In India this fruit guava is very expensive. We buy it and eat it with great joy. But here, there are plenty of trees - and nobody cares ! Why? Because it, is easily available to you. If you have to work for it, or walk five miles for it, you will enjoy it. Anything that is easily available, is not valued. If God is easily available, I tell you, you will not care. Jesus was there : how many recognised Him? Krishna, how many recognised Him? If God walks here - nobody will care. Struggle, struggle, struggle ... When you realise God, you will value it.

10. Posture for Meditation

The next step in Yoga after Yama and Niyama is Asana. The Yoga Asanas that we practise are not essentially and really part of Raja Yoga. They help us in Raja Yoga, but they are not actually part of Yoga. Patanjali describes Asana in a very simple way - Sthira Sukham Asanam - "Asana is, a posture where you are firm and comfortable". We saw in our study so far, that we must forget the world and the body and make the Purusha or the soul meditate upon God. That is not possible unless the body is firm, steady, and also comfortable.

Firm and comfortable: there is one posture where you are firm and comfortable, but which is no good the posture in which you sleep! You recline on a sofa; it is firm and comfortable - but you will sleep. After some practice, meditation is possible even in bed - as in the case of our Master. But for our purposes, the posture must be firm and comfortable, and must also be associated with Yoga. After perfection, it does not matter how you sit - but it is important that now you sit properly.

It is not always possible to have a firm posture in a day. The Yogi of India does not expect you to become perfect in a day. So long as you try and try sincerely, it is all right. So, Patanjali gives us some hints how to get control over posture. Now you cannot sit for a long time. What will help you in Asana Jaya or perfection in postures? By Asana Jaya they mean : you must be able to sit steadily for over three hours, continuously. Then you have Asana Jaya. One of my brothers who is in the Himalayas sits in Padmasana for ten or sixteen hours. If you are able to sit for three hours, afterwards you can lengthen the period as you please. As in the case of the other Asanas, it is only the beginning that is difficult.

Patanjali gives us three hints.

(1) Mild, steady practice. You should not give up, nor overdo the practice. Please remember; this is important in the case of not only Asanas and Pranayama, but also of meditation, everything. Too much is not good. We have seen young men who take to Yoga with a zest. They overdo the practice, - Sadhana. Sometimes they develop some nervous disorder. Even if this does not happen, they expect God to come in two months, and if He does not come, a reaction sets in and they abandon the practice. This is no good. Steady and mild practice is necessary.

Sometimes in our scriptures we are told that we should have a burning aspiration or desire for God. Please remember that the word 'burning' was used by a Rishi, who was living in a forest. What was the burning he had seen? The burning of fire. Have you noticed how fire burns? Steadily, without noise, always going up. Steady, calm, and without excitement and always going up. That is 'burning aspiration for God.'

But take the case of the primus stove : when you turn it on, it burns with great sound and fury. But in a moment it goes out and it is finished. Modern burning is

all sound and fury, then the fire goes out. Modern Yogi is also like that. He does all sorts of things for a little while and then gives up. That shows, that his motive itself was somewhat undesirable.

When a proper student practises Yoga, it will be steady and mild practice. If you are able to sit for half an hour now, gradually increase it - not suddenly. If you suddenly increase the period, something will happen to the leg, and you will not be able to practise for two months.

(2) The next aid is meditation. Meditation itself will give steadiness of posture. One helps the other. If you are able to sit steadily, you will get meditation. If your mind is concentrated, you will be able to sit steadily.

(3) In India they have a belief that if you want great strength, you must meditate on the elephants, as Patanjali says. They have a belief that if you meditate on a tortoise, you will get firm posture. The idea is see how steady the tortoise is. When you sit for your meditation, think of a mountain, tortoise or some such firm object, and pray, "God, I am going to sit like that". Or, you can think of Lord Buddha. When He sat under the Bodhi-tree, he resolved, "Even if the body disintegrates, I will not get up from this seat till I get enlightenment". Like this you must have steady and continuous practice, combined with thought-power (intelligence). This is what I have been trying to tell you during the Asana classes also. Yoga-exercises are not physical postures. The mind must be connected. It is the mind that gives strength. The power is always there, and it is the mind that makes the power available to you. You must apply the mind to the practice. Feel, "This is easy for me. I pray to God to strengthen me."

(1) Steady, mild practice, (2) meditation, and (3) contemplation on symbols of firmness, if these three are combined, you will get mastery over the posture.

What is the effect of this mastery over the Asana? Tato-dwandw-anabhighatah - "By mastering this posture, the Yogi becomes free from the pairs of opposites." Specially those of you who are practising meditation would have noticed already, that the moment you sit for your meditation, you are not affected by the cold. It is only a sample. By mastery over the posture, you are able to go beyond heat and cold, pleasure and pain - everything is forgotten. When the mind is habituated to the feeling that the moment you sit in the Asana, you are going to think of God, it will ignore everything else.

That, by the way, is an important psychological law. The Law of Association or conditioned reflex. The mind always associates one thing with the other. A great Russian psychologist Pavlov proved this through his famous experiment with the dog. That is one reason why in Yoga - specially so in Tantra - you are asked to practise meditation in the same room, on the same seat, facing the same direction, at the same hour. If you do this, the mind will easily get concentrated. Some of them even insist that you should wear the same clothes, specially set apart for the meditation practice. The mind instantly feels : "Now it is

meditation-time."

In this Asana, what exactly do you do? There is a certain natural restlessness in the body, the nerves. You cannot sit quiet for some time. You usually think it is nice to rest. But you find that it is very difficult to sit quiet without doing anything and without sleeping. It is called Rajas-restlessness. By steady posture, you conquer that Rajas. You tell yourself, "For an other hour I am going to sit steady". By will power, practice, and prayer, conquer this Rajas. When Rajas is overcome, restlessness is overcome. If you are not restless, then the mind steadily flows towards God. When the mind steadily flows towards God, you forget heat and cold, pleasure and pain, etc.

Kundalini Yogis or Laya Yogis believe that there is a tremendous power in us, and it is through that power that we enjoy good health, calm mind and so on. The power that flows through the nerves is called Prana. When it does not flow freely through all the nerves, we get disease. A great psychologist from London, Dr. Graham Howe, also says that when the life-force is blocked in some of the nerves, you develop disease. When does this happen? When there is disharmony or restlessness. By sitting steadily in a single posture you establish harmony in the whole body. When the Prana flows freely through all the Nadis, the body is full of life, and you are not upset by what goes on outside.

This is Asana. The other Asanas that you practise every day help you in the practice of this Yoga. Even in the case of those Asanas, mental concentration on some centres of energy will greatly help. When you concentrate your mind on the centre, influenced by each Asana, power is generated in that centre. Each centre controls a certain part of the body and of the brain. When that centre functions properly, that part of the body and of the brain will also be healthy. When in this manner you are healthy, you shall not be affected by what goes on outside.

Thus, even though this Asana looks like a completely physical practice, Patanjali says it enables you to go beyond the pairs of opposites and find God.

Padmasana is of course the best of all for meditation. It is not possible to sag in this posture. There is a locking of the legs and so the posture is firm. The back automatically becomes straight. In meditation we want more blood to circulate in the head. By pressing the thighs with the feet, the blood circulation in the legs is lessened, and we have greater circulation the upper part of the body. The advantage that the Tantrics insist is this: the toes and the fingers are the poles of discharge of psychic power. That is why we place our head at the Feet of our Master, and He places His hands on our head. Through the legs and hands, He gives - through the head, we receive. In Padmasana, your feet are turned up, and so the power cannot be lost. The hands are placed on the knees, with the chin-mudra, a symbol which asks you to renounce the three, and unite the soul with God. Chin-mudra : open the palms, with the fingers stretched out. Touch the tip of the index finger with the tip of the thumb. This is also known as Jnana-mudra or the sign of wisdom. The three are : the physical, astral and causal bodies, or

the waking, dreaming, and sleep states, or Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. I find that the priest in the Roman Catholic church uses the same sign. It is the same thing all over the world. Every time the mind runs, remind yourself of the symbolism of the Chin-mudra. Or, you can place your hands on your lap - in a symbol of peace - with the palms lying one over the other facing up.

11. The Miracle of Life

Last week we discussed Asana. Till last week perhaps you thought that all that Yoga had to teach us, is common knowledge. Now, the next step is Pranayama : and there is a big surprise.

In Pranayama, the Yogi has something new and different to tell us. There are some scriptures in India - the Upanishads - where you have the statement that Prana is God. There you have the exhortation "Meditate on Prana as God". They go to the extent of saying that Prana controls the mind.

When two objects function together, you cannot say which is first - the cause, and which the second - the effect. They are one. In Hatha Yoga, they say Prana controls the mind - Prana vibrates and mind thinks. If you are able to control the Prana, you can control the mind.

What is this Prana? It is not easy to understand intellectually what Prana is. You may say it is life-force; but you do not know what life-force is. It is your life. And, if you open your eyes and see, you realise that there is life in all. You also know that if you stop breathing, you will die. The air outside contains Prana. You are breathing in Prana. The air is not Prana, but something in the air is Prana. Therefore, for instance, when you breathe poisonous air, you die. You cannot say "Well, I breathe air and I must live". The Prana in that air has been destroyed. You drink water. If you do not drink water for a long time, you will die. Prana is in water. In the same way, Prana is in the food, too. Not the food or water or air, but something in all of them. That is the thing that lives.

You will immediately see that when the Yogi says "Prana," he has a concept of his own. Something which is cosmic, which functions in the body, with the help of which I am able to see, hear and speak, and ultimately with the help of which I am able to think. When the Prana works in the physical body, it generates energy and movement. When that same Prana works in the brain, it thinks. It is here that the Yogi has a different philosophy. He says that it is the Prana that works through the mind. When you are calm, your breath also is calm. When you are excited, your breath also is excited. Which is the cause and which is the effect? I do not know. Either may be the cause. Because, it works both ways. If you control your Prana, your mind is controlled. If you control the mind, the Prana is controlled. Ultimately, you reach the conclusion that both are somehow one.

Please try to understand these three - the physical brain, the Prana and the mind. These three are not identical, but they are in the head. Does the brain think? No. In the dead body there is the brain, but it cannot think? It is the mind that thinks. How is the mind able to think? Because of Prana activating the latent thought-impressions. Three things are seated in the same place, having the same seat. In exactly the same way, you have Prana filling the whole body. You have the physical nerves. Within that there is what is called the astral Nadi. Through that this Prana flows. That extremely subtle psychic power is called Shakti, it is the

Prana-Shakti, life-force.

As I told you last week, when this Prana flows smoothly, you enjoy good health and also peace of mind. When there is disturbance, you get disease and imbalanced mind. Therefore, during the Pranayama exercises, when you concentrate your mind on the various plexuses, Prana flows into them following the mind. With a little practice, you will actually feel power being concentrated there.

Somebody experimented this in America. He placed two buckets of water in front of him and immersed his two legs into them. This man had trained himself in concentration. He concentrated his mind on his right leg - he thought only of his right leg. The doctors who were there, found that the water level in the right bucket rose a little. By that they proved that, when you intensely think of some part of your body, you are actually making it swell. Similarly, for instance, when you are thinking hard, your head becomes hot - all the Prana is concentrated in your head. If you understand that principle, you can work wonders. Even as you are conscious of your head when you think, in the same way you must be able to concentrate on the Chakras. Then you will be concentrating all the Pranic power at those centres. The ultimate benefit, of course, is that your Kundalini will be awakened, and you will have spiritual consciousness. But immediately you will enjoy good health and a balanced mind.

A few minutes ago I told you that we get Prana from food. The Yogi has a different story to tell. He says that, from the day of our birth till we die, everything that we do involves expenditure of Prana. Even eating is an expenditure of Prana, though Prana is also obtained from food. You see the difference between the motor-car and the human body. If you put some charcoal in the car, it will not function. But you are only putting charcoal (raw materials) into the mouth. Your body manufactures or extracts Prana from the food. The body needs the fuel, and Prana is required to produce Prana. It is like saying that each car has an oil well and petrol refinery attached to it. The body has to live. It has to spend Prana. It has to manufacture Prana. For manufacturing Prana, Prana is required. It must spend this Prana, get Prana and then spend more. Now you know how precious this Prana is.

How many ways are there in which we spend Prana freely? All activity involves expenditure of Prana. But the Yogi says that large-scale expenditure of Prana is involved in three things: (1) talking involves terrific expenditure of Prana, (2) eating : anything that you eat unnecessarily involves only expenditure of Prana in the mouth, in the digestive tract right up to the rectum, with very little gain, and (3) sex. The Yogi therefore controls these three. In regard to the first, he observes Mouna. Talk as little as possible. Even in speaking, talking with a lot of emotion especially like anger, involves excessive expenditure of Prana. It is simple and physical. Anything that makes your body tremble and the skin hot, reminds you that the Prana is going out. Anger, passion, greed, jealousy - in all these you find the body shaking, and the skin is hot. Prana is going out.

After all, if you have a pot which has no bottom, it can never be filled. Before you start pouring, you make sure that it has a bottom. Hence, first we have to exercise control in these three, talking, eating and sex. We must learn to economise on energy. In the Bhagavad Gita it is said :

Yuktaharaviharasya yuktacheshtasya karmasu
Yuktasvapnavabodhasya yogo bhavati dukkhaha

"If one treads the middle path, with neither too much of starving, nor too much of eating, neither suppression nor indulgence - Yoga will destroy his suffering."

The idea of the middle path is interesting. Supposing you say, "I will not talk, walk or open my eyes". Will all the Prana be inside? You have become so Tamasic that the Prana will leave the body. For instance, you do not like to go in a motor-car, when a driver is mad, because at any time there may be an accident. Now there is a safe motor-car in the yard outside. I guarantee that if you sit in that car, you will never die of accident. Why? Because it is not moving at all. But, there is no use sitting in that car. That is what Prana will think : if you do not use it at all, it will leave you. Hence, the middle path is prescribed.

In the case of speaking, our Master is against complete Mouna or vow of silence. I have actually seen a very great saint who observed Mouna for twelve years. He was living in such a dense forest that there was nobody to talk to. After twelve years, he had to talk - but he could not ! He had lost that faculty. That is not wisdom. In everything you must use commonsense and wisdom - and walk the middle path. Then the Prana will fill your whole system and function properly. The main source of our Prana is the air.

The second source is water. We all think that Prana comes from food - that is the last source. Because, the food that we eat also consumes a lot of Prana, during the process of digestion, and the net profit is less than we believe. Lest I should forget - I want to give you two hints in this connection : (1) We should not eat frequently. You have your breakfast, and you put a few sandwiches in your pocket which you eat later; then somebody gives you biscuits, etc. and you eat. This perpetual eating is unhealthy. (2) Eat a little, but eat it truly. I will give you a formula that the Nature Cure people use. They say, "Drink the solid food and eat liquid food". When you take a piece of bread into your mouth, chew it till it becomes liquid, so that you do not have to swallow it. When you take liquids, eg., milk, keep it in the mouth, and feel that it is something solid, so that it has to go down drop by drop. If you, swallow these, you spend Prana unnecessarily trying to do with the stomach work which should have been done in the mouth, i.e., breaking the solid food and mixing it with the saliva. Mr. Andre Van Lysebeth, the renowned Yogi of Belgium, says that the Prana in the food is extracted only in the mouth. That is when you enjoy the "taste" of the food or the drink. This should be completely extracted before the food is sent down the throat! In other words, "chew all the taste out of your food, and drink before they descend into the stomach."

Food is the last source of Prana. The middle is water. Very few people drink plain water nowadays, but it is necessary. That is the biggest source of Prana. Do not say, "I drink a lot of liquid wine". That is like breathing a lot of poisoned air. A friend of mine who is Mauritian, went to Paris and asked for water to drink at a restaurant. They were surprised and remarked, "If you, a man, drink water, what will the cow drink ? Man must drink wine, water is for the cow." That is wrong philosophy. We must drink just plain water. Water has the power to radiate Prana. For instance, if you place a basketful of apples and sit by its side, you will not get Prana. But if you go near water - a lake - and sit there, you will get Prana. Water radiates Prana. So, you have the fashion of having an evening walk along the beach or lakeside, and so on. You are actually refreshed. If you take bath or wash, you actually get the effect of Prana in water. All these are necessary. In their interesting book "The Projection of the Astral Body", Messrs. Muldoon and Carrington remind us that sleep is one of the main sources of Prana - recharging (which the Yogi does by the sleepless sleep of meditation and samadhi) : "The human body more nearly resembles the electric motor than it does the steam engine ; and the ordinary theory that chemical combustion of food supplies the vital energy of the body is a mistake ; rather the nervous system is recharged with vital energy during the hours of rest and sleep and food merely supplies broken-down tissue." They also quote Dr. Henry Lindlahr who says : "All that they (food and drink) can do is to furnish the materials to keep the system in such a condition that vital force can manifest in and through it." However, there is some Prana in food also - which we call vitamin or rasa in sanskrit, which means "essence", which is in greater abundance in natural raw, vegetables and fruits which the Yogi eats, than in denatured, overcooked food or stale or dead food which the Yogi avoids.

Then the air we breathe gives us Prana. As I told you in the beginning, air is not Prana, but something in the air is Prana. When you breathe in, the doctor says you breathe in oxygen. There is some power in the oxygen which purifies the blood : that is Prana. So that, if you take an oxygen tube and place near it blood from a dead cow, and let the oxygen pass through it, it will not be purified. The Prana in me is able to extract the Prana from the air I breathe and use it. You know petrol drives the car, and makes the wheels turn. Pour petrol into the wheels, nothing happens. It is the carburetor which takes the petrol, mixes with air, and supplies the engine - so much work is involved. It is wrong to think that oxygen makes me live. My Prana uses the oxygen. Otherwise, poke oxygen into the dead body - nothing happens. In the dead body, the Prana which is capable of extracting Prana from oxygen has gone. Now you have some idea of what this Prana is. It is not possible to understand what it is intellectually.

The air that we breathe contains Prana. That Prana is, of course, contained in oxygen. We have therefore, the air; in that is oxygen, in that is Prana. The scientists themselves say that of the quantity of oxygen we breathe in, we use only one-fifth. How do we live? We breathe more often. For the amount of oxygen we breathe in, we can breathe five times less. Supposing you breathe fifteen times in

a minute. It is enough if you breathe only three times. Something which the scientist forgets is that even in breathing I am spending Prana. If you breathe hard for five minutes, you get giddy - you cannot say, "I am breathing Prana". Even breathing involves expenditure of Prana. If you want to live long and more healthily, utilise the Prana you breathe in. Then you are breathing properly. That is the basic principle of Pranayama.

Connected with that there is another theory. We believe that when we are born, our life-span is fixed. God is not the God of only this earth, but of the whole universe. How do we count the days, months and years? By the movement of the moon and the revolution of the earth round the sun. We have our clocks and calendars adjusted to these. Does God have the same watch and calendar? The Yogis believe that the life span is fixed in terms of the number of breaths you take. In other words, if on the day I was born, ten million breaths were granted to me, if I breathe more slowly, I will live longer. If I breathe very fast, the life is shortened. The Yogis also have got some proofs. The tortoise breathes very slowly, so it lives long. The dog breathes very fast, so it is short-lived. Again, you cannot stretch this argument, and say, "If I stop breathing altogether"? You will have a long life, but next time, not in this body! Now the Prana will go, saying, "This fellow is not using me at all, I will go". So, slow breathing, and utilising all the Prana you breathe in, is the principle of Pranayama.

By the practice of Pranayama, you come face to face with the power we call Prana. You know that power. It is not possible for anyone to show you, but within you, you will realise what it is.

The Yogis have a method of breathing in and out through alternate nostril - the right they call the sun-Nad, and the left is the moon-Nadi. Look at any book on anatomy, you will realise that these two nostrils join at the back of the throat. So, the doctors say, "What nonsense! Both these holes are joined at the throat, and through whichever nostril you breathe, the lungs are filled. It is sheer foolishness to say that one is the sun and the other the moon!" First of all, the doctor himself does not explain why the good God has given us two nostrils. The two eyes, ears, and hands, serve some purpose - they are symmetrical, and have their own use. You have only one nose. Even if you do not have the septum between the nostrils, and have only one hole, like the mouth, it will make no difference aesthetically. Why has God made two holes here? There must be some meaning. In God's creation, there are no unnecessary parts. Everything has some purpose. That is what the Yogi has actually found, i.e., that the nerves that supply one nostril are different from those found in the other.

The same scientist, who ridicules this theory, believes in the horse-shoe magnet. It is one piece of iron, bent into U-shape. Even a school student will tell you that one side is positive and the other negative. In exactly the same way, the right nostril has the positive or solar influence, and the left has the negative or lunar influence. If you go on breathing through the right, you will feel hot - and the left will make you feel cold. There is another scheme in God's Plan. Observe your

breath. You are not all the time breathing through both - even if you are not suffering from a cold and the nostrils are clear. Sometime you are breathing through the right. After about two or three hours, the breath is flowing through the left. It goes on changing, to suit the need of the Prana in the body, whether it needs the solar or the lunar influence. Only when you practise meditation, the breath will be even! It is difficult to believe that all this is meaningless.

I shall describe only two Pranayama practices. Sit in Padma Asana or Siddha Asana. Use your right thumb to close the right nostril, and the right ring and little fingers to close the left nostril. First breathe out, either through both the nostrils, or the right nostril alone. Breathe in through the left. Hold. Breathe out through the right. Then breathe in through the right, and breathe out through the left. This is one round. Mentally repeat your Mantra. After some practice, try to establish the ratio 1 : 4 : 2. Do this about 5 or 10 rounds. This is a very important exercise for awakening the Kundalini Shakti. It will also enable you to sublimate the sex-energy. You can do this Pranayama about 10 rounds in all. Throughout the exercise, keep repeating the Ishta Mantra Before that, let me tell you that Patanjali actually says that this Pranayama-practice can be taken up only after you have got control over Asana or posture. There are people who say that Pranayama is dangerous. It is not so. It is very beneficial. But if I do not know how to drive a car in Madagascar, I could be involved in a car accident in three minutes, if I drive a motor-car here, keeping to the left as we do in India. I must know the law, and obey it, and then Pranayama can do nothing but good.

Why does Patanjali say that we should get steady posture before attempting Pranayama? Because, when you begin the practice, the Prana vibrates more powerfully. If you are not sitting in proper posture, the Nadis are not free. It is like choking my throat and pouring something into my mouth. If the body is not in proper posture during Pranayama, you are asking for trouble. Even that rule is mostly for an advanced practitioner, who does say 80 Kumbhakas (retentions), and has four such sittings. It means, twelve hours of Pranayama-practice itself. For them - who do Pranayama alone in three hours at a stretch - these rules are most essential. For you they are not so. But it does not mean that you can sit as you like. Try to maintain a good posture. But there is no need to fear.

Again, for the advanced practitioners, the Shatkriyas are prescribed. Neti to clean the nasal passages. Dhauti to clean the stomach. Basti to clean the intestines. If you want to, you can sniff a little water through the nose - it is good for the nose, the eyes, and can also disinfect the sinus. That is one Kriya you can do. The other is Nauli which you can do. Even if it may not clean the lower intestines so perfectly as Basti, it will keep them fairly clean.

The Pranayama of Raja Yoga is the simple Sukha-Purvaka Pranayama. But, Bhastrika will help. Here you notice something amazing. Ordinarily, if you stop your breath, you cannot do so for long. But, after one round of Bhastrika you can retain the breath longer. It shows that even now you have large sections of the filled with foul-air - neglected pockets in your lungs. You do not breathe fully.

When you practise Bhastrika, these neglected pockets are cleared. Afterwards, when you breathe in, the lungs are really filled with good air, and you are able to retain the breath longer. The only caution here is - it should not be done within three hours after aeting. And, not often in summer. The number of expulsions should not normally exceed ten - start with five and gradually increase to about ten. If you feel that you are becoming giddy, it means you have already exceeded the limit. Nothing more serious than that can happen. This giddiness is God's Grace, preventing us from overdoing it.

Incidentally, there is no such thing as overdoing or overwork. If you reach the limit, the next minute you will collapse and sleep. It is only mental worry and imagination that make you feel you are overworked. In the same way, there is nothing called unbearable suffering; it does not exist. If I am smashed in car and my hand is broken, and I cannot bear that suffering, immediately I become unconscious. It is all God's Grace.

There is a safety switch - and through Asanas and Pranayama you cannot injure yourself.

The Pranayama that, Patanjali prescribes is threefold. Inhale, retain and exhale - again inhale, retain and exhale. Please remember that everything complete or divine is a circle. So, if you start with your left nostril - breathe in through the left, retain and breathe out through the right - to complete the circle, breathe in through the right, retain and breathe out through the left. That completes the cycle. Do not worry about the ratio '1 : 4 : 2' now. Take care to see that the breath is smooth, graceful and steady.

I will explain the benefits next week. But let me tell you that half an hour a days of this practice will alter your breathing-habit. Even during your work, etc., you will breathe more gracefully and usefully.

12. Big Profit for Small Investment

Last week we discussed Pranayama in great detail. There are different varieties of Pranayama. We are not concerned about those varieties. But let me remind you here that Pranayama itself is divided into two categories. One is called Agarbha Pranayama, the other Sagarbha Pranayama. The first is Pranayama alone, without Japa or meditation. The other, Sagarbha Pranayama, in which along with the Pranayama exercise, we also do Japa. Our Master encourages only Sagarbha Pranayama. Patanjali also asks people to do Japa of OM along with Pranayama.

Let me offer a word of caution. You are studying all kinds of Yoga books. It is good to know that each Yogi has got his own words or terms. We should not be confused. In the Bhagavad Gita the word "Apana" is used for the outgoing breath. The ingoing breath is Prana, and the expired breath is Apana. But, in Hatha Yoga scriptures this is not so. According to Hatha Yoga, Apana is that aspect of Prana which does the function of excretion. Whenever you come across such differences, you must try to find out the correct meaning from a Guru, learn and understand.

In the same way, the perineum is sometimes referred to as "Yoni", and in some texts as "kanda". In Sanskrit, several words are used to refer to the same thing.

In Asana, sitting for several hours in the same posture is called perfection. Perfection, in Pranayama, is called Kevala Kumbhaka. It is described by Patanjali as the suspension of Puraka (inhalation), Kumbhaka (retention), and Rechaka (exhalation).

Bahyabhyantara vishaya - akshepi chaturarthah

You do not want to breathe in, stop, or breathe out - suddenly everything stops. You know of two kinds of Kumbhaka or retention. The one is: take the air in and retain it. The other, during Uddiyana Bandha, you expire and retain. One is internal and the other is external. But Kevala Kumbhaka means neither of these, but absolute suspension. I do not think it is possible to explain this verbally. One day, as you go on with your practice, you yourself will experience it. Suddenly everything will stop. Do not be scared that you will die. When you hold your breath now, you feel the "cork" sensation in the chest. But in Kevala Kumbhaka there will be no cork, the whole thing will be open. We are not interested, in breathing - that is the idea. That is Kevala Kumbhaka, which is the sign of perfection in Pranayama.

What are the benefits of Pranayama ? First: physical. You, will be full of energy. Another physical benefit is that you will not easily fall ill. Fear of disease will go. I think I have explained sufficiently that disease itself is caused by the Prana not functioning properly. The modern doctors feel your pulse only to count. In India, we have a system of medicine called Ayurveda. The Ayurvedic physicians also feel the pulse with the three fingers. But they can tell you everything about you - not

only the rate of heart-beat. That science is called Nadi-sastra. Their idea is that in disease the Prana is not functioning properly in all The Nadis, and when you feel the pulse, where what has gone wrong will be found out. When the Prana is properly functioning, you are free from disease.

But the Yogi goes much farther. He says even your bad qualities are due to the fact that the Prana is not functioning properly. Sometimes disease and bad thoughts go together! We have seen this. People who have eczema, haemorrhoids, or asthma - they get angry very quickly. Not because they are bad, but because there is something wrong with the body and the nerves. When a man has headache, he is irritable - not because the man is bad, but because the Prana is not functioning properly. In the same way a man may be very bad - angry, lustful, etc.,. Do not give him food for a few days - there is no anger, no passion in him - he is saintly! Because he has no Prana or energy. By merely starving, you starve the senses and get control over them. It is the reverse-working of Kundalini. If the Kundalinj is awakened, and there is sudden flow of energy in the Maladhara, one might become passionate. On the same principle, withdraw all the concentration of power from there - passion will come under your control. The theory of Hatha Yogis is that everything can be controlled by the control of Prana. They even think that mind is controlled by Prana. So, if you practise Pranayama, and if your Nadis function properly, you will have good health and brilliant mind, which will be well under your control.

With the awakening of the Kundalinj, you will get some psychic powers. You may get some healing powers also. For the following simple reason : there is Prana in me, in you, and in the space between us. In other words, we are swimming in an ocean of Prana. Now, I am full of Prana. My Prana is functioning wonderfully. With the help of the Prana in the atmosphere, I can transmit my energy to you. That is one of the reasons why, when you go near a happy or saintly man, you are also happy. Why? Because He is radiating Prana and you are getting it. If you want to, you can actually transmit Prana, and help somebody else. These are not to be done. Till you are able to consciously draw Prana from the perennial source, viz., God, you should not meddle with Prana. If you are in tune with Hiranyagarbha or Cosmic Prana, afterwards you can give, give and give : because then you are not giving from yourself, but giving only from the cosmic source. A bank clerk may not be able to give a hundred francs in charity - but with the same hands working for the bank, he gives millions of francs every day. Why? Because, in the bank, he does not give anything out of his own purse, which is limited, but from the money in the bank. In the same way, if you contact the supreme Bank or Cosmic Prana, you can do what you like, or rather what He likes.

For the same reason - Prana is the power in the mind - you can meddle with somebody else's Prana and the mind also. We do not make any difference between mind and Prana. If I can contact your Prana, I can contact your mind also. Yogis enjoy some psychic powers like thought-reading, etc., but, again, they should be avoided. All that I have been talking to you now is from Hatha Yoga

scriptures. What is the benefit that Patanjali promises us ?

Tatah ksheeyate prakashavaranam

When you practise Pranayama and become perfect, the veil or the wall that hides the Reality is removed. 'Prakasha' - the light of the soul shines in your heart. But because of the veil of ignorance, you are not able to see it. How does the veil operate? By disharmony in the Nadis. That is why they say that God made everything good, but it is our own little devil that has upset everything. By the practice of Pranayama, we tune in with God, and the devil's work of disharmony is removed. The veil is removed and we are able to see face to face that power within us.

I can ask you a dozen questions, and you will always reply, "I don't know". Why do you live? How? Who created you? I don't know. When the ignorance is removed, you will actually come face to face with the power that creates you, and that is sustaining you. Now you are only imagining God, imagining the Chakras, etc. But when the veil is removed, you will actually "see" them. This is the benefit actually promised by Patanjali. And,

Dharanasu yogyata manasah

The mind is made fit for concentration. Again, in Yoga, this Prana is given supreme importance. Patanjali does refer in one or two places to the Chakras, but for him they are not very important. For him, what is most important is complete suspension of breath. There must be total harmony in the whole body. Because, it is disharmony that makes it impossible for us to concentrate. As I said earlier, even ill-health is bad only from the point of view of concentration. If you are not healthy and have a tooth-ache, you will think only of the tooth, and not of God. We want to enjoy good health, because we want to forget this body. Please do not forget this: this is the most vital point in Yoga. We do not practise Yoga for health or physical perfection. But we value them only to enable us to forget this body. Only when we forget the body, can the mind be fixed at the feet of God, and the mind be made fit for meditating upon God.

You know the eight steps of Yoga? After Pranayama comes Pratyahara. But here Patanjali says, "If you practise Pranayama, your mind will become fit for Dharana". Pratyahara is ignored. The reason is that Pranayama itself is Pratyahara. When you learn to control the Prana, you have already learnt to withdraw the mind and the senses. Especially if you adopt our Master's technique of doing Japa and meditation, along with Pranayama, you will get Pratyahara very easily.

13. Formation of New Healthy Habits

We go on to one or two other methods of controlling the mind. In Yoga Sadhana we have always found that doing the same thing every day makes it lose its effect. So, our Master asks us to introduce intelligent changes in our Sadhana. For instance, even while doing Japa, if you go on doing mental Japa for an hour or two, you might feel sleepy. Slowly, start murmuring the Mantra. You wake up. It is not the muttering that keeps you awake. Supposing you do so from the beginning - I have seen some people mutter and sleep! I have seen people who shout the Mantra fall asleep. Still worse - I have seen someone who used to repeat the Mantra aloud, and walk, sleeping! Anything - mental, verbal or even loud Japa - the same thing done continuously will lose its effect. Even Pranayama - if you go on doing it - will lose its effect, though in the beginning you may feel elated. You must intelligently modify the Sadhana. If the mind is tired of Pranayama, do Japa. Sing some hymns. Read some books. Get out and talk to people. Or, go to a quiet place like the "Hill of God" and sit and see the scenery feeling "All this is God" and come back to Pranayama. Combine all these, ensuring that they are spirit all, and have the same end, aim and purpose.

Patanjali also gives us a few more methods of controlling the mind. The fundamental basis is thus stated by him:

Abhyasa valragyabliyam tannirodhah.

A holy man in the Himalayas, Sri Swami Omananda Avadhuta, once said to me: "To dwell constantly in the consciousness of All this is Brahman is Abhyasa. Never to allow the thought of the world to arise in the consciousness is Vairagya." These two things are important - Abhyasa and Vahagya.

Let me explain. Abhyasa is Tatra sthithau yatno abhyasah.

In other words, to fix the mind on God is Abhyasa. It will wander. Bring it back. I might perhaps give you here a wonderful teaching of Upasadi Baba. He also used to ask his disciples to repeat God's Name (Japa). A young man, who was fond of his wife, started doing this. He came back to the Master and said, "Whenever I sit down to do Japa, my wife's face comes before me." Another man who was also there, said, "Somebody hates me and whenever I sit for meditation, I think of him. What to do?" The Master said: "What does it matter? Be careful to repeat God's Name - never mind if the mind wanders - be sure you repeat the Mantra." That is why I told you it is good to have a small Mala in your hand - so, that even if the mind wanders, the Japa goes on. And, Upasani Baba said something very very interesting. "You are repeating God's Name. His Grace is flowing into you. At that time whoever you think of, will also get the benefit. That is the meaning of praying for the sick. So, if the mind thinks of the wife, she will also get the benefit. If the mind thinks of somebody who hates you, he will also get the benefit." You cannot compel or force the mind. If a car gets stuck, you have to go behind it to push it. In the same way, if you have to push a bad idea out

of the mind, you have to go behind it. You have to become "worse", so to say. It is no use. So, calmly go on thinking of God. When His Grace comes, your mind will become calm and one-pointed. That is called Abhyasa.

Another great saint of India has given us a timetable. This Sutra of Patanjali was demonstrated by him. He says, for a period of two or three years, constantly repeat the Mantra aloud. He used to repeat 'Om Namō Narayanaya'. Except for a period of two hours when you sleep, and one or two hours of some other personal activity, for the twenty remaining hours, you must shout the Mantra - you should not talk and do nothing else. This is to be done for two or three years, continuously. He wanted that we should even reduce our sleep - first to four hours and then to two hours. What to do if you feel sleepy? He had unusual method for keeping awake. He said stand up and repeat the Mantra. Sometimes we sleep even standing. In India many of the Hindu males have long hair; he said, "tie that hair to a thread, and on to a nail on the wall - the moment you begin to nod, it will pull you up". After two or three years like this, whisper the Mantra, with the throat - this for, another three years. It is not a joke! Then, repeat the Mantra silently. That goes on for another three years. Then, he says, repeat the Mantra with the breath or in the heart. This comes after eight or nine years. He says he himself did this, and after a period of thirteen years or so, he saw God. That is called Abhyasa. Persistent effort, without bothering about what is going to happen.

We practise Yoga with faith. In Yoga, faith is not blind acceptance. It is founded on the fact that the mind is full of conflicts and contradictions, and is therefore full of sorrow. And, faith is merely an aspiration to overcome this condition. Obviously, one has to have faith in such a possibility - or, else, one would fatalistically succumb to sorrow. God-realisation or "seeing God" and its synonyms are used to denote that state of being where these conflicts and contradictions are removed - not psychedellic experiences, visions and hallucinations. Hence, this faith in the possibility of God-realisation is accompanied by a healthy doubt (faith + doubt = enquiry or quest) which guards one against psychedellic and other distracting experiences and leads one on to the total cessation of sorrow. What is faith? You feel that you are devoted to God and love Him, and that He will appear to you. Is that faith genuine or not? If you ask people now, they will say, "My faith is perfect." God Himself wants to find out. That is why in some stories current in India, you come across incidents that God sent some obstacles to a Yogi and the latter stopped his practice. God wants to know if your faith is real. If it is, however much the mind may wander, however many obstacles may come, you will go on. "I believe in God and I will get Him" That actually is the correct attitude of a Yogi. He will not be upset either by external or internal obstacles. External obstacles are social upheavals, domestic troubles and weather conditions. Let them come and go, but sit, and think of God. Internal obstacles are : the mind wanders and it is sleepy. It does not matter. If the mind wanders and is still for a few seconds - think of God at that time. Here is a formula which I have found useful for me : if you make the best use of the opportunity God has given you, He will give you more. Do not say that

after all the waves have subsided you will take bath in the sea. Try now itself. Sometimes people say, "After my children are grown up and I earn money, I will go to the Himalayas and practise Yoga." Before that they may die. That is not faith. If you have faith, start doing now whatever you can. If you can think of God only, for one minute a day, good; and if the mind wanders, even then it is all right. Afterwards sit and pray. "O God, please free me from this obstacle". Then you are sincere. God Himself will give you more opportunities and greater concentration. Thus, the time spent in meditation, even if the mind wanders, is not a waste - it is Abhyasa.

The next is Vairagya. I think once I told you the story of how a few mad people started rowing a boat which had been tied to a tree on the bank of the river. No progress is possible. Side by side, with this Abhyasa or practice, try to turn more and more away from the world. I cannot see that light in front of me, and see the wall behind me at the same time. I must try to turn away from one, however gradually. If I want God, I must turn to Him, and that means turning away from the world. Please remember that I do not say "run away from the world". Turn away from the world. That is Vairagya. A man may go to the forest and think of his home. A man may live here and still not be too deeply involved in anything. Vairagya is very important. If you do not cultivate Vairagya along with Abhyasa, the latter will not be effective.

I referred to a Swami a few minutes ago. If you wanted to become his disciple, he insisted that you must give up everything. You should not even touch money. You should not talk! He said the tongue was meant only for repeating God's Name. In food also, he was very strict - he always carried a weighing scale and demanded that everything you ate should be weighed. That too you must slowly reduce. That is to show that you are not interested in merely living. Only so much is to be taken as will keep the body and soul together to realise God. He himself was very very strict. He wore only sack - no clothes. He was very simple and even in terribly cold winter he would sleep only on the ground with dry grass on it. He said all this discipline was essential. If you want to realise God, you must turn away from the world. That is Vairagya, though this Swami's standard may be extreme and unnecessary, for all.

Then there is another method, and that is to develop virtuous qualities. The virtuous man is always peaceful. When we do good, we are not mentally disturbed. When we even think of evil, the mind is already disturbed. Great evil qualities like lust, anger, greed, vanity and jealousy, cause violent distraction of the mind. Hence another method of controlling the mind is purposefully to cultivate good qualities. You must have a plan and work according to that plan. Our Master gives very practical instructions. We have what is known as the spiritual diary in which our Master asks a question, "What virtue are you developing?" and the next "what bad quality are you trying to eradicate?" These two together will help us. Our Master gives even more practical instructions. Remember that Yoga is sublimation and not suppression. If you get angry and suppress it, you will become sick. Let us see how to deal with the problem : I am a

very angry man and I know it. In the diary, I write : "I want to control anger. I am trying to develop patience." There is no use suppressing it; and I get angry. I go to the meditation room and pray. I take the Mala. As a self-punishment, I do ten Malas of Japa. Then, again, as a punishment, that night I do not eat. Punish the mind. And, also early next morning, I must sit and meditate on patience. I must try to convince the mind that patience is good - anger is not. This way also you will be able to control the mind. Where a single method may fail, this combination of many methods will succeed.

There is another which is the Raja Yoga method. That is usually called suppression of the Vrittis. Patanjali gives the name Nirodha Parinama. It is really not suppression. I will explain it to you. It is not possible to translate it. It is possible to explain it. Take the same qualities - anger and patience. I am a bad tempered man and I want to remove the bad quality. I should not suppress it nor express it. That is puzzling. Open the door, but do not allow the visitor to enter - that is Nirodha Parinama. Take another example. A thief enters the house. Luckily you get up and see the thief coming in - and you are a strong man. As soon as the thief enters, you catch hold of him and the thief says, "Do not hit me. I will become your servant. I am hungry, and I am poor. That is why I came to steal. I will become your servant. I am not a thief now. Please take me as a servant." That is called Nirodha Parinama. The same mind, energy and intelligence are put to good use. That is what Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita:

Shaknotehaiva yah sodhum prakshareeravimokshanat Kamakrodhodbhavam
vegam sa yuktah sa sukhi narah

"He who is able here and now to sublimate and make use of the force of desire and anger, and is able to turn it all towards God - is a Yogi".

Where does that anger arise? In your mind, with your own energy, there is no devil in Raja Yoga. Even the mind is not Satan, only the vrittis are disturbances, causing pain. The Chitta is a reflection of God. The desire is energy. Take it and use it. That is called Nirodha Parinama. If you understand the illustration I have given, you will understand what it is to control the mind.

The thief entered the house. If the owner was not at the door, the thief would have stolen the money and gone away. There would have been great loss. How was it possible for the thief to become a servant? The owner stood at the gate. That is the factor number one. Number two : the owner was more powerful than the thief. If he was weaker, the loss would have been double. The thief might hit him and take the money and go away. The owner built up strength before the thief came. That is Nirodha Parinama : before the thief of anger or lust arises - you build upon the other side, a strong man, a virtue. When anger arises in the heart, and at the same time this strong man also comes up, that anger will collapse and plead to be taken as a servant. Now you have some idea of what Patanjali calls Nirodha Parinama in Chapter III, Sutra No. 9. When the outside disturbance comes, raise this counter Samskara (Nirodha Samskara) - make it strong. How to make it strong? By habit. The psychologist also says the same

thing today. It is the simplest law stated in Raja Yoga. When I have a bad habit - and I know it, I must do two things : One : cultivate a good habit. How is a good habit cultivated? If I am an angry man, I cultivate love and express that love as often as possible. I must manifest that love. Then this "man" inside (love) becomes strong. Repetition generates strength. A good habit can be formed by repetition of good acts. The good habit becomes strong. Some people say : "I cannot do this because I am not in the habit of doing this." But, how is this habit formed. A habit is formed by once doing something and then repeating it. Do the right action and repeat it. Two : The strong man was at the gate at the time the thief entered. If the thief had entered without his knowledge, then the loss would be there. If you want to conquer a bad habit, next time you submit to that evil, you must be at the gate, conscious. I will explain it to you. You have a bad habit, e.g., eating meat, and you want to give it up. First, you build up love. Every morning you sit and meditate, visualise animals being butchered. This love will grow. Yet, the bad habit may be strong. It will come again and knock. It is possible that, in spite of your love, you are forced by the past habit to eat meat. What the Raja Yogi and the psychologist say is : sit down with the meat in front of you and say, "This is not good, but my tongue and the mind want. I will eat. It is not good, but I like it". If you do not repeat this, you can never conquer this bad habit. You may eat meat for another six years, but every time you do so, you say "It is not good." If the mind says, "It is good", you accept it and hence cannot conquer it. If you say, "What is the good of merely saying it is not good", then you are taking the strong man away from the door. Only when the strong man meets the thief will the thief submit. You must face it, the bad quality that you want to overcome. If these two principles are adopted you will develop Nirodha Samskara. Then your mind itself will undergo a transmutation : and that is called Nirodha Parinama. It will, of course, take time. Nirodha Parinama does not drop from the heaven. There seems to be no method at all for bringing it about. Man has tried all kinds of methods and techniques: as the Bhagavatham declares, all spiritual (or religious) practices are intended only to bring this about. Yet, as soon as the mind becomes familiar with a method or technique, it becomes immune to it, and the technique loses its strength and potency. Prayers, confessions, affirmations, austerities, self- or psycho-analysis, different psycho-physical practices, religious rites, exorcisms, etc., have all been evolved by men to overcome this inner enemy. They seem to work for a short while when they are novel. But, soon, the novelty wears off, and they do not work. The problem is not one of technique, but of sincerity! Modern world and modern seekers look for modern techniques. LSD, mescaline, have been tried, hailed, assailed and abandoned. The latest in the series is an experiment of tremendous psychological and spiritual significance that a few earnest scientists are conducting in America. They are mapping the brain-waves during widely different mental states. When they identify a particular signal which signifies a particular desired state of mind, they feed the signal into the subject so that he becomes aware of it. Then it is easier for him to recall that signal and thus that state of mind. Whatever the method adopted, therefore, sincerity and awareness are indispensable. Again, morality cannot be imposed upon from outside, either by the state (by legislation) or by religious authority. Threats of imprisonment or hellfire will only corrupt

"enforcement" agencies (the police and the priest , and temptations (rewards and heaven) are unimpressive when one remembers that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush". It is only when man is able to observe for himself that an immoral life is the cause of sorrow and pain in his own inner being, that he will want to reject it, not because it is sinful, but because it is sorrowful - not because someone else demands it, but because he needs it. Then, when he observes the psychological phenomenon of lust, hate, jealousy, etc., without the ego-interference of value-judgement (even concerning oneself) and sees for himself that all these are manifestations of the psychic energy mis-directed, he will re-direct the energy along channels of moral order we call virtue. This is Nirodha Parinama.

Yet another illustration will make us realise that merely brooding over the evil or attempting to remove it will be useless unless it is accompanied or even preceded by the creation of the opposite good quality. If you want to divert the course of a river, you do not break the bank of that river or block its course. You first prepare another canal. When it is ready, you gently divert the current on to that canal. Even so the good habit must be formed, even when the evil quality is present and effective. When the time comes, all that one need do is to gently rub the evil quality : and, since by this time, the parallel good quality is strong and deep enough, the waters of his psychic energy will flow on smoothly, without any disharmony or disruption, into the good.

We saw previously that when we think of an object of enjoyment the mind itself is transformed into that object. Thinking of it, a habit is formed. Now thinking constantly of the opposite, the opposite transformation takes place. If you understand this, then you will also understand why Patanjali says, "Sarvam Duhkham Vivekinah" - "Whole life and everything is painful to the wise man". Many people have accused Patanjali of being a pessimist. He was not. He was echoing what the Upanishads had declared: "Yo vai bhuma tat sukham, na alpe sukham asti" - the unconditioned alone is bliss, there is no happiness in conditioned existence.

Especially when, by the cultivation of the Nirodha Samskaras, he has glimpsed the state of the unconditioned, anything other than that appears as sorrow. He thus feels that all life is enveloped by sorrow. This, however, is not a morbid or pathological condition, but the appreciation of fact which acts as the necessary spur to enable the Yogi to get established in the unconditioned. What a Vritti is, and what Patanjali says about it, we shall discuss in the next lesson.

14. A Brief Analysis of Mental Modifications

Last week we studied what Patanjali describes as Nirodha Parinama. Elsewhere it is also described as Pratipaksha Bhavana - thinking of the opposite. As we saw in the example we took, if we want to control anger, we meditate on and cultivate love and patience. By this method the Vritti or the thought-wave which you want to get rid of is removed.

I promised to tell you what Patanjali says about Vritti. The whole of Raja Yoga is built on this one idea: all thought-waves must be removed. Before I proceed further, let me remind you that it is "all thought-waves", not only bad thoughts. Only when all thoughts are removed will God reveal Himself. Nirodha Parinama means cultivating the opposite, restraining force. Let us not make this mistake of thinking that these techniques are to be applied only when we want to get rid of evil habits. Even good habits have to go. If that is not done, you will become a slave of good habits. Suppose a glass piece has entered the stomach, and a surgeon inserts a knife into the stomach (during surgical operation) and removes the glass piece - can he say, "This knife has helped you, let it remain in the stomach." No. It must also go. A good thought or a good habit is better than a bad thought or a bad habit. But both of them have to go if we are to enter into Samadhi. Only then do we become perfect. So, Chitta-vritti nirodhah means removing all Vrittis, good and bad.

Patanjali divides all Vrittis into five categories. Vrittis can be pleasant or unpleasant. A thought arises in the mind, "Ah, he is a wonderful boy," it is pleasant. Another, "Oh, that is a lion - it will eat me up" - that is an unpleasant Vritti. We are not bothered about whether they are pleasant or unpleasant. But Vrittis can be divided into five categories.

Vrittayah panchatayyah klishtah-aklishtah i.e., "Vrittis whether they are painful or pleasant are of these five classes." What are the five? Pramana, viparyaya, vikalpa, nidra, smriti. Prainana is right knowledge, viparyaya is wrong knowledge, vikalpa is imagination, nidra is sleep, and smriti is memory. We Indians are supposed to be unscientific. This classification is most scientific. You analyse all thoughts in the world; they can be brought into these five categories. Right knowledge, wrong knowledge, imagination, sleep and memory - now, think of any idea which is outside these five - you cannot. I hold up this thing : you know what it is, and say it - it is right knowledge. He does not know what it is, and yet he thinks he knows - he says, "It is a mirror, I know it" - it is wrong knowledge, a mistake. Mother imagines something, "It may be this" - it is imagination. Somebody else, says, "I remember - yes, yes, I saw something like this." - it is memory. Another man says, "Why worry about this, ignore it and go to sleep". Think of a sixth approach to this.

I think all of you understand the firing of a spark plug in the motor-car - that is what happens in your mind when a Vritti arises. You know how many times those plugs fire? - thousands of times a minute. In the same way, in the mind, every

minute thousands of sparks are fired. If you want to have an idea of what a Vritti is - each spark is a Vritti. Some of them are right knowledge. Some of them are wrong knowledge. Some of them are mere imagination. Each Vritti stimulates some particular cell in the brain. When the spark ignites a particular centre in the brain, it functions in a particular way. All these sparks can be classified into one or the other of these five categories.

The first is Pramana or right knowledge. How do we get right knowledge? Patanjali takes three ways. Pratyaksha, Anumana, Agama Pramana - these three are the sources of right knowledge. Pratyaksha is sense perception. I have the right knowledge because I see or perceive. Anumana is inference. I see two red lights moving outside the window. I say, "A motor-car passed." If you ask me, "Did you see a car", I will reply, "No, two red lights moved." In the same way, in the house over there you see smoke coming out - you infer that there is fire. That is inference or Anumana. These two can be wrong. So, we also depend upon Agama or scripture. I think once before I told you that the scripture is nothing but the statement of the experience of Yogis. For instance, however much you discuss amongst yourselves what India and her people are like, you cannot arrive at the truth. Your inference may be wrong. You have not seen directly either. You have to take the third - my word - for it. I come from India and you ask me, "What does India look like?" and I tell you. In the same way, scriptures are realised truths. These are the three sources of right knowledge.

I shall skip over the others by merely translating them. Wrong knowledge is when you think that an object is what it is not. Children think that the earth is covered by a blue glass dome - the sky. You know it is wrong. In our scriptures, there are some standard examples : in the dark a rope appears to be a snake. You know it is wrong knowledge. When you walk through a desert, a patch of sand looks like water. That is the second category.

The third one is imagination. I think I need not explain to you. This imagination is something terrible. You as students of Yoga should be very careful not to let imagination enter into your mind. I pray to you with folded palms : do not let imagination enter your mind at all. Perhaps tomorrow one of you may come to my house. I might be deeply thinking and may not have noticed you. You are offended because you imagine that I was rude or angry with you. You go away angry. I see you somewhere and say "Hari Om", but you turn your face and go away. I imagine you hate me. Nothing has happened, but we imagine that we are enemies. But if you analyse the whole thing and ask the other man, like a detective inspector, you will discover that there was no valid reason at all, but the misunderstanding was built on imagination. This is one of the things which we as spiritual aspirants must be very careful about. It is good to imagine that everybody is God. That is precisely what we do when we say "Namaste, Hari Om" - I see God in you and to that God I bow. This imagination will go or become perfect realisation later. But as I said a few minutes ago, when the glass piece is in the stomach, it is necessary to remove it by another sharp instrument - if the mind imagines that somebody is bad, immediately imagine he is God.

The fourth Vritti is Nidra or sleep. Here we are caught by Patanjali. You think it is very easy to remove all Vrittis - why, sleep! There is no thought in the mind. Ah, Patanjali says, "Sleep is also a Vritti" - during sleep the mental modification of darkness or ignorance has arisen. It is also a Vritti. Even that must go.

The last is smriti or memory. What I told you about imagination is true of right knowledge, wrong knowledge, and memory. When a good thought arises, slap it and let it be subdued - when a bad thought arises, remove it. This is one of the basic teachings of Yoga - that it is not enough to be a good man, though it is better than being a devil. For, suppose you are a wonderful person, you have served all and done a lot of charity. What will happen to you? You will go to heaven and live there for a long time. You will have plenty to eat. You can sleep on mattresses which are three miles high. You can marry five thousand celestial women. You can drink nectar, instead of tea. You can eat golden mangoes. I wish to share with you a thought which is not connected with Raja Yoga. In three months I have become completely used to Madagascar. You may believe me or not, I have completely forgotten I am Indian. Now, in three months, I have changed. Suppose you go to heaven, and you have a big holiday lasting for thousands of years. Within three months you will get used to it, and all those wonderful things will not give you happiness any more. That is one of the reasons why there are divorces in Hollywood. Though people think that film-stars are wonderful; their husbands do not think so. Within three months, he gets fed up - another man feels she is an angel. He marries her and in another six months, he gets bored. Either pleasure or pain - after a little while we get used to it. So, we do not want heaven, because it will be enjoyable only for six months, and afterwards you will get fed up. The Bhagavad Gita says, once that bank balance or merit is exhausted, we return to this mortal world. So, good habits are good, but they are not enough. You must go beyond both good and evil. Even though right knowledge is good, even that has to be removed. With right knowledge you remove wrong knowledge, and then throw both of them away in Samadhi. By right imagination you remove wrong imagination and throw both away in Samadhi.

One Brother asks : "Is God Himself goodness or does God possess goodness?" We usually say that God is good, i.e., God has goodness as a quality. God is compassionate, etc. You see so much of evil and misery around you and ask, "Does God tolerate all this?" We also experience (imagination) misery and evil in ourselves. To remove wrong imagination, we resort to the right imagination that God is goodness, etc.

I will come to sleep a little later. The last one is memory. A wrong memory crops up. Throw it away with right memory. Somebody has scolded you or behaved badly towards you. When he comes in front of you, the memory is revived - remove that immediately by remembering something good that he did to you. Then forget both, feeling that he is God.

Sleep is something interesting. Here, only the practice of Yoga can help you.

Quite a number of Yogis have used this technique which is very useful. When the mind is full of Vrittis, make the mind calm. In your practice you will find that suddenly something like darkness comes on. If you allow that, you will sleep. With eyes open or closed, think of God. We use an image of God. If this image stays there as an idol, try to remove even that (not now, later). Try to remove even that one Vritti, and see if your mind can be conscious without Vritti. If you do it now, you will sleep - but you can do that much later.

The Zen Buddhists have a wonderful method, and I will give you just a sample of it. Their entire Yoga is built upon only this. Always, paradoxes and contradictions. That is why even in Indian philosophy you will find contradictions. If you ask "Is God peace or does He possess peace?" I ask you, "What do you think?" "God is peace" you say. I reply, "No, no : God has peace." Somebody else says, "God has peace as an attribute", and to him I reply, "No, God is peace." You know why? Because God is beyond all these descriptions. You cannot describe God as a person or as no person. In the silence created by contradictions you will realise God. The Zen Buddhists have what are known as the Koans. Suppose I enter the room: the Zen master might ask you, "Who is that?" You reply, "It is Swami." He will deny it and say, "It is a two-legged animal." If you had said that, he would say, "No, it is God clothed in human form". Whatever you say, he suggests the opposite. In sheer wonderment and bewilderment, your mind stops thinking - and you enter into Yoga. This is one of the most effective ways of removing all Vrittis.

15. The Mind-Stuff and its Control

Today we shall have a glimpse of the Chitta or (it is difficult to translate, but which is usually called) the mind-stuff - I shall explain to you what it is. The Chitta is what in English idiom is called, "the heart" when we say, "My heart is pure or disturbed, etc." What we refer to in these expressions as "the heart" is the Chitta. Here, you know that we do not refer to the physical heart, but to the psychic heart - that is Chitta. That is why ordinarily in India when a man says, "My mind is not functioning properly", he touches the head and when he says, "My Chitta is disturbed", he touches the heart or the chest.

I shall explain to you in few sentences the function of Chitta. The mind is divided into four parts in Yoga - manas, chitta, buddhi, and ahamkara - these four are called the antahkarana. Just as the hands and the feet are the outer instruments, these four constitute the inner instrument. In the external world you work with the outer instruments, and in the inner world you work with the four inner instruments. Here is some thing when this is held in front of me, first light falls on it and those rays of the light reach my eye, the sense organ. The eye does not know that this is a wrist watch - it only sees "this". Those vibrations or stimuli are carried to the manas or mind. The manas is also merely a co-ordinating instrument. The senses of touch, sight and hearing (the ticking sound) all these are co-ordinated by the manas. Then, immediately (like what happens in a police station - the policeman puts the records together and sends it to the special branch) the reference is made to the chitta by the manas, "These are the data : what is this thing?" The chitta says, "Ah, this is a wrist watch". Just as the special branch that has all the previous records reports, "This man is a thief". Even here, it is impersonal and illogical - there is nothing good or bad. "This is a wrist watch." That is all. The whole thing comes back again to the buddhi in the cerebral cortex. The buddhi says, "This was given to me by Swami Sivananda. It is sacred. It is keeping good time", or "It is too much of a luxury. A Swami should not have it". It is the buddhi that discriminates between good and evil, right and wrong. Even here it is only like the big officer who makes the recommendation. The whole thing is pushed back again to the Ahamkara, the I. In common parlance also, we say "He has lost his discrimination" and point to our head. But when we say "I", we point to our chest. It is that power that decides, even as the Minister or the President passes orders.

Having this picture in mind, you know how to control your mind, your thoughts and emotions. Simple thoughts are in the mind. Imaginations, emotions, feelings, and memories, are in the heart. Discrimination is in the head. Will, again, is in the heart. So that, if you want to control the mind or the reception of impressions, concentrate on the head. If you want to control the emotions, feelings and memories, concentrate on the heart. If you want to develop your powers of discrimination, concentrate on the head. And, if you want to develop your will power, concentrate on the heart. It is not enough if you control the mind, you should control the heart or the chitta also. The heart or the chitta should be prevented from throwing up memory or imagination. If somebody abuses you,

you say, "My heart is broken" - the impression is so deep that it is buried in the chitta, and even long afterwards when that person is not there, the memory troubles you. Even that should be controlled, if you want to practise Yoga.

First try to control the thoughts, then the feelings and emotions, and then go back and build up buddhi, the highly discriminative intelligence, which does not allow any undivine thoughts or emotions to get back to the ahamkara. It is a very complicated process. But because the whole thing takes place in a split-second, we are not aware of it. We are like a motor-car: when the accelerator is pressed, the wheel moves a thousand times a minute. The same thing takes place in the antahkarana. The whole process must be controlled in the practice of Yoga. If I tell you that it is very easy to control the mind and make it blank, prevent it from receiving sense-impressions, you will realise how difficult it is to control the chitta. For you, even to control the mind is very difficult. To control the chitta is very much more difficult. But it has got to be done, and so we are here to study the method. Commenting on the Sutra "Yogah chitta vritti nirodhah", the great Siddha Yogi Paramahansa Muktanandaji said during the course of a lecture in the USA: "Chitta is extremely minute and subtle, and cannot allow to pass through it anything except the chit-shakti, the power that creates and sustains the universe, which is the same as Kundalini. The sadhaka in meditation should, therefore, understand all thoughts that may arise in his chitta as the manifestation of that chit-shakti, and not try to fight them. Of course, he should not regard them through his own eye or viewpoint, but through the viewpoint of the Guru - and that is to realise that the substance of the thought is the chit-shakti, whatever the form of the thought may be. This way meditation becomes easy, smooth and fruitful. He further said: "Do not impose any condition for meditation. If you think, 'I am a Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Jew, etc.', the meditation will not be free." He asks the meditator not even to condition himself concerning what thoughts and experiences he should have or should reject during the practice - as this might merely invite such thoughts and experiences and prevent the Truth from revealing itself.

I explained the operation of these four in order to show you how the same method is to be adopted to control the antahkarana. See here: I point the pen at the paper and a drop of ink falls - to remove it I point my finger towards it and wipe it. Through the senses, into the mind, chitta, buddhi and ahamkara the world has entered - through the senses, into the mind, chitta, buddhi and ahamkara, God must enter. I remember to have explained that in Yoga, we take the assistance of Isvara and not depend upon our own strength. I explained to you that if I fell into that mud pool somebody had to help me. In the same way, I take the help of Isvara to remove the world from any mind. Patanjali regards Isvara as a special soul. And, now comes a very important point to remember. You are not even to hang on to that Isvara for ever. You are going to become one with the Supreme Being. Therefore, Patanjali regards Isvara as the cosmic Guru. He is the Guru, and therefore Guru is Isvara. Guru is God and God is Guru. Guru to whom I resort to is Isvara in human form. And God is the supreme Guru of all.

Sa esha purveshamapi guruh kalenavachedat.

The physical Guru to us is God, and God himself is our Guru. That Supreme Guru or Cosmic Guru whom Patanjali calls Isvara has a name: it is not exactly a name, but the word by which He is known is Pranava or Om.

Tasya vachakah pranavah.

This Om need not frighten you at all. As I mentioned before, it is the simplest cosmic sound. Any sound of a motor-car, falling rain, wind blowing over roof, a number of people talking - will sound to your ear as Om. Sound is produced by the breath coming out of the throat through the mouth. This Om starts from the abdomen, comes out of the throat, and ends in the lips. So, it is called a complete monosyllable. Yogis divide even this one syllable into three parts A U M. It starts with A, continues with U in the throat, and ends in the lips with M. So, that this simple monosyllable Om is regarded as the synthesis of origin, preservation and dissolution. Everything in the universe is subject to creation, preservation and dissolution. All sounds have got to have an origin, a period of intonation and termination. So, we say that Om is the root of all languages, all speech, all Mantras - everything. This Om is regarded as a sacred word with spiritual power.

How do words get power? Take the word "fool". The English word "fool" means "adala" in Malagasy. And, in Hindi (an Indian language) it means "a flower". In Hindi it is good, in English it is bad. In the same way the English word "bless" is good, in French it is not. When you say that "he is a fool", you may mean "He is a wonderful man like a full-blown flower" (the expression being a mixture of two languages) or "He is an idiot". Depending upon how he takes it, it becomes good or bad. So, besides having its own intrinsic glory as the basic sound, Om has also acquired a lot of significance. Because, millions of Yogis have chanted it, meditated upon it, and given meaning to it. Here again when you repeat that sound, according to Hatha Yoga, certain nadis vibrate. When there is tension in the office and somebody is getting angry, repetition of Om produces peace and harmony. Of course, the mechanical repetition of the mantra will only make you a tape-recorder, not a Yogi. Hence, Patanjali emphasises. Tad japas tad artha-bhavanam. To do japa, contemplating on the meaning or content. "Bhavana" of course is not "thinking", but entering into the content of the Om. One has to find one's own entrance. Perhaps the very miracle of "hearing" inwardly an "unarticulated sound" (anahata sabda) might be the door for some, and the mystery of the one being both the producer of the inner sound, its audience and the witness of both these, could be the door for yet others. Because, this particular sound vibration has got wonderful calming influence over certain nerves or nadis. Every letter of every Mantra releases certain psychic powers in the body. So, when the Yogi today repeats Om, the sound vibration releases those psychic powers in it, and at the same time, since the Mantra has been chanted by millions of Yogis, he is put in touch with the power that they have added to it. Continued Japa or repetition of the Om liberates or manifests that energy in you, and another person can get it by similarly chanting Om, and we always feel that

this power must be transferred from Guru to disciple, as you do with candle. You light one candle from another - whatever you do with the unlighted candle, until it is brought in contact with a flame, it cannot be lighted. Similarly, you cannot start this power building of Om within you, except through initiation. You can get the Mantra from a book, gramophone record or from a Guru, but not the power. What the difference is, I shall explain next week.

16. The Yoga Attitude to God and Fellow-Man

Last week we saw that in order to control the chitta we use the sacred formula, Om, Pranava. Om is the name of Isvara or the term by which Isvara is known. In Sanskrit and in our scriptures Om is the only word which is specifically mentioned as denoting God. Perhaps some of you who study Hindu philosophy know that we have a million names of God - Narayana, Vishnu, Rama, Krishna, etc. For that we have been criticised by everybody, but I can tell you that Om is the only word that has been given as indicative of God, and the others are only descriptive words. For instance, Vasudeva means, "That power or that God which pervades the whole universe". In Sanskrit each word has got a meaning. "Rama" is "That aspect of God in which we rest and enjoy". "Krishna" is "That aspect of God which attracts you" and which also "rubs and purifies you". "Hari" is the Name referring to that aspect of God which "takes away all our sins, defects, weaknesses". I have only given you a few. There are millions. Yet the Hindu will not agree that Vishnu and Krishna are just one and the same. God is One: but He has different aspects. It will not do to confuse them.

Here is Mr. Alexander and his son Hariom. Suppose Alexander becomes a Judge and Hariom is an advocate. When this boy goes to the Tribunal where the father is the Judge, he cannot say, "Papa, my client is good". Even though the judge is the father, the son has to address him, "My Lord." The aspect is different. When he comes home, the son will not say, "My Lord, let us go to the Ashram". He will use the more familiar expression. In the tribunal you are looking at the man as the judge. Here the same man is the father. God is one. Each name refers to Him in different aspects, and you use that aspect which you wish to invoke.

You will find this again in Yoga. Though we have so many Mantras, we invariably use Om in conjunction with the other formulas. Om is the word by which we refer to God, and then, we also include some other aspect. You can use any formula, but combine with Om.

This Om only has become Amen. I believe long ago it was pronounced Amun. Amun, Amen, and now the Muslims say Amin. All are same. This is regarded as something which is not exactly the Name of God, but which the chitta associates with God. It is Universal. Each sound vibrates some parts of the body. This Om, when it is repeated properly, generates power.

This method of converting sound into power has to be learnt from Guru. You have the printed word Om in the book. Read it. If you do not know how to pronounce it - in Malagasy 'o' is pronounced 'u' - you will pronounce it um. In English sometimes 'o' is pronounced like the long 'a', as in "body". You might pronounce it like "aaaam". It is sometimes written Aum. I have actually seen a good man who is trying to be a Yogi; he twists and tortures the jaws in pronouncing these three letters independently! That is the danger of taking Mantra from book : we may not even know how to pronounce it.

I told you last week that you can take the Mantra from a book, from a

gramophone record, or from a Guru. From a book, it is useless. From a gramophone record, you hear the sound all right. But, while learning the Mantra from a Guru, you get some power which the record cannot give you. Sound (Sabda, nada, varna) has four stages - para, pasyanthi, madhyama, vaikhari. I will describe these from the last. Vaikhari is the sound I utter and which you hear. Madhyama is the middle stage. "What is this?" The moment I ask, you think, "It is mala", and say so. The word uttered is called vaikhari. The word which appears in the mind is called madhyama. It is the word-picture of an object. The third stage is pasyanthi, where you see an idea. We can understand only these three; the fourth is para or the consciousness itself, which it is not possible to explain or to understand. The consciousness in which the idea is coming up is called para. Pasyanthi can be explained in a round-about way. Suppose I show you a fruit. You have seen it in France, but have forgotten its name. You say, "Ah, this ... " - you know it, and it is coming up, the word is not properly forming in the mind. The idea is seen by the mind: "I know it", "It is coming". The next stage is madhyama, "Ah, I know, it is guaf". The word has formed in your mind. Vaikhari is when you say the word.

Take an example. A child comes to you and asks you, "What is this?". "Kerchief". The child also repeats, "Ah, kerchief". If I ask you to describe how you produced that sound, you will not be able to do so! "Put your tongue on the back, stop your breath", etc. - it is difficult to describe the process. But the moment the child hears it, it responds "Oh, kerchief". Though it heard only the sound, it knows how to produce the sound. The picture has been transferred from the mother to the child on three planes - vaikhari, madhyama and pasyanthi. All these have been combined to transfer the word-picture. If you understand this, you will realise how important it is to receive the Mantra from the Guru.

This actually happened in the Ashram. Our Master brought a poem. He had written in sets of three words, e.g., "Sat Chit Anand, Infinity Immortality Eternity" - all philosophical terms describing the Supreme. I have read these words a million times in books. But on that day, He was looking straight into my eyes, saying - "Infinity, Immortality, Eternity". The same words, but looking into His eyes, one could actually see Infinity, Eternity, Immortality. The Guru is able to transmit the varna or the sound in all the four stages at the same time. That is why we always insist that a Mantra should be received from a Guru.

I did not want to mention that the Guru transmits His soul-force, because even a man who has not developed that force is able to transmit it. I will give you an example. Take a small candle. It has a small flame. Take a huge bundle of rubbish or clothes and pour petrol on it. With this small candle, set fire to it. You know what happens? This is only a small candle, but the fire lighted becomes terrific. Without this small flame, all that is useless. But when this small flame comes into contact with it, it does not produce only a small flame, but a big fire. So that, if you have been soaked in spiritual essence, you can get blazing light even from a small candle. We have any number of examples in India of how a disciple has become much greater than the Guru. Our own Master, for instance. He lived with

His Guru only for three hours. He received only the initiation and the Mantra. The Guru went away. Maybe that Guru was not a God realised saint. It does not matter at all. Our Master became a great saint. If you are full of the essence, and even a matchstick will do. Therefore, when we approach a Guru, we do not ask, "Have you seen God?" My salvation depends upon me, and your salvation depends upon you. If I am full of faith, devotion and a pure heart, even from this little boy I can receive initiation and become perfect. That is the glory of Pranava or Om. By constantly repeating this Mantra, we generate wonderful spiritual power, which destroys all the evil within us. Patanjali asks us not only to do Japa but enter into the meaning.

Tad japastadarthabhavanam

Both are necessary - do Japa, but all the time realise the meaning of the word. Without the Bhavana, if you go on repeating the Mantra, nothing very much will happen. If mere repetition Om Om Om can give salvation, then this tape-recorder will get salvation. Fill up one tape with Om, and play it day and night. Nothing will happen. It is only the artha bhavana or realising the meaning of Om in your heart that can produce the power or the effect. The word Om must immediately remind you : "There is God. He is Infinite, Perfect, Creator, Preserver, Destroyer. He is everything." The idea must go on in the chitta. This Om can also be regarded as the key with which you open manas or the conscious mind. It is this manas or the conscious mind that is blocking your approach to the subconscious mind: we do not know what the subconscious mind is so long as this conscious mind is on top! We have seen in our meditation class, we repeat Om and the conscious mind stops functioning. Then it opens. We are able to get down into the chitta. There, bhavana is always associated with the chitta - we begin to realise (we do not merely think) "God is. He is infinity, etc." This chitta - we can go on describing what it is for ten years! - contains the impressions or samskaras of all the past, from the day you and I were stones till today. That is one of the reasons why when you see somebody you say, "I love him" or "I hate him". But "why should I like him?" There is no reason. The head is silent. Heart-to-heart some past-birth connection is renewed now. This chitta, nobody can analyse or know it fully. Between this chitta and the conscious mind, the difference is this : let us say the depth of the Indian Ocean is 8 kilometres, and the waves play on half a metre. The latter is your conscious intelligence : the rest is the chitta. We do not try to understand everything about it! All that we try is to pour into it the Om-vibration and the bhavana of Om. It is possible by this Japa and bhavana to transform the whole chitta into Om.

Let me give you a small example. Imagine a huge big rock falling away from the mountainside. It is possible that it creates a cave. It is dark in the cave. You take your son with you and he asks you "How long has this darkness been in this cave?" "Thousands of years." "Oh, so long? How long will it take this darkness to go?" Not even half a second. If you have a flashlight in your hand, the moment you press the switch, the darkness goes. It will not argue, "I have been here for ten thousand years, and, now, press the switch for a thousand years and then I

will go." In a moment it goes. The Yogi has that faith. Even though the chitta is big and impenetrable and all dark, the moment the bhavana of God is put into it, it is all light.

Patanjali gives us as the benefit of meditation on Om - "You will realise your soul and all obstacles will be removed". It can be understood. The conscious mind is made peaceful. And, the japa of Om and the bhavana purify the heart - what remains? The soul, and you can "see" it.

Patanjali's Raja Yoga is extremely practical. He gives us very practical instruction. I sit and do Japa of Om. For how long? Not for 24 hours - 1, 2 or 3 hours. Afterwards, I have got to come out and meet people. It is said of an elephant : take it to the lake and give it a nice bath. Immediately you bring it out it picks up dust and sprinkles on its head. Whenever we refer to something which is useless, we say it is like "Gajasnanam" (elephant's bath) - what is the use of bathing it when it is going to become dirty immediately? Doing Japa of Om is wonderful. But if I am going to come out and make my chitta dirty again, what is the use? Raja Yoga combines these two-inner Sadhana and outer Sadhana. We saw one half of our Sadhana - feeling the presence of God within by the bhavana of Om. Now the other bhavana is given by Patanjali.

Maitreekaruna-mudito pekshanam sukha-dukhha punya-apunya-vishayanam bhavanatah-chitlaprasadanam,

By cultivating the habits of friendliness, mercy, gladness and indifference towards happiness,pain, virtues and vice, comes peace of the mind.

This consists of the fourfold attitude towards people, when we deal with the world, here again it is not thinking, but bhavana. I think he is a doctor, but the feeling is "I like him". My brain says he is a doctor, but my bhavana says "He is a sage or God". Again I will give you another example: of a mother and her two children. One is intelligent and very good, and the other is dull and bad. The mother looks at one, her brain says, "He is a good, intelligent boy". She looks at the other boy, "He is a dull, bad boy". It is the mind that says this. But the heart says, "I love them both". There is no difference. Mind and buddhi say one is good, the other bad. The chitta says, "They are my children, I love them". That is bhavana.

In our attitude towards people, Patanjali gives us four bhavanas. Please do not think it is thinking : it is not the work of the manas.

Maitri : it is the bhavana of friendship. Towards people who are equal to us, we have the bhavana of friendship.

Karuna : compassion. To those who are inferior to us we have compassion. We treat them with compassion.

Muditha : it is translated as complacency in English. Somebody is superior to you. You are happy about it.

That is all : the whole world is covered by these. There is one more. There are some people of whom the mind says, "Ah, he is a bad man". What to do? The bhavana is, "Upeksha : be indifferent". He does not even exist for you. Don't even think of him. If your mind says someone is bad, refuse to think of him. This is something wonderful.

What you do now is just the reverse. If people are your equals, you either love them too much or hate them. No - be friendly towards all. Towards your inferiors, you have contempt : no, no - have compassion. Of the superiors, you are jealous : it is bad - be happy that he is there in a higher position, financially, socially or morally and spiritually. By all means try to become like him, but entertain no jealousy. With the wicked man, if you go on thinking "He is a bad man", now, who is the bad man? The man in your mind is the bad man. You see something funny. When I hold a camera in front of you and click, you know where the picture is? In my camera, not on your face. The moment I think of the bad man, he is here within me. The more you think of the bad man, the more bad you will become - I have seen this. Think of God, you become God. Think of the devil, you will become devil. One meditation leads to God, and the other to the devil. You did not create him (the bad man). You are not responsible for him. God is in him and enables him to breathe. He has some purpose for him. It is not your business.

Pain and pleasure, virtue and sin - these are the four things that confront us in our daily life. They have no absolute or intrinsic value - it is the mind and wrong discrimination (the head) that give them value. Pain and pleasure are the result of the past actions - wrong action and right action, respectively. The Yogi peacefully allows them to work out past karma. He is not now interested in sowing the seeds of virtue or sin. He aims at liberation, which is possible only when the chitta becomes totally pure and tranquil. He is, therefore, ever at peace within himself, never letting his attention be diverted towards thoughts of pain and pleasure, virtue and sin.

Thus we have the fourfold bhavana of the Raja Yogi

(i) Pranava or Om - bhavana or Isvara - visualising the Infinite and Eternal God, during meditation.

(ii) The fourfold bhavana of friendship, compassion, complacency and indifference towards people.

(iii) Patient endurance of pain and pleasure, in the field of experience.

(iv) Disinterestedness in acquiring virtue and sin in the field of activity.

These four transform the chitta, and make it divine entirely, which is what is meant by chittaprasadanam. It is filled with the Grace of God.

17. The World Within you

Today we actually enter into the inner circle of Yoga. Already, through Pranayama and Japa of Om, we have learnt to turn the mind inward to some extent. As I mentioned while dealing with Pranayama, Patanjali says that Pranayama itself leads to concentration. Even these - Pranayama, Pratyahara and Dharana - depend upon one another and are not independent. When you do Pranayama, automatically the senses are withdrawn. It is impossible to withdraw the mind within without fixing it on God. It is like pouring milk from one vessel to another. You cannot empty one vessel without letting the milk fall into something else. Without showing the mind some place where it can rest, you cannot withdraw it from the world. Therefore, our Master says, "Pratyahara and Dharana are two sides of the same coin".

Pratyahara actually means "withdrawing the senses from the world". There are two methods. One: we have already learnt this, and that is what we do in our meditation. It is the simple practice of using a Mantra and visualising a form of God. It is true that when we say "senses or indriyas", we mean all our senses; but we find that only two senses actually trouble us - the eyes and the ears. Take for instance this paper: it has got a name, viz., paper. It has a form. Two senses are brought to play. It has also got some taste, it has also got some smell, and you can feel it. When I say "paper", you hear the name and the form comes to your mind, not the taste, feel, or smell. So, we can say that the whole world is made of name and form. Mainly it is through these two senses that the world enters our mind. So that, if these two are controlled, then the mind is concentrated. The devotee of God, therefore, uses a Mantra and a Form - Nama and Rupa - and his problem is solved.

There is another method. It is called Laya or Kundalini or Hatha Yoga. It is perhaps more "scientific" because (please do not think I am criticising Bhakti) it is possible for a Bhakta (devotee), sitting and doing Japa, and thinking of a Form, to merely imagine something or dream! The Hatha Yogi, on the other hand, wants actually to dissolve the senses. He analyses the whole world. His being is also part of the world. My body is part of the world of matter. My life is part of cosmic life. My intelligence is part of the cosmic intelligence. My soul is the Supreme Soul. My senses have got their corresponding objects in the world. Each sense has got some corresponding quality in the object of the world, so that, for instance, my ear cannot see you. Only my eyes can see you, only my ear can hear you, only my tongue can taste something, and only my nose can smell, and my skin only can touch. Again you see that the whole universe is one, and yet there is a magic of diversity. This creation is something wonderful. The whole universe can be reduced to the five elements. And, the whole universe can be reduced to space, from which this diversity arose.

Forget the whole world. Everything exists in space. In that empty space there is some movement. We are told that at the time of creation, a vibration arose, and the equilibrium was disturbed. I will only give you crude illustrations to make you

understand. To the right of Alexander there is empty space when I blow air, there is some movement. Even if he does not see, he is able to feel "There is air". Thus from space air is born. I shall not bother you with the details of grouping and regrouping of the molecules of the elements. This is simple physics: when an object like an aeroplane or rocket moves very fast, there is friction, it becomes very hot and it may burn. The air around moves very fast and there is friction. From air you get fire. When you mix hydrogen and oxygen, there is fire and there is water. From fire water is produced. When the water becomes cold and solid, you get the earth. The whole universe can be reduced to these five, all of which were born of space.

Our body is also made of these five elements. Each sense has got its own receptive centre in our body. Just as the gross sense organs perceive the gross sense-objects, the subtle element is received by the subtle psychic centres in the body. The Hatha Yogi has got the five psychic centres. Muladhara, Swadhishtana, Manipura, Anahata and Vishuddha (Ajna is the mind-centre). From the base of the body, Muladhara, etc., are the psychic centres. The five centres correspond to the five elements. They act and react upon the world. Don't ask: "How is it possible for the outside stimuli to enter the centres which are in the body?" Even the X-ray can enter the body without disturbing the outer parts. It can take a photograph of the skeleton. These five centres vibrate in correspondence with the five elements. The Yogi feels that if you can acquire mastery over the five centres, you have mastered the whole universe.

This is something wonderfully scientific. Each one of these centres is represented as a lotus. A flower has got petals. Each centre or Chakra is represented to have a number of petals. These very things seem to correspond to certain nerve plexuses in the body. Here is something wonderful. At each plexus the number of main nerves seems to correspond with the number given in Hatha Yoga. Muladhara has four petals, and in the plexus corresponding to it you get four main nerve-trunks. This is one view. The Hatha Yogi refuses to concede that these chakras have anything whatsoever to do with the physical body. The nadis are neither nerve-trunks, arteries nor veins. Literally, the word "nadi" means "a flow of psychic energy". The flow is nadi, not a channel for the flow, for such channels do. In the same way Swadhishtana has got six petals, Manipura ten, Anahata twelve, Vishuddha sixteen and Ajna has got two. The Hatha Yogi says that every petal vibrates. In other words, every Nadi vibrates. You have seen the stringed instrument vali - if you pick one of the strings, it produces sound. Even so, the Nadi, when it vibrates, must produce some sound. Yogis who have occult powers have heard those sounds and related those sounds to those Nadis or petals. Count the number of petals - you get 50. The Sanskrit language has 50 alphabets. So, the popular belief is that Sanskrit language is holy and Yogic. Whether we know the meaning of a Mantra or not, the very sounds vibrate the Nadis. If you know the meaning, it is a thousand times better. But sound itself has got tremendous psychic influence. And, the Yogis through their occult powers have even found out the vibrations of these five elements. From that they have fixed the Bija Mantras for the Chakras. Lam is the Bija Mantra for the earth. Vam

for the water-element. Ram for the fire-element. You can try this for instance, if your stomach is not functioning well, and there is indigestion, they ask you to repeat Ram and massage your navel. Your indigestion will go. Yam is for the air in the heart. Ham is for space.

The next beautifully scientific truth is this. Above the Ajna - the whole brain - is what is known as the Sahasrara or the thousand-petalled lotus. 50 multiplied by 20 is 1000. In other words, all these fifty petals, and all these six centres have their corresponding centres in the brain. The physiologist tells you that every nerve has got its corresponding centre in the brain. When you give a blow on the head, the corresponding centre in the spine is affected, and a part of the body is paralysed. The spinal cord is only an extension of the brain. It is part of the brain. It has got nearly all the powers of the brain. The Sahasrara is manifold multiplication of all these centres. It is the seat of the mind, Buddhi or intelligence. To control the mind, you have the Ajna, the sixth centre. When the Buddhi is in contact with God and the Masters, we get their command through the Ajna Chakra. Ajna means command.

The Hatha Yogi says that this is the correct system of Pratyahara. He says, "Your Prana is distributed or dissipated in all these centres, and it is the Prana that makes the mind think." And, "so long as the Prana is vibrating in these centres, so long your mind will be thinking of those objects". For instance, if the auditory nerve is paralysed, (the Prana does not flow through the auditory nerve), you may be the most intelligent man on earth, and yet you will not hear one. The mind itself has no power without Prana, says the Hatha Yogi. If the nerve that supplies the nose has its Prana cut off - it is paralysed - even if you are the greatest man on earth, you cannot smell. So the Hatha Yogi says, "Cut off the Prana from these centres, and then you will get Pratyahara". You want to practise meditation, but you do not want to become sick. If you cut off the spinal cord, everything will be paralysed! But it does not solve your problem. You must know how to withdraw the Prana. That method is called Laya. You cannot jump to the highest centre all at once, or even dissolve earth into fire, etc. There is a Laya-Krama or order in which this is to be done.

The Yogi generates Pranic power in him by the union of Prana and Apana. Even here it is very scientific. It is the union of positive and negative to produce electricity. The extremely small atom cannot be crushed by the fingers or by ordinary electricity. It requires enormous power to break that atom. So you have the atomic reactors or nuclear reactors. In the same way, the Yogi generates fire in the fire-centre first, by the union of the positive and the negative forces - Prana and the Apana. When these two come together, psychic energy is produced. The two letters. "Ha" and "Tha" stand for "solar or positive power" and the "lunar or negative power" in us. When these two are united, great power is produced or generated.

You remember that when I taught you the relaxation exercise, I asked you to make the organ tense and then relax. When you make that part tense - and only

then - you are establishing contact. Without contacting the part of the body, you cannot relax. The mind must go to each part, touch it, make it tense and then consciously relax it. Otherwise, it means you have only forgotten it! In the same way, Prana is vibrating automatically in these five centres, and you have no control. With the new psychic power, you must go and contact the Prana at each centre. That is the risk in Hatha Yoga. There is first stimulation and then control. When you practise even Pranayama, you might become very hungry before you are able to control it. If you go on eating, the Yoga stops there. When the concentrated psychic energy touches each centre, first there is awakening of great power in that centre. Then you get control over it. If you do not want the risk, you will not get the benefit, control.

The method is to take the power gradually, centre after centre. It is not easy to get that control. But, once you get that control, it is easy to get Pratyahara.

Now, by concentration on Muladhara, and by repeating the Bija Mantra, the Yogi actually catches hold of that centre. Now, he consciously withdraws the power and takes it up. Then he goes to the "water-element" centre, then to the higher centre, Manipura. Then on to the air-centre or Anahata, and then to the space-centre or Vishuddha. He has withdrawn himself from the elements. He has "dissolved" them. There is now that subtle principle which we called Antahkarana, inner instrument, in Yoga. In the universe, you see the five elements, but the ego is the subject of all. I touch, I see, I hear. So, through the Ajna, the Yogi gets mastery over even the Antahkarana, the mind. This mind, this egoism, this intelligence or Buddhi is dissolved into Cosmic Intelligence.

The elements are merged in the ego and Buddhi. It is merged in Mahat. In Sanskrit Mahat only means "big". It is cosmic intelligence and cosmic life - force or Prana. Both these are mixed up. Mahat is really indescribable. It is the cosmic intelligence-Prana mixture. Our Prana we have from Mahat. Our intelligence also we have got from Mahat. This Mahat itself is the product of the "Nature" of God. The created universe is called Nature. From that cosmic prana, intelligence has come my prana-intelligence. From that intelligence my ego has come. My ego has brought all the elements together to form this body.

That Mahat is born of Prakriti or God's Nature. All the five elements, life, intelligence - everything is cosmic. The elements are cosmic. The life or Prana is cosmic. The intelligence is also cosmic. But, why do I say, "I am so-and-so, and he is so-and-so"? All these are God and His Nature! What is it that makes you different from me and me different from him? Nobody can explain this. Beyond this Prakriti, there is darkness or Tamas. So that whatever you do, you will go and knock against that darkness. Whatever Yoga or path you follow, you will knock against that darkness.

Everything is born of this dark side of God's Nature. That is why someone said in answer to the question, "What is this universe?" - "It is the dream of God." Perhaps, God Himself is sleeping, and He is dreaming the universe.

This is the particular glory of the Laya Yoga. The human intelligence cannot understand God. This intellect which is itself a product of Prakriti cannot understand God. The Hatha Yogi says: "Dissolve all these, and go to that stage where you are conscious of the Prakriti". Then you come and knock at that stage of Tamas. Eventually, even this great Yogi who says, "I can generate psychic fire and have control over the elements," admits "I do not know what God is". Here is the genius of Yoga and the difference between this practice and nihilistic Buddhists. According to certain sections of Buddhism, they go on and on and negate all these and fall into void. The Yogi is very careful to avoid that. Our formula for Laya is tamah sajeevam paramatmani ekibhavayami: "This Tamas and Diva together I feel is one with God." Again I shall give you a very common example. During the day sometimes you see thick black cloud. You do not see the sun at all. Still you know it is day-time and not night. Why? Because you see light coming through that dark cloud. Therefore, even though you do not see the sun, you know the sun is there. When you mix these two -Tamas and Jiva (the living soul), you feel, "I am not the body, etc., but I am not nothing - I am." Though I cannot understand what God is, I know God is. Through the veil of Tamas, this feeling "I am" radiates. The Yogi gathers up the whole thing, and fixes it in the Sahasrara and meditates on Isvara. This is the process of Hatha Yoga or Laya Yoga.

By this practice, Patanjali says: "Atah paramavasyala indriyanam", "you get supreme mastery over the senses". The mind also is regarded as one of the senses - the eleventh sense. In Yoga, whenever you speak of senses, you include the mind also. When you practise this Pratyahara, you get supreme mastery over the senses and the mind. Our Master says in his book, "Pratyahara and Dharana are interdependent. You cannot practise one without the other." Even in the practice of this Laya Yoga, fix your mind at those centres, and visualise God there. Because, if that concentration on God is not there, in a minute the mind will take you to New York. Sometimes you will see the light connected with the particular element you are meditating upon. Even then, do not bother. Go on with your concentration. Otherwise, do you know what will happen? If you see a blue light, you ask yourself "What is this"? You have forgotten God. The mind will answer, "It is like the light in our class room. Oh, doctor bought it from a shop. Doctor is a wonderful man. He pulls out our tooth without pain. The Chinese are experts in pulling out teeth." Where was that blue light and where are the Chinese? At 6.00 am. you will wake up and wonder, "Where was all this?" If you want success in Pratyahara, you must have Dharana. One cannot go without the other.

18. Try these Mental Disciplines

Connected with this practice of Pratyahara and Dharana let us discuss some simple exercises. Padmasana - or any comfortable posture - you must practise apart from concentration and meditation. Suppose you come to the meditation class and you cannot do Padmasana, but try it all the time. You will disturb yourself and everybody else. All these different parts of Yoga must also be practised separately. Asana must be done independently. Pranayama must be done independently. So that, when you sit for meditation, it must flow automatically and smoothly. If you cannot do Padmasana, try to practise it independently, but sit in any comfortable posture for meditation.

I will give you some Pratyahara-Dharana exercises. The simple exercise is that of looking at somebody or something and not to recognise. Look at the doctor's face, but let the mind not think at all "I am looking at the doctor's face". This is possible only if inwardly you raise an image of God. In Hatha Yoga, we have an exercise called Sambhavi Mudra. It is to keep the eyes open and not to see anything outside. Please remember that it is not the eyes that see, but it is the mind that sees. So that a dead body may have its eyes open, or a man in coma may have his eyes open, but see nothing. You must try consciously wherever you are to practise this. Try to wipe out all the ideas that arise in the mind. You see something within though your eyes look at something outside.

Another Pratyahara exercise. Take off your shoes. Sit with bare feet. Ask somebody to tickle you. First, you feel it - something is happening. Quickly take the attention away from there. When the feet are tickled, the Prana becomes active there. Now, remove the attention from there, and fix it in the heart or in the Ajna Chakra. With a little practice you must be able not to be tickled.

Yet another exercise. This is a little more difficult. You are listening to an orchestra, on your record-player. Listen closely. Tell yourself, "I want only the piano now." You must not listen to anything else - no violin, etc. Next time, play the same record and tell yourself, "This time I want to listen only to the violin". Here, I shall mention a stupid nature of the human mind. Even when you are successful in this practice, and you are listening to the violin, the mind will ask itself, "Have I really forgotten the piano?", and suddenly you will hear the piano. That temptation should be resisted. The same thing will happen in meditation. While you are meditating, you forget your body - but, suddenly a curiosity enters the mind. "Have I really forgotten my body?" And immediately you will remember the body. All the effort is lost. Never mind: if you forget the body, and even if you sleep, do not mind. Try to forget the body. That is possible only if you fix your attention on God. In the same way, there are certain simple exercises at concentration and Pratyahara. You might find some of these in some hooks. Some of these are meant to develop the mind more than the spirit. Come into the room, look, go away, close your eyes, and count the number of people in the room. It is possible with a little training. The same thing is applied on the spiritual side, for meditation. Look at a picture, close your eyes, call up the whole

picture. It is not so easy because, when you look at a face, you are not looking only at the face. Within the mind there are so many other pictures. The eye itself in its periphery is seeing so many other things. That is why you are struggling with your meditation. Try these exercises. Do not think that only one exercise or one type of Sadhana will do. Take help from any exercise, anybody, anywhere. Be careful that you do not lose sight of your goal, and you are not confused. But accept the Truth, whoever gives it to you.

Then, with closed eyes or open eyes, when you sit in a dark room, you should be able to convert the mind into the image of God you are concentrating upon. Patanjali defines Dharana as Desabandhaschittasya dharana - i.e., when the chitta is prevented from getting out in space, it is called Dharana. What is thinking or imagination or memory? It is the mind moving in space. When I think of somebody even here, my mind is moving in space to contact that somebody. When I imagine, again my mind is moving in space connecting me with those imagined objects. When I remember, my mind travels back both in time and space to re-capture the past experience. These three must be conquered. These three must be positively restrained. One formula which has helped me greatly is, whatever happens, to tell the mind, "Look, I am here. I am interested only in this - now and here." When you sit for meditation, when the mind thinks of anything else, say, "No, now and here". "I am not in contact with those situations now : I will not think of them" When you are sitting in meditation, the mind has no business to think of your shop etc. - you are not there and they are not here. It is good mentally to suggest - like auto-suggestion - "Here and Now, and nothing else". In the same way, when there is memory or hope (planning), suggest to yourself - Here and Now. "I am interested only in what is taking place here and now. I am sitting here for meditation now and it is going to happen."

Discipline is something which nobody likes in the world. It is a perverse manifestation of the independence of the Spirit. The Soul is independent - it is not bound by the world. It is immortal - death cannot touch it. That is why when you are sick, you do not lie down and be reconciled to death - you go to the doctor and try to cure yourself "I am not a slave, but I am master of the body." In the same way, if you think of life itself, you will see that you, the Immortal Soul, are trying to assert all the time "I am the Master, not the slave". The mind is a slave of habit. It has learnt this formula: "I am master, I will not obey anybody". Now, you ask the mind, "Keep quiet, I want to meditate" - it will not obey you also! That is the tragedy.

Here is a small story. A man borrowed some money from another man. He went to an advocate and said, "I do not want to repay. Can you help me ?" The advocate agreed, on payment of half the amount as his fees. The advocate told the man, "When that man takes you to the court, only say bey, bey, bey." The same thing happened - to all the questions of the court, the man replied "bey". The judge dismissed the case, saying that the man was mad. Outside the court, the advocate demanded his fees. The man turned and said "bey". The same "bey" to you also!

Like that it is good for the mind to be independent of the body and the world. But it is not good to let the mind be independent of Yoga. That is the idea behind. For instance, one of the disciplines we adopt as Swami: whatever happens to the body, we try not to care. But, humility is important, and we shall not let the mind say, "I don't care for the rich man or for somebody who threatens me." But when the mind says, "I don't care even for the good man or Guru", it is wrong." If the mind asserts its arrogance, it is not good. Only through discipline, can the mind be made fit for Yoga.

Pratyahara and Dharana are very powerful mental disciplines. This discipline must help us in our life also. As I have said earlier, if the spiritual life goes one way and the workaday life goes the other, there will be no progress. These principles of Pratyahara and Dharana must be applied in our daily life. I don't suggest that this is possible for all of you today - but you must try. Take a book, go to the market, and try to read it there. Put it in your pocket. Come home and write the gist of what you read there. Like this, try to make your own exercises to develop concentration and Pratyahara. In this manner, eventually, even in the midst of all kinds of disturbances, you will be able to sit, withdraw the mind and meditate.

One of the greatest results of this kind of Pratyahara is that we will never blame anybody else for our not progressing in Sadhana. "Why have I not progressed? Because I have not done enough Yoga. Because my mind is still full of desires." In the Bhagavad Gita, after Krishna has described the process of meditation, Arjuna says, "You have described the Yoga very easily. But I do not see any hope, because the mind is constantly flitting here and there". Krishna agrees with it. "It is true. It is difficult, but not impossible." He and Patanjali say, "Abhyasa - practice, practice, practice - and Vairagya (dispassion) enable you to control it".

Here again Pratyahara by itself is of no use. It has to be combined with Dharana. Try to control the mind again and again - it will not be possible. The more pressure you apply, the more terrible it will become. Why? Because, in trying to suppress it, you are only thinking of the thing you want to suppress. A doctor gave a medicine to a patient. He said, "Look, this is not only medicine. It also contains some Mantra. The only caution : if you think of a monkey when you take it, it will not work." If the doctor had not said, it would have been all right. Now that he had said it, the man took the bottle home and was about to take it and thought, "What did the doctor say? I should not think of the monkey." He was thinking of the monkey.

No evil habit can be conquered by directly attacking it. In a scripture called Ramayana, we have the story of God incarnated as Rama. He had to kill a very powerful monkey-demon. That demon was called Vali. This monkey-demon had a boon: "Who-ever fights with you, you will get 50% of his strength". So, nobody could defeat him. When someone went to fight him, he had his own strength plus the 50% of the opponent's. He was always more powerful than the enemy. And,

Rama who was God, had to hide himself behind a tree and shoot him. It was not right for a warrior to do that. The story is an allegory. It shows that you cannot fight face to face with your own mind. When you say "No", the mind will say "Yes". You are actually thinking of the evil you want to get rid of, and thereby strengthening it. Some automobile drivers will tell you, when they are learning to drive, they look at a tree in front and want to avoid but go right on to it. Because they are looking at the tree only.

There is no use fighting with the mind. We must get behind it, be with God, and then fight. That is what the above story illustrates. Pratyahara will be effective only when the practice of feeling the presence of God is strong. When you sit for your practice of Dharana, if the thought of somebody else comes, don't try to drive it away. It is no use : you will also go out. If a friend in America comes into your mind and you try to drive him, he will go and you will also go. Silently and calmly, tell yourself: "Here and Now. That man is not here now : God is here now. For this period of meditation, I am going to live in God and make God live in me."

It is not the achievement of a day. Our Master has said that if after one year's practice you are able to say, "Ah, last year my mind used to run 50 times during meditation, and this year it runs only 40 times", you have made great progress. In this practice there is only one vital factor - Abhyasa. You must conquer the mind by its own strength or weakness. You must find its weak point. What is the weakness of the mind? Habit. The mind is our master now because we have made that its habit. The whole thing has to be changed. We must set apart certain times for controlling it. That must become a habit. Not in a day, month or year - but we must persist. Suppose you started the practice of meditation on the 1st March. If you continue, at the end of the year, you would have continually meditated for 10 months. But suppose you think "I meditated for six months nothing happened", and leave it, and suddenly re-start it. At the end of the year, how long have you continually practised meditation? Only two months! There was a break in the middle. There is absolutely no use stopping or breaking the practice.

I think this story is told of a rabbit and a tortoise. They both started running a race. The rabbit looked at the tortoise and said, "I can run fast and you are a slow creature". But the tortoise said, "All right, I will do my best". The tortoise went very slowly. The rabbit ran fast and looked back. The tortoise was far behind. The rabbit slept for a little while. But before it woke up, tortoise had reached the goal. It is better to go slow, steadily, and with regular practice. Once the habit is established, you will not have to tell the mind - the mind will automatically do it. For instance, if you want to wake up early in the morning, use an alarm clock, and try to form the habit. After a month or so, you will find that you will wake up a few minutes before 4 o'clock. I have seen the effect of habit. In the Ashram I used to do the Puja in the temple, and had to get up at 3. On occasions, I had to work till 1 o'clock at night. Yet I would wake up at 3. I might not get up from bed, but I would wake up and sleep again. This will go on for a number of days - God gives you some chance. If you go on neglecting it, then a new habit is formed. Form the habit, "I must sit at this place for meditation at this hour." Pratyahara will be

easy. Dharana also will be fairly easy.

19. A Glimpse of the Goal

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras deal mainly with the practical aspects of Yoga, though there is a little bit of complicated theory. We have so far confined ourselves only to the practical aspects of Yoga. Theory is essential and good. Without theoretical knowledge perhaps we may not commence our practice. Even in order to prepare a cup of tea, a little theory is necessary. But if the theory is only in the brain, it is useless. I have seen some musicians in India who know everything about music theoretically. Ask them to sing - they cannot. What is the use of that theory?

We have approached Yoga only as practical spiritual seekers. From the beginning till today we have only approached it as students of Yoga, neither as professors nor as philosophers. The practical side of Yoga for us at the present time almost ends with Dharana or concentration. If we ascend or climb these six steps in the ladder of Yoga - Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara and Dharana - God will lead us on to Samadhi. I will only briefly give you a description of Dhyana and Samadhi.

Last week we looked into the practice of Dharana or fixing the mind. Without fixing the mind on the object of meditation, you cannot meditate. I will tell you what meditation is in brief: it is like a flow, a river, a channelisation. If you want to take water from a reservoir to your house, what do you do first? You fix a channel. If you do not fix the channel and break the reservoir, the water will go everywhere. The Yogi says that our mind now is like the reservoir that is broken, without a channel. Dharana is like fixing the two points - the meditator and the object. That is not the goal or the end. Imagine: there is a reservoir and the garden to be watered and the channel also is there, but it is not opened. Through that the water must flow and then it is complete. Dharana is fixing.

What happens when you do this? Two things, viz., your intelligence and your Prana become concentrated. You must carefully try to understand this. Prana is the electric or life-force in us. All the power in me is Prana. The intelligence - not the intellect - in us is God. If there is no thought-wave on the chitta, it is God! That is why Patanjali allows us to meditate upon the chitta itself, when there is no thought in it: Vitaragavishayam va chittain. It is abstract meditation and difficult. But, you can meditate upon your own chitta without a thought-wave or without desire. What is your intelligence if there is no desire in it, if there is no thought in it, if there is no attachment in it? It is God. Therefore Ramana Maharshi always used to ask: "Find out - where does this thought arise, where does this desire arise - if you go along with it and trace its root, you will find God".

The chitta is made calm and peaceful. The Prana is concentrated. The Prana acts upon the chitta, and you get subtle vision. If you please practise Pranayama and meditation every day, you will get this very soon. Even when you talk to other people if you watch yourself, your chitta will be clear and crystal like. It will be clean and clear, and it will also become extremely subtle. Because it is like a crystal, it will reflect whatever object comes near it. A crystal has no color, but it

will reflect the color of the object placed near it. Therefore, you may develop powers of thought-reading, for when somebody comes near you, you may reflect his thoughts. Because the mind is like crystal, at that stage, it is very necessary for you to select your company. The thoughts and the desire and the motives of your friends will be reflected in your own mind.

You will be able to understand everybody. You will spontaneously begin to love and to understand everybody. That is a great advantage. What is understanding? It is looking at the other man as he looks at himself. The result is that you will be always peaceful. You will not be upset by anybody. If a mean comes and scolds me, I know why he does it. It is all wonderful! I look at it not as somebody else looks at it, but as he looks at it himself. Only the Yogi who has reached the stage of true Dharana will be able to understand everybody and love everybody. That is all we are interested in, though Patanjali extends it to other objects. Because your intelligence is so subtle, if you look at this watch, you will know how it is made! But that again will take you away from God. You will start making watches, and not meditate upon God. Any power which you get or use will take you away from God. Turn the whole practice towards God.

The mind is like a crystal. We place God in front of it. The whole chitta is transformed into God. Every time you turn into your mind, you feel the Presence of God within you.

We go on to Dhyana. Tatra pratyayaikatanata Dhyanam. When this channel has been fixed, and when the whole mind-stuff flows continuously towards that God, it is Dhyana. I do not think it can be explained properly. Here and there some Yogis have tried to explain it, but I do not think it is satisfactory. For instance, they have given some exercises like this for Dhyana. Take this rose. First fix your mind on it. Then, let the mind flow towards it. You can think (that is the trouble here you are only going to think) all thoughts connected with the rose. But you shall not think of anything else. You can think of the color, where it is made, etc. But the mind should not even associate it with something else. If you look at this rose, and begin to think "Miss Lewis has a pullover of this color", your meditation is disturbed. Only this rose and things connected with it can be thought of. It is good as an exercise, but it is not meditation.

First you fix the mind and let it flow and flow and flow towards God, and your whole being enters God that is Dhyana. The next stage is Samadhi. We cannot even understand Dhyana, and how can we understand Samadhi? Tadevarthamatranirbhasanr swarupashunyamiva samadhih. Only That is there. I was looking at the rose - I was meditating upon it. A stage comes, when - of the three viz., I, see, rose - the seeing goes, and I become one with the rose. That is called Samadhi. I can only tell you a story to enable you to understand this.

A man went to a Yogi. He was a cowherd. He used to give milk to the Yogi. The Yogi was highly pleased with him. He asked the Yogi to teach him meditation. The Yogi gave the man a Mala, a Mantra, and asked him to think of Krishna. But

the man could not. He could not fix his mind on Krishna. The Yogi asked: "When you close your eyes, what do you think of?" "Swami, there is a buffalo which I like very much. When I close my eyes it comes before me." "Now, meditate upon that as God." He immediately entered into Samadhi. After several days, when the Yogi called out to him to come out of his room, the man said from within: "Oh, Swami, I cannot come out - the door is too small and my horns are very big". He had meditated on the buffalo with such concentrated intensity that, either he had actually become like a buffalo, or had at least complete identification with the buffalo that he thought he had grown horns.

The same story is told of Gopis who were friends of Krishna. They were so much in love with Krishna that one day when they were playing, they said to one another: "I am Krishna, worship me." That is complete identification.

You also know the story of Theresa Newman who used to bleed or suffer from stigmata, because she identified herself with Jesus so much that blood started pouring from her hands.

That is called Samadhi. Trayam ekatra samyamah - Raja Yogi is very fond of Samyama. When these three - concentration, meditation and Samadhi - are practised together, it is called Samyama. Patanjali gives a big list of objects on which the Yogi can do Samyama and get psychic powers, etc. Again I must remind you that we are not interested in these powers. We do not want to fly in the air - there is the aeroplane. We do not want to walk on water - we have the ship. A young man went to Ramakrishna, Guru of Vivekananda, and said that after twelve years of Yoga-practice, he had acquired the power to walk on water. Ramakrishna laughed and said, "I give five francs and that boatman takes me to the other side of the river. Twelve years you have wasted for five francs worth of power." We want God and nothing else. Yoga must always be directed to God.

I will give you an example which will help you to understand these three a little better. Suppose, a king who was drunk (and so had forgotten that he was the king) stands in front of a palace - he likes that building - and admires. He forgets everything else and is looking only at the palace. It is Dharana. You forget yourself and everything else. He goes into the palace. He goes from room to room. It is meditation. Within the palace, he wanders. That is why I told you it is different from thinking of the rose. You do not get into the rose, but you are outside the rose - it is thinking. Here you are inside it. In meditation you are within God. It is like wandering inside the palace. He goes to the throne room. Now the effect of the alcohol is finished. Suddenly, he remembers "Oh, I am the King". That is called Samadhi. First fix your attention on God. Then let the whole chitta flow towards Him. Suddenly, the realisation will dawn on you, "I am that God. What a fool, I was dreaming all the time". You are the soul, the immortal Self or God. Because you are drunk with delusion, you are thinking, "I am so-and-so, I am doing this" - it is all dream - exactly like the reverie of a drunkard. You have got to counter-hypnotise yourselves or dehypnotise yourselves. Concentrate or fix the mind on God, let the mind flow towards Him. By the power of

concentration and meditation, when the illusion vanishes, realise "I am God". That is the goal.

This can be had only by the Grace of God. I think it is Ashtavakra who said: "Only by the Grace of God one can have desire for realisation of oneness with God." He was a very great sage who ever lived in that realisation. Yet, he glorified the Grace of God. God is not our servant, and therefore we cannot command Him to come. He will come when He wants to. All this Yoga-practice is like cleaning a mirror and preparing it. When the sun rises, the mirror will reflect it if it is clean. Suppose you want to catch the reflection of the sun. The whole night you go on cleaning the mirror. And, you start showing it to the sky. There is no reflection. You ask, "You said that if the mirror is clean, it will reflect the sun, but nothing happens!" Wait. When the sun rises, it will reflect.

So long as you are restless, it means you are still egoistic. It is your ego which says, "God must come today." You have done your job. Keep quiet. When He wants, He will come. Why are you restless? It means: the ego is not completely dead. So long as there is desire in the heart, God will not come. Look at what people are doing in the world. Whatever they make, they only sell, but do not give free. If a man is a doctor with good knowledge - how many are there who will freely give of that knowledge to the poor sick people? Take atomic power for instance: if it is only used for the good of mankind, great good can be done. But who will do so? If one has little power, one wants to use it for selfish ends. If the restless desire is there, God will not come. For perhaps you will say, "Oh, I have got God in my pocket", open a big shop announcing "God is here", and collect money. Till you completely surrender yourselves, and till that stage comes, when you are prepared to forget yourself in Him, He will not come. Someone says, "I have completely surrendered myself" - who says that? It is hypocrisy. If you have surrendered yourself, you will not even know it. Only God knows. If you say, "I know it", it means you are different from that. So, the man who says "I am good", is not good. That goodness is something apart from him, and he sees it. Only God knows. If He is satisfied that you are completely pure and egoless, He will reveal Himself. I told you in the beginning that even when we do Dharana you will understand others. When you realise God, you will understand Him also. You will not want to play miracles. Because you will understand why God wills that these things should happen. You will understand God and will do nothing which is not God's Will. So, the whole thing depends entirely on God's Grace. Even Patanjali, therefore, emphasises that you should worship God. You should serve humanity and purify your heart, and meditate at the same, study scriptures and then patiently wait till God reveals Himself. That is what Ashtavakra says, "God can be realised only by His Grace." Let us bear this in mind and go on with our Sadhana. The more peaceful you are, the nearer you are to God. The more loving you are, the nearer you are to God.

I must explain one more thing. The special type of goal of Raja Yoga is this. The liberation of Raja Yoga is called Kaivalya. It is translated as 'isolation', to be alone as God - not to be involved in all these activities, but to be merely a witness of the

activities. That is not laziness. Because, what is Prakriti or Nature? This body of mine and the mind are also part of Prakriti. I will not identify myself even with these. They can take part in all the worldly activities. But I, the Purusba, have disconnected myself, not only from the world, but also from this body and mind. I am always peacefully witnessing the whole thing, even what this mind thinks and this body does. That is called Kaivalya which the Raja Yogi experiences, by the Grace of God.

20. Synthesis of Yoga

Today is the last lecture, and I am glad to see so many of you present. For the benefit of those who are new, I will give you a summary of what we have been discussing so far. It will also help those who have been following this series to understand the lessons better.

First: what is Yoga? Yoga only means what the English word religion means. After all, when we say something, it has got to be said in some language. Yoga is a word in Sanskrit - but that need not frighten you at all. For instance, supposing I eat cheese made in Australia, I will not become an Australian. Do not say, "I will not eat it. It comes from Australia." There are people even now who say, "Oh, Yoga? It is Indian. I do not want it." There is nothing Indian or Hindu about it. It is for you. If you want the benefits of Yoga, you are welcome to practise it. And again, I emphasise that not only we do not want you to become Hindus, but we do not want to change your religion. It is bad to go from one religion to another. You may go to Church. If you do not want to go to one Church, go to another. If you do not want to go to Church at all, sit at home and pray. But we do not want you to change your religion.

Yoga asks us to believe in God. Again, I would like to point out that every man has got some faith in something. Think about it carefully when you go home - if you do not believe in God, you believe in money, in the army, in police, or in something. You cannot live without faith. All that the great Yogis ask you to do: put your faith in something which is not changing, which is permanent. You have faith in money? Good. But, it will pass away and you will be unhappy. If you have faith in your own physical strength, good. But, even that strong body will be come old and die. All these things will one day or other lead you to unhappiness. What is it that has been in this earth, before you and I were born? Tananarive existed before you and I were born. Do not think you and I have to carry it on our shoulders. And, your soul and my soul existed before you and I came to this city. That means: there is a God who supports the world, and there is a God who supports you. If you believe in Him, if you have faith in Him, then you will not see unhappiness. That is the first principle of Yoga.

Having said that, let me assure you that I do not have God in my pocket to give you. I do not say, "Here is God, and come and follow my God". No! God is no one's monopoly. You have some idea of God follow that God. Believe in God - have faith in God, that is all we ask.

Next, we ask, "What is that God?" No. 1 - We believe that God is in the soul of man. Within you, right in your heart, there is God. If you cannot find God in your heart, you can find him nowhere in this world. No. 2, God is not so small that He can be accommodated in your heart. God is the Creator of the entire universe, universe which your mind cannot think of. God is everywhere. No. 3, whenever there is trouble in the world - trouble in the sense that people become unrighteous or sinful, God manifests Himself in this world. Why does he come?

In order to help those who want to be good, and in order to redeem those who are wicked. Therefore, the third aspect of God is His manifestation or incarnation. This incarnation is also infinite or limitless. I do not believe that God incarnates only in India, only in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, England or America. God is infinite. Do not make Him small. It is true I will tell you about the incarnations in India, because I know them. But I tell you, if only you take the trouble, you will perhaps find that there were great incarnations of God in every country of the world.

That God manifests Himself again and again all over the world. Jesus was one incarnation of God. Muhammad was an incarnation of God. Krishna was an incarnation of God. Moses and Buddha were incarnations of God. Limitless and countless. These three are the aspects of God. One is: immanent, within, immanuel. The second is: transcendent. The third is: incarnation.

You can approach God in any one of these three ways. But our Master, Swami Sivananda, always said, "Approach God in all the three ways". You must become perfect - that is Yoga. You must become perfect in all the aspects of your personality, that is Yoga. You must have a strong and healthy body. You must have a peaceful mind. You must have a brilliant intellect. You must have a pure heart. And, you must have an enlightened soul. The Light of God must shine in and through you. Yoga can do that.

You maintain good health through the practice of Yoga postures. You calm your nerves and be free from tension, by the practice of breathing exercises. And, the powers of your mind and intellect could be tremendously augmented by the practice of concentration and meditation. By worshipping God and loving God, your heart can be made pure. And, eventually the soul is enlightened, and you realise or experience God. This experience no one can describe to you. No experience can truly be described. If I ask you, "What is the taste of sugar?", you cannot explain it to me. You will say, "It is sweet." "What is sweet?" "It is like honey." "What is the taste 'of honey?" If I go on asking you, you will take a little bit of sugar, and put it into my mouth and say, "Taste it, that is called sweet." Everyone will have to realise God, and know what it is. That experience, Yoga will lead you to.

How to combine these practices? Approach and worship the incarnations of God. Understand that God is all-pervading and infinite. And, realise that God is in your heart. When you combine all these, it is Yoga. Again I must remind you that it is not worship of this or that God. I want you to worship 'your' God. If you think that the Sun (Hari) is God, go on. If you have faith in Lord Jesus, go on with it. If you want to worship Mary, go on. Or, if you have faith in some of your own ancestors or other saints, go on. For, eventually whatever be the object on which you meditate, you must love it. It is impossible for me to love something that you bring. Love is not like a coat which can be purchased in the shop. It must come from your heart. If your heart loves something and you feel, "Ah, that is God", that is God for you. It may be a picture of an object of nature, like the sun, or it may be an image of a saint, or a mere piece of stone which your grand father and

great grand father worshipped as God. That is very important. In India sometimes this shapeless thing - Siva Lingam - is worshipped as God. I must remind you: I am not worshipping this. I am worshipping God in it. God is everywhere. If you say God is everywhere, and God is not in this, it is blasphemy. You can worship anything you like, provided that in that you feel the presence of God. I can assure you that if this symbol is lost or broken, I will not feel that God is dead. You can use any symbol.

And, when you worship a saint, the picture of a saint, the image of an incarnation of God like Jesus, what happens is this: you think of the picture of Jesus feeling He is God. And, you love Him. You meditate upon Him. At heart you become one with Him. A miracle happens. You become like Jesus. It does not matter if that cross or crucifix, or the picture in front of you is Jesus or not. It does not even matter if Jesus actually lived. But in your heart, He will come to life, and there you will find God. That is why we feel that even our Guru can be worshipped as God. Our spiritual teacher is God to us. We do not worship that body, but the spirit in that body. When you worship with faith, with love, this miracle takes place, your heart is purified, and you find God.

This miracle is not very easy. He who would find his soul must have these two things - peace of mind and purity of heart. If a man says, "I feel God is with me" and is worried, he is a hypocrite. Please think over this carefully. If you feel that God is with you, where is the worry? If you feel God is in you and everywhere around you, your heart must be pure. These two things take place within - our evil qualities disappear. When you pick somebody's pocket, it is only because you think no one is seeing you. God out here is watching - if you feel it, you will not pick his pocket. Peace of mind and purity of heart - these you must have if you feel that God is in you and he is everywhere.

God is in you. God is everywhere. When someone else is sick or poor, you will immediately go to serve. This is called Karma Yoga. If a man does not do selfless service, he has not yet understood what God is. As you are walking, if a thorn enters the foot, the hand immediately goes to take it out. Why? Because the hand and the foot belong to the same body. The hand does not say, "The thorn has not entered me, let the foot suffer". You feel that God is all-pervading, that you are all merely cells or parts of that God. Then you have understood Yoga. If you go to a shop, you cannot buy anything without paying the price. I told you that if you practise Yoga, you will have peace of mind and strength of heart. It is possible only if you serve everybody. That is the price you must pay. Karma Yoga-service, service, service - we must learn to live for others' happiness. The man who says, "My happiness first", is the most unhappy man on earth. The man who says, "I do not care what happens to me, I want everybody to be happy", is always happy. That is Karma Yoga.

Why should I serve? Because God is everywhere and we are all parts of God. Just as in your body there are millions of small cells, we are cells in the body of God. We want to feel the presence of God. We enter into Bhakti Yoga. Get some

picture or symbol of God, and sit there and feel that God is present there. Worship it. Worship God in it. And, love God. But if a man sits there thinking of God, comes out and is cruel, he has not understood what God is. God is everywhere - not only in the symbol. After we feel the presence of God, we come out and love everybody. In that Bhakti Yoga or love of God, how to concentrate our mind and fix it? Raja Yoga teaches us how to do this. This Yoga which enables us to concentrate the mind, will help us to have success in life also. Now in all these, we use some symbol. And, we sometimes visualise the symbol in our self, and in others. But God is not limited to these symbols. Your mind cannot understand God. God created your mind. It cannot understand God. So, to keep alive in our mind the transcendental nature of God, we study the scriptures and remember that God is transcendent. All these must be combined.

One of the greatest devotees of India, Hanuman, says, "God, when I think I am this body, I am your servant. (At that time we practise Karma Yoga.) When I sit for my worship or meditation, I forget the body and I feel that I am a drop in the ocean. I feel I am part of God. (This is Yoga). And, later, when even that idea disappears, I feel I am one with you." (This is Jnana-Self-realisation.) That is the goal. All three must be combined. That is my last prayer to you: all these must be practised daily, daily, daily. Physical exercises, breathing exercises, worship of a symbol of God, meditation on God, selfless service of humanity or the poor and the sick, (service, not mere words, feeling you are serving God, feeling you are serving your own body), study of scriptures - all these must be combined and made daily habit. I can assure you that if you do these, you progress rapidly towards the goal of Yoga.

You must have a time-table for your daily life. And, you must stick to that time-table. You must have a diary in which you must note how much you are progressing - how less angry and more loving you are, how pure your heart is becoming - all these you must note down and review the diary. Then the progress will be extremely rapid. I am quite sure that before I have the blessing of God to meet you again, many of you would have become Yogis. That is my prayer: please, you must realise God. You must be free from misery, and you must not only have faith in but, you must actually realise the permanent Reality. Only then you will be ever peaceful and ever happy. That is the only prayer to God with which I came here, with which I have served God in you. And that is my last prayer to God.

Concluding Prayers

Om Tryambakam Yajamahe Sugandhim Pushtivardhanam
Urvarukamiva Bandhanaan mriyora rnuksheeyamaamritaat

We worship the Lord : may He liberate us from death.

Om Sarvesham Swasti Bhavatu
Sarvesham Shantir Bhavatu
Sarvesham Purnam Bhavatu
Sarvesham Mangalam Bhavatu

May all be blessed with well-being, auspiciousness, peace, and fullness.

Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah Sarve Santu Niramayaah
Sarve Bhadrani Pasyantu Ma Kaschit Duhkha Bhag Bhavet

May all be happy and free from illness.
May all see only good.
May no ill befall anyone.

Asato ma sadgamaya
Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya
Mrityor ma amritam gamaya

Oh Lord, lead me on from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to Light, from mortality to immortality.

Om Purnamadah purnamidam purnat purnamudachyate
Purnasya purnamadaya purnamevavasishyate

Om shantih shantih shantih

The Lord is full ; the creation is also full.
The latter has come out of the Lord, and yet the Lord is ever full.

Om peace, peace, peace.