

A Season's Harvest

1978

part 2

Talks on the Yoga Sutras

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part 2 - Talks given on the Yoga Sutras given in the ashram

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Realise the Reality

The name raja yoga does not occur in the yoga sutras. Only the word yoga occurs. Raja is royal. There are two suggestions why this particular path or method could be called royal in comparison with others.

One suggestion is that it is the royal road; you go straight, that is - you do not beat about the bush and you do not do something in order to get something else, that is - you are looking straight into the source of the problem itself, the problems that arise in life. They have a single source and instead of analyzing all the factors that may be related to the problem, instead of cutting down the branches and dealing with the trunk, you go straight to the root of the problem.

Another suggestion that occurs I think also in the Yoga Vasistha is that this is raja yoga because rajas practise it; it is fit only for kings. We need a bold understanding, a courageous, adventurous spirit. If that is not there, you are useless. If you want to go begging, 'God please give me this, God please give me this,' do not touch this. This is fit only for royal sages. If you are chicken hearted, do not go anywhere near it. Go somewhere else; there are other paths, the chicken's path. They are probably smoother and safer but they have their own difficulties. They are very long winded and halfway through you might completely forget what you started on.

What is the purpose? Why is this yoga or doctrine expounded at all? To point out in utter simplicity that all our problems arise from non-understanding of a very simple truth that, whatever there is, is one indivisible whole. If this understanding arises, all problems are dissolved immediately. If there is a headache, I suffer only because I isolate this head from everything else. Gurudev often used to say, 'If you have a headache, be happy that you have a head.' The headache is there because you have a head, it is positive proof that you have a head.

That is one way of looking at it. If for instance I realise at the moment of having what is called a headache that the head is only a small part of the organism and the rest of the body is beautifully healthy, why should I not be happy about the other parts of the body being healthy? Why should I go on moaning as if the head were the whole being? If I am miserabel, it is only because I think I am only this body, this personality, which is not the truth. Gurudev once remarked during a rather disappointing event when somebody had cheated Him, 'You feel unhappy only because you think you are swami so and so and that the other person is totally different from you. If the vision disappears, you realise that the cheater and the cheated are both limbs of the same being, and you do not feel unhappy about it.' There is a beautiful saying in Tamil - if accidentally your own finger pokes your eye, will you cut your finger out? He represents the finger and you represent the eye. Both of you belong to the same organism. It is because of this division, this fragmentation that has arisen in us that we feel miserable. It is from this fragmentation that all our problems arise. I versus you, I versus he. You

wonder: how do I know that this fragmentation itself is not the truth? That is the problem. We do not see the fragment as a fragment. For the time being at least the fragment is given the dignity and the validity of the whole. If I have a headache, it is as if the whole world is falling apart, my whole life is ruined.

Again, I am creating fragments in time. You have had a headache which lasted for only one day. You are 50 years old which means there have been so many hundreds and thousands of days when you did not have a headache. Are you not happy about it? It is quite possible that you will live for another 50 years, many of the days of which you may not have had the same headache. You are giving that particular moment the dignity and the validity, the glory, the halo of a whole life. It is as if this is the only thing that has occupied your life.

So, the truth or the being is indivisible, but somehow I that indivisibility a feeling or an idea arises 'I am'. That also is not an error. There is an empty space that we build a few houses, plant a few trees, and somehow you begin to think within yourself that that space has been occupied or there is no space any more. Nothing has ever happened to that space. The space is still there in and through those buildings and those trees. The trees have not swallowed up the space, the trees can never do anything to that space, the space will continue to remain. When this truth is not understood, then the other idea which is a contradiction of the truth arises that the space has somehow been altered, that something else has taken its place. Nothing can take the place of space.

So, from this thing called ignorance, the notion or the idea that something other than what-is, exists, arises. One thing we should remember here. We are not saying the house does not exist, that the tree does not exist. What we are really saying is that the space in which they exist still remains. The space now remains as the house, or as the tree; nothing has ever happened to the space. So, if I clearly understand the existence of space as a whole or as a totality in which things arise, exist, and dissolve without making any difference to the space in which those things happen, then there is no ignorance. The idea that that which has arisen in that space has somehow swallowed that space or made a difference to that space, is called avidya or ignorance. The idea that we have taken up so much space is illusion.

An example is given which is very often quoted in these discussions. Mirage. The existence of a mirage, of the appearance of water, is not questioned. In a manner of speaking, the illusion exists. What is the meaning of this illusion. You see water there, water does not exist. I am sitting here; of course I am sitting here, nobody is going to contradict this. But you think that I am something enormous, something big, and I have somehow taken the space, that I exist in the place of the space. That is wrong, the space is still there. In that space there is an appearance of a thing called a swami. The appearance has arisen, the appearance might continue for some time, and then it will disappear. When that truth is seen, a tremendous inner transformation takes place. When the truth is not seen, then what appears to be for the moment is given the dignity of a real substance, real in

the sense that it will be there for ever and ever. When that truth is realised, then life takes on a completely different quality. If that truth is not realised, the I, the ego-sense that arises in the appearance regards itself as a permanent entity in the place of the total truth. That is a small fragment, a small thing takes the place of this truth, of the totality, which is absurd.

Once this fragment has arisen, it develops a relationship, one cloud meeting another cloud, and both of them are going to disintegrate in a little while. In the meantime, each cloud thinks it is eternal - 'I am', I am so real that whatever there was before has disappeared, I am the whole thing. I am the most important factor and so I develop a relationship with you as if because I am eternal, the relationship is also going to be eternal. Otherwise, there is no relationship. If we merely shake hands and say hello, bye, bye, there is no relationship in that. When do you develop a relationship? When you are convinced that you are going to be whatever you are. In our weaker moments we have some glimpse of the reality. But very soon, because it arises in weakness, the wisdom also goes away.

The stronger forces of ignorance take over. Why do I develop a relationship at all? Because I think I am and I will always be. This relationship usually takes the form of 'I like this, I do not like this'. Minus these two feelings there is no relationship at all. Gurudev used to say that if you remove these two expressions from your heart, there is no world - I like this, I do not like this. What are they based on? They are based on I. And what is I based on? I is based on ignorance, or non-understanding of the one fact of existence and that is the totality. By repeatedly being affirmed and asserted this error has attained the glory of truth. Nobody is going to deny I am a swami, and in order that we may be secure in this conviction, we think that we will be there even after the body is gone. Hopefully I will go to heaven and stay there for ever and ever. In spite of this hope we are afraid to die. This is another puzzle. I do not want to die, but I would like to go to heaven. The tragedy is that without dying you cannot go to heaven. That is one puzzle which puzzles even the author of the yoga sutras. Calling it 'abhinivesah', Patanjali says that this abhinivesah is self-perpetuating, exists even in the wise.

11.9. svarasavahi viduso 'pi tatha rudho bhinivesah

Blind clinging to life is an inexplicable yet undeniable fact of life which is self-sustaining since it is just another phase or face of ignorance, and is therefore found to be a dominant factor even in wise beings as long as the physical body which is the operative seat of ignorance exists. It is the operation of the power that preserves the physical sheath for the unfoldment of self-knowledge, combined with the habit of dependence on objective sources for enjoyment and sustenance and fear of losing them, and the inability to see other states of existence.

This fragmented I-consciousness is very strong. It has been repeatedly hammered in right from childhood. From the time you give me a name, you call me by a name and repeatedly tell me, 'You are so and so, you are my child, you are a

Brahmana, you are an Indian', so that probably by the time I am two or three years old I am utterly convinced that I am a young boy, etc. And therefore even when death stares me in my face, I think, 'Well, never mind, I have been brought up as a very holy man, I will continue to be a holy man even afterwards.' The personality feeling is so strong that there is a longing, a wish, a hope that I would somehow survive all that happens here, that I would continue to exist independent of you, independent of the totality, as a fragment. In Vedanta there is even a formula, 'I am Brahman' - 'aham Brahmasmi'. 'Even if this personality is dissolved, I am the totality. Of course what the sages really meant when they used this expression was totally different. I only brought it in to show that this I is so strong, that it thinks it is the whole.

If you put all these things together, you realise how strong this 'I' feeling is. When it comes to the practice of yoga, the same feeling arises as, 'I must realise God, I must see God, I must have a spiritual experience.' Wherever you go, whichever way you turn, the I is there, and by all these you are digging it in with greater and greater effort.

In the first three sections of the yoga sutras several methods have been suggested to deal with this fragmentation, how to realise this indivisible intelligence. As long as I regard myself as a personality which is more important than the totality, the problems will continue to exist. So, the personality feels: 'It does not matter if the whole world is destroyed, as long as I am alive, or if everybody else goes to hell, as long as I go to heaven, as long as I am secure.' It is this personality that says, 'I am more important than you, I am more important than the whole world, I am more important than the entire universe.' That is the problem with our life. How can this be overcome or solved, except by realising the indivisibility of the being?

Now, I exist apart from, independent of the rest. There is absolutely no consciousness or understanding or realisation that if I exist at all, it is as one of the billions and billions of beings in this universe. When you think you are very important, so terribly important, so tremendously important, then you are denying the existence of the one indivisible being of which we are all cells. When that totality is realised, understood to be the sole reality, then the fragment is restored to its place. Is that right? I am not going to pull down that tree in order to create space. But I want to realise that, tree or no tree, building or no building, the space is still there. That is the realisation we are talking about.

In the first three chapters, a number of methods are given how to overcome this problem of fragmentation. When the whole totality is immediately realised, then everything exists except the problem. That is the beauty, I do not know if it can be made very clear even during these five days. When the totality is realised, nothing disappears except the error - the erroneous perception of water, not the mirage. You did see the mirage. If you have seen it as a mirage, you are wise, you are perfect, you have realised the truth. If you saw it as water, there is the error. It is when you see it as water that you start running after it. If you saw it as mirage

you do not run after it. You probably stand there and look.

That is precisely what happens to an enlightened person. When you assume that the fragmentation, that is the personality, is an independent entity, which has to fight for itself, then you begin to develop a relationship with others, they whom you consider others. I love this, I hate this. I like this, I dislike this. And you think, 'My pleasure comes from there'. Pleasure is everywhere. Space is uncuttable, indivisible.

Space does not jump out of there and come here. Because you are cut, you think you are isolated from the rest of the universe, you want to develop a special relationship with x or y. With x your relationship is one of friendliness, with y, it is one of enmity. You create a problem for yourself. When this totality is realised as the real, then without disturbing anything that exists, the illusion is gone. You see the diversity, you still see the other as the other. You still see the tree as the tree, and your body as a body, but the space is there, it has not gone away. That is space and this is space. There something - tree - has grown, here something else - body - has grown. That appearance appears to be a tree, and this appears to be a man. As appearance they exist, as mirage a mirage exists. There is space and in that space, there is an appearance of a tree. Here is space, and in this space there is the appearance of a man. That is all. These do not have to be cancelled, these do not have to be rubbed out. What is removed is the error that I am seeing a tree there and I am the swami sitting here. That is where you do not see the mirage, but you see water. When you see water, you get excited, you want to run there. When you see an object of enjoyment there, you are excited, you want to run there. But when you see that there is an appearance there, and this is an appearance here, that what is there is here and what is here is there, then there is no need to run after one.

How to deal with this tendency to accept or regard this fragment as the whole is the problem that Patanjali addresses himself to. He has given various methods for the realisation of this truth. We shall look at a few sutras in the 4th chapter. The first sutra is very beautiful.

IV. 1. janmau 'sadhi mantra tapah samadhijah siddhayah

The attainments listed in the previous section are not only the fruits of the threefold inner discipline, but they are congenital in some, and in others they may follow the right and intelligent use of certain medicinal herbs or of certain mantras - mystic formulae or advice, or they may follow the kindling of the psychic fire.

This realisation, not only the siddhis or special psychic powers mentioned in the previous section, but even perfection or right understanding seems to be related to one or the other of these factors - janma, birth itself, ausadhi, which literally means drugs, the use of mantras, not just one mantra, tapas, austerity, various forms of penance and samadhi. Meditation, concentration, and samadhi - all

these have been utilized as means for attaining not only psychic powers, but even in reaching perfection or self-realisation. We will deal with janma tomorrow.

But just in passing, how come ausadhi or drugs is mentioned here - it looks as though there are other means of dealing with the distractions of the mind? You must know what those drugs are, and how to use them. In the same way, there seem to be special mantras for calming the mind, for enabling the insight to develop. Even tapas, austerity, standing upside down, hanging by the feet tied to a tree and so on, have been used.

The Means to Enlightenment

Of the apparent means for attaining perfection we briefly looked into these three - ausadhi, mantra and tapas. With the help of these three, a certain altered state of consciousness can be brought about in which the reality is realised. When reality becomes clear then error ceases because error is not something which exists. Mirage exists, water exists, but water in the mirage does not exist, has never existed. That it is a mirage is true, that water is water is true, but the seeing of the water in the mirage is error.

When I begin to see the mirage as a mirage, does something go away? Nothing goes away. But something has gone. This is a puzzle which each one has to work out. Nothing has happened. The mirage remains a mirage. There is still the appearance of water there. Something looks like water there, but the erroneous feeling that there is water has gone. That's all that goes. Nothing else need to go. When the truth is realised, the error disappears without making any change anywhere. That is the beauty which one has to grasp, by God's Grace.

But there is a big change - you do not go to the mirage to have a drink of water. In a state of ignorance, the other things arise - likes, dislikes, and cravings. When the error is gone, that craving has also disappeared, and therefore in the Yoga Vasistha this is strongly emphasised. There is no visible external difference between the enlightened man and the non-enlightened man or the ignorant man because both of them see the mirage. One of them sees it as water, the other one sees exactly the same phenomenon. Is there no difference between the ignorant man and the enlightened man? There is. In the enlightened man, craving is totally absent. If you find craving in a man, who talks as if he is enlightened, he only talks as if he is enlightened.

Can I pretend that the craving is gone and I am enlightened or as is commonly suggested, can I deceive myself? I do not think we are interested in deceiving ourselves. I am not quite fond of that expression - 'deceiving myself'. That means that one part is deceiving the other part of myself, doesn't it? The deceiver part is not deceived; so, why should I identify myself totally with the deceived, why not with the deceiver. The deceiver is a very clever fellow. So, I do not think, in pretending to be enlightened, to be highly evolved, we are deceiving ourselves - we are always trying to deceive others, which is a clever thing to do. I may pretend that all cravings have gone, even though my heart is churned by them. I may pretend to have entered into samadhi, and pretend to be an enlightened person. In that pretension I am not deceiving myself, but I am deceiving you, which is a sign of worldly cleverness. So far as the enlightened person himself is concerned, it is a waste of time. Why does a person want to deceive others - for getting a little bit of food, a little bit of money? That you can get even without all this pretension. A little farce, a little name, you can get in a million other ways. So, you do not have to pretend to be enlightened in order to get these silly little gains. That is out of the question. In the enlightened man, doubt is absent, confusion is absent, but most of all, craving is absent.

I do not know if I am confused or not, or if there is a doubt in my mind or not. When you read a manuscript which contains some sanskrit words, you read the wrong thing, but you do not know it is wrong. It is correct so far as you are concerned, because you read your own meaning into it. So, later when somebody else points out that this is wrong, you say, 'Oh, I thought it was right.' And he comes and tells you, 'When you are in doubt, come and ask me'. You do not come and ask him at all. Why? Because there is no doubt. There was no doubt in your mind concerning this, because you thought that this was the right thing. So, confusion and doubt are very difficult for one to discover in oneself, but craving can be discovered. If there is craving in your heart, you can definitely know that this is craving, and therefore enlightenment is far away.

To be able to see the world as it is, is enlightenment. The world here means - me too. This body, this mind, and if there is a soul, or whatever it is, are also part of the world, whatever that is. That is, I am not outside of this world, this universe. By world we do not mean this earth, but the whole of creation.

It is when you confuse the fragment for the totality, when you fall into the error of regarding the fragmentary personality as the whole world, that error arises. How to get rid of this or how to deal with this? Whether it can be got rid of, what is got rid of when you see the mirage as a mirage, we do not know. The mirage is still there; with wide open eyes, with an intelligent, enlightened mind, you see the mirage as it is. Now it is as it is, not as water. But then, what is the big joke? It was never water. What have you achieved? Nothing. So, one does not know how to express it in proper language, because language was not intended to describe this phenomenon.

To deal with this, certain herbs, certain mantras, certain forms of penance and austerity were probably used. In addition to this, two other factors are mentioned, jati and samadhi. Jati is birth. That is, some people are enlightened or are close to enlightenment at birth. One example with which we are all familiar is Ramana Maharshi. Right in his childhood he had some experience. From then on it was one long unending uninterrupted self-realisation.

The other is samadhi. Samadhi has been described in great detail in the 3rd section where we are introduced to the three-fold inner discipline, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. Please remember - we are dealing with the problem of fragmentation, narrowness of mind, narrowness of vision, narrowness of heart. But,

III.1 - desa bandhas cittasya dharana

When the attention of the mind-stuff is directed in a single stream to chosen field, without being dissipated and thus distracted - that is concentration.

Dharana or concentration is described as narrowness, it is a tying of the mind to a

limited field. The dhyana is getting into it, becoming saturated with it, ensuring that only one thought, one concept, or just this I feeling prevails in that small area. Then you are able to look at it with tremendous fierce focussing. In samadhi, this narrowness, this limitation, is suddenly destroyed.

Why all this game. When you are trying to deal with fragmentation, why create another which this technique appears to do? Normally the mind or consciousness or awareness is scattered everywhere. As you are sitting here you can mentally fly to India, to America, to heaven, hell, everywhere. The focal point is still there, 'I' is still there, and 'I' is projecting from here onto the whole world, heaven and hell and all that. All these rays have to be gathered, focussed on this of ego-sense, burst that ego-sense, and once again spread out to the whole universe. Why? You hold an empty glass, look into it, there is space. It is empty, that means there is empty space inside. Fill it up with water. Now the glass is filled with water. What happened to the space that was there before. It is still there. That is, the water has filled the glass without disturbing the space that was there. So, you can say now that in that glass there is water and there is also space. In exactly the same way, consciousness is cosmic and ignorance is cosmic. Ignorance is as wide as awareness itself. Ignorance and enlightenment are co-existent. Even so is the comparison between deep sleep and samadhi. In deep sleep there is complete non-awareness and in samadhi there is complete awareness.

So, in order to deal with this darkness of ignorance which created this ego-sense, you gather all the rays of the mind, all the rays of awareness, focus them powerfully on this egosense, and let only that awareness of the ego-sense prevail. After having gathered all this, focus the rays of the mind on that small area, let that alone prevail. Then there is awareness of this ego-sense. That is dhyana. In one moment the illusion is gone. So the same thing emerges again. It is no longer ahamkara, but ahambhavana, ahampurana, in the words of Ramana Maharshi. There is just this vibration - I am, I am, I am. But this I am is not operating now in the shadow of ignorance. That 'thing' is still seen, but not as water. And this 'I am' looks around, and finds that the world is alright. The whole universe is still there and even the 'I am' is there, but completely changed.

Acquire this eye of wisdom which is what we are describing now, then you will see the whole world as God - not till then. The I is still there, but what a change. So this is the whole samadhi pattern. The samadhi appears to be some kind of a practice. This can also lead to perfection or the various siddhis described in the 3rd chapter. If this concentration is applied to various phenomena, you can also acquire complete knowledge of those phenomena. And after describing all this in the previous chapter, the author also says, please do not get involved, then you will lose your direction. These themselves can become distractions.

The samadhi itself can lead to perfection. And if it does not lead to perfection now, which means in this life span, what happens? That is suggested in the next sutra:

IV.2 - jaty antara parinamah prakrtya 'purat

However, congenital endowments are not accidental, as the incidence of birth is determined by the character or quality with which one's whole being is saturated.

When this body is dropped, that which dwells in it continues to exist. That takes on another birth as it were, because the ignorance is not completely gone. We are still practising, struggling, we have not reached perfection in this samadhi.

To get back to the analogy of the mirage, you drove past that place yesterday and you come back and look at it this morning. You think, heh, it looks like water, no it is a mirage. There is doubt - it looks like water, but who knows, there might have been a little bit of rain yesterday. Though it looks like a mirage as it looked yesterday, and though I checked on it and discovered that there was no water yesterday, how can I be sure that last night there was no rain and that today there is really a little bit of water there?

You have a vague idea of what the truth is. It is still more or less an idea. Probably in one of those meditational experiences you have a glimpse of the truth. But when you open your eyes, you have a doubt. 'It was wonderful but how can I still see a bad man as also the embodiment of God?' We used to read in Ramakrishna's teachings about some mad insane looking sage instructing somebody whom Ramakrishna had sent, 'If you are able to treat the gutter water with the same respect as you treat Ganges water, then you know that you are enlightened.' That realisation is still not there. I see that this is water and that is water, but then, this is sewage, filth, that is Ganges. I can understand intellectually that if the sewage flows into the Ganges, a little later it becomes Ganges. But then I still see the difference.

At that point, if the body drops, your nature is saturated to some extent and the next birth takes on from there. It is only in the case of people like Ranana Maharshi that you find right from childhood, right from birth as it were, that they have a spiritual inclination, a spiritual tendency. They inevitably walk the spiritual path, so that it looks as though perfection is very close to them. Then the practice starts again, samadhi starts again, so that it is a continuous ongoing process, abhyasa. The practice of yoga, raja yoga, this samadhi, is an ongoing process, ending only in enlightenment. This samadhi, though it is interrupted by all sorts of things, is really not affected by what happens with the body or to the body in this birth or in the next birth, because the truth is there always.

IV.3 - nimittam aprayojakam prakrtinam varana bhedas tu tatah ksetrikavat

To be so saturated does not involve acquiring or adding some new quality; for the transmutation of one's nature is not effected by the introduction of a new cause, but by the removal of that which obstructs the realisation of that nature. The new practice is a catalyst, and is otherwise useless, and people of different natures make different choices. As in agriculture, there is fertility in the seed and the soil,

and effort is directed at the removal of the weeds and the pests.

All your struggle and your sadhana, is merely nimittam, an instrumental cause, not a direct cause. It is not as though that without it the truth will disappear, the self will become unreal. Do not think that all the sadhana that you are doing is of great importance. If you do think so, you are stuck in that sadhana. Why is this sutra introduced here? In order that you may not cling to the ladder, to the rungs of the ladder, instead of ascending it, in order that you may not fall in love with the boat, and forget to cross the river. Do not think that this is going to bring you enlightenment. Enlightenment is already there. And in accordance with the assets and liabilities that you have brought forward from a previous birth, previous life span, you choose your path. There seem to be all sorts of distinctions and differences. One person does something, a second does something else, and a third does yet something else, all of them proceeding in the same direction of enlightenment, self-realisation.

All of this is of no consequence whatsoever, really and truly, though they are necessary. Here we are caught. You cannot attain enlightenment without these, yet they do not lead you to enlightenment. You hold in front of you a beautiful mirror, which is covered with an inch thick dust which has settled there for years. You want to look into the mirror. You cannot. Nothing is seen. You take a piece of cloth and wipe it. You see your beautiful face. You realise that it was not wiping that created the reflection; the capacity to reflect is there in the mirror, not within the cloth with which you wiped it. But if you had not wiped it, you could not have seen it. If you think that because you wiped it, you are able to see, come on, wipe this carpet with the same cloth, you will see nothing. Why is it so? The cloth is not a reflector. It is only the mirror that can reflect your face. But that mirror, even though it has the capacity to reflect your face, is not able to do so because of the dust. That is what is called nimittam. Wiping is only incidental to it.

We sit here and meditate, we chant, we study and do all sorts of things. These are not what are going to bring about self-realisation, but without these, no self-realisation is possible. I must give them their due importance without exaggerating and making them the goal, the vital essence. When you see that, and when you see that each person will choose a path that is in conformity with the assets and liabilities brought forward, you develop a tremendous understanding. You do not go about hitting people on their heads, 'This is not right, that is not right, you must do this, you must do that'. You leave them alone. They are all going towards the same destination.

What does the practice of yoga do. It is like a gardener who puts forth tremendous effort in order to cultivate and make a plant grow but whatever he does is merely an effort to remove the obstruction. The soil contains fertility, the seed contains the tree, the plant. He brings these two together and when the plant is about to germinate, he probably removes some weeds, indirectly helps the plant to grow. He cannot grow the plant. He cannot produce the plant. The plant is in the seed already. He has no ability to germinate, only the earth has that

ability. All that the gardener does is to bring about the right conditions in which what already exists is realised.

Meditation

This 4th section of the yoga sutras started with a statement that siddhi - perfection or psychic powers, whichever way you wish to look at it, is born of some factors - birth, drugs, mantras, austerities, penance, and samadhi. Then there is a declaration which we dealt with yesterday that all these are incidentals, useless.

There are two ways of looking at it. Nimittam is an instrument. When you write a letter with your pen, the pen is the instrument, an instrument in your hands. If someone asks you, 'Did the pen write the letter', you say, 'Of course, I wrote the letter.' Could you have written a letter without a writing instrument? No. There again is a very puzzling, paradoxical situation. Without it you cannot, and without you it cannot. I am the writer of the letter, not the pen. So, from one point of view the pen is useless for writing a letter. I have to be there. I must pick up that pen and write the letter. The pen could lie for eternity on the table and it would not write the letter. And I could struggle for eternity and not be able to write the letter till I pick up a pen, a writing instrument. So, both these extreme views must be avoided by the intelligence.

If you grasp it clearly, it contains a fairly disturbing message. It is quite possible that you were born a saint, but that will evaporate if something is not done to further it. Just because you were born a saint, or at least you think so, you are not absolved from further effort. Of course, if it is really and truly true that you were born a yogi, naturally you would engage yourself further in the yogic path, as long as there is life in the body. That is it that makes you say, 'Oh, alright, I performed a few miracles even when I was a little boy. I am up there, I am on top.' You are not on top. That was only an instrument's game, and the moment you put the instrument down on the table, the letter ceases to be written. In the same way, the mantras and even the drugs are all instruments. People have been discussing this problem ad infinitum because a great man called Aldous Huxley in a book entitled 'Doors of Perception' has mentioned a drug experience as having been 'up there', 'out there'. Is that true? Can the drug itself give me the experience? There I must bring in this argument of the third sutra in this fourth section. It is one of the aids perhaps and it has to be used intelligently. If you pick up a pen and start rubbing it with its bottom, no letter could be written.

While you are using an instrument, you must know how to use it. There must be full understanding of the advantages, the disadvantages, the limitations and the ability. If that is not there, then I do not know the result. Some people may question Aldous Huxley's declaration that lsd is of great use in attaining heightened states of consciousness, I do not know first hand. I have never experienced any of these. But vaguely in my own mind I can compare the effect of these drugs to a cup of coffee, for instance. Even in the ashram in Rishikesh we used to do that. I want to get up and meditate in the morning or late at night and the mind is dull due to various causes and circumstances. It is dull, not fatigued; if it is fatigued, all that you do is to go too sleep. Take a cup of coffee and sit and

meditate, that's alright. The coffee drives the drowsiness away and you sit and meditate. If you do not want to do that, do some sirsasana or vigorous bastrika pranayama. Coffee is a drug, shouting kirtan is a mantra, and some kind of sirsasana, or bastrika pranayama is tapas. All these things are aids, that's all.

But after having done all this, what you are going to do with the effect, only you know. There was a swami in Calcutta who used to get up regularly at 4 o'clock and he was a very delightful man, a very nice man. He said that that was the best period of the day to write difficult letters to clients. He was in big business. He said that on Fridays and Saturdays, brahmamuhurtan, when all these saints and sages emphasise that we should sit and meditate, was the best period for him to sit and calculate what to do about the horse racing on Saturday. He chose the right horse during that period. You get up at 4 o'clock, have a cup of coffee, then you are wide awake. But the coffee and I guess in a similar fashion lsd, or whatever it is, is not going to put you into meditation.

Perfection is not brought about by these, nor is perfection possible without some kind of effort and practice. Here you are caught. Perfection is not the end result of any process nor is it independent of any of these. You go on doing this like the gardener removing the weeds and watering the garden, and doing all sorts of other forms of activity. But the growth of the plant is not dependent upon whatever he does. He is not bringing about the growth of the plant. The doctor might treat this body with some medicines and vitamins and so on, but if the life has decided to leave, they will not work. Both these are necessary, not in a causal relationship, but in some other relationship - a relationship of the essential and the incidental, the essential being the inner awakening, perfection which is already there and the incidental being the aids, the help.

Perfection is not brought about, it is not something that is made anew, something that is created, it is not something which is the end result. If something comes into being now, it has to cease a little later. But this perfection or enlightenment is a fact of existence, it is not something which you and I are creating. It is like the reflection in the mirror, it exists at all times. Because of the dust covering you are unable to see it. Wipe it and you can see a reflection in the mirror.

Now, why is it that all this effort that we have put into our meditation and our spiritual practice is considered to be 'aprayojakam', useless, except as an aid?

IV.4 - nirmana cittany asmita matrat

Any attempt to introduce a new transforming influence can only erect one more barrier - as such a construction of the mind-stuff - as the new influence or image is - is obviously and only a product of the ego-sense.

Whatever you put together with the help of your mind is related to your own ego. Please remember that earlier on Patanjali had said.

I.39 - yatha 'bhimata dhyanaad va

Or, the distractions can be overcome by adopting contemplative technique, using any object of meditation one likes most, for that which one likes most holds one's attention, and the technique one likes most makes contemplation easy, provided, of course, that neither the object nor the technique itself involves or invites distraction.

You can meditate in whatever method you like, upon God, upon a light - you use that method and meditate. Here he says you can do all that, but please remember that all that is your own creation. Whatever you have put together, constructed with the help of your mental activity is very nice, a beautiful dream. If you want to go on dreaming, please do, but do not call it perfection or enlightenment.

In that there is still a division, the seer and the seen, the meditator and the object of meditation, the subject and the object. As long as this division is there, you are sure that ignorance is there, and its consequent ego-sense also is there. Perfection is there, it has not vacated its omnipresent throne. You have covered the whole thing with your own mental activity and concepts; you are playing with these creatures of your own mind. All these are related to the self, ego. That is why in one of Ramana Maharshi's talks he says, 'Enquiry into the self alone is the right path.' 'Meditation', he said, 'is based on the ego. It is the ego that does the meditation.' But having put your foot on this rung called meditation, you can go further.

Patanjali's meditation is intended merely as an exercise to acquire the power of concentration, the power of entering into oneself. Once you go through with it, you are outside of it. That is the vichara method. The other forms of meditation are more or less concentration. Any effort that is put into this meditation practice is merely to ensure that there is concentration of attention. With that you are able to other into it and that is vichara - that is moving very efficiently; 'car' is to move', 'vi', is 'very efficiently'. It is very interesting if you write vichar in transliteration - v-i-c-a-r-a. The root is 'car', to move and car moves. Only the pronunciation is different. So, first you learn to concentrate the mind, focus the mind upon something which is chosen, but all the while you remember that this is merely an instrument, an incidental exercise. One must go through this and come out of the other side, the other side of ignorance, where there is enlightenment. If that is not remembered, one gets hooked onto a thing called meditation which is nothing but mental activity and therefore ego-based mental activity, ego-related experiences. You can have all sorts of experiences, but all these are ego-related.

You might think, 'Well, this man is talking about hallucinations and so on - we are not like that, we are really meditating upon God. You know we see Brahma seated in the lotus and somebody with two horns and four arms.'

IV.5 - pravrtti bhede prayojakam cittam ekam anekesam

However many such images one may build within oneself, all these are projected by a single ego-sense in the mind-stuff, though the operations of the diverse successive images may vary, giving the false feeling of methodical and rapid spiritual progress.

The citta, the mind is only one, but on account of prayojakam, propulsion, the diversity in pravrtti, or one's nature, one's practice, the same thing appears to be a different experience in different people. She sits there and meditates and suddenly she sees Virgin Mary or Jesus Christ. Wonderful, that 's nice; there is no harm in it. Someone else, sees Krishna dancing around. That's marvelous. The same citta plays different tricks in different people.

Whatever be your thought, whether it is virtuous or vicious, it is all the play of the mind. One kind of mental activity gives you inner happiness or peace of mind and so they say this is better. Some good thoughts are constructive and therefore they encourage it. They compel you to promote the welfare of society. If you are thinking positively, thinking of the good of others, you would surely do something about it so those good thoughts are exalted. If you go on entertaining vicious thoughts, it is inevitable that those vicious thoughts must be translated into vicious actions, destructive of society, and so they say it is a bad thing. What is the difference between good and evil here? There is only one simple difference. The spelling. One is g-o-o-d, the other is e-v-i-l. That is from the point of view of a seeker who wants to reach perfection. Without totally abandoning evil thoughts, evil thinking, which is a necessary preliminary step, you are getting nowhere. You have not even put your foot on the first rung of the ladder of yoga. But this is said in order to caution you against resting on the fifth rung of the ladder. I have got there, all my evil thinking has been abandoned, now I think God thoughts only - not only good thoughts. But thoughts are thoughts, whether they are God thoughts or good thoughts or evil .

Because you are of a certain nature, your thoughts share that nature. The other man being a drunkard and debauch and vicious scoundrel, all his thoughts are evil. This man is honestly and faithfully manifesting his nature, and the other man being a swami, a holy man, is honestly and faithfully manifesting his nature. What is the difference? Fire is hot, ice is cold. You do not expect fire to be cool. It is the nature of fire to be hot, warm. It is the nature of ice to be cold. It is the nature of that man to behave in that way. It is the nature of this man to behave in this way. What do we learn from this, as students of yoga who have learned to abandon evil even right from the early yoga practice? We learn not to consider ourselves very superior and not to condemn others. That man is merely manifesting his own nature, his proper nature. I should not hold him responsible for that. Because I have been walking this path not only in this birth, but maybe in several previous births, it is natural for me not to think those evil thoughts. So there is no glory here. Because of different inner equipment, different predisposition, different natures, if one may call it so, each one thinks differently, each one has different experiences, but the mind is the same.

IV.6 - tatra dhyanajam anasayam.

Hence, the no-image that is born of meditation is the best - because it does not create a receptacle for itself, entrench itself as a real image, and colour the mind.

So instead of hanging on to these experiences, produced by the mind, put together by the mind, created by the mind, the yogi bent on reaching perfection, engages himself in this enquiry. The enquiry itself becomes jnana. And knowing that all constructions are bound to be destroyed - even psychological constructions, which are called doctrines, dogmas, faith, belief - the yogi steers very clear of all those-things. He sees a brilliant vision. He recognises this is one kind of construction. It may arise in him. Very good, but this is a kind of construction. This is not going to last. It will be destroyed. All that is put together by the mind, constructed by the mind, and must eventually be destroyed. So without clinging to it, without hanging on to it, without resting in it, or on in it, yogi's intelligence moves on.

When the mind comes to a rest, saying 'this is the truth, that is not the truth', there the mind is creating the concept that this is the truth, and it is going to rest there. It says: 'I have attained enlightenment'. It is stupid nonsense. Your meditation should have no support at all. When the mind feels like resting somewhere, no, no, keep going, this is not the goal. The mind is still functioning, still building an image called perfection or enlightenment, or God or the self. The understanding of this simple truth enables you to go on. You become aware of those experiences, but you go on. You become aware of even greater experiences, and you go on. You become aware of heightened states of consciousness, but you go on. You do not want heights. Why not depths?

Self-image

Meditation is meditation only if it leads to the self, but as the self is not an object, one cannot determine that 'this is it'. When there is such determination, there is an image, whatever it be. Whatever be the determination of the self that 'this is it', there is an image, and you are trapped there.

IV.4 - nirmana cittany asmita matrat

Whatever be the concept of self that you may have, it is all put together by the mind and the ego, which is the mind.

As a matter of fact, it is because yoga deals with this fundamental problem that it is called raja yoga, the royal road. In life itself, everything that happens to us and everything that we do is made possible and is made inevitable because of this image formation. It is because I have a certain image of myself that I crave for something. If I do not have an image of myself as a man, there is no craving for companionship of a woman. If there is no image in oneself of being a woman, there is no craving for a child. It is of these images that cravings and aspirations are born.

For instance, it is because I have an image of myself as a weak person that I conceive of God as a strong personality. God is omnipotent. Why? Because I am impotent. That is the image I have in my mind. I am unable to achieve what I desire to achieve, and therefore I feel that I am weak. So, having built the image of weakness of the self, I build another image called omnipotence of God, and I worship God. I am not saying that this worship is good or bad, but it is good to understand it without any prejudice whatsoever.

My mind is constantly restless. This restlessness is also an image that is formed in me. How do I know that the mind is restless? Because I think it is restless. Because I have no peace of mind, I form an image that I am restless, and it is that image that clamors for, aspires for a God who is all peace. I have an image of what a peaceful mind should be. Since it is not the self, i.e. I cannot look at the being that I am, I think a completely peaceful mind must be 'like this'. That is already an image. And, in comparison to that image, I am restless.

In my self I am alright. If I continue to live in the village in which I was born, I am perfectly educated. I may not be able to read and write English, but that is not important. In my self I would have been contented. So that restlessness, lack of peace of mind, is already an image put together in the mind by my comparison with somebody else. If that is not there, there is no discontent at all. If there is no comparison, there is no discontent.

But comparisons are unavoidable. You see a man sitting peacefully, but you do not even know what he is doing within himself. You look at him and say: 'If only I could sit quietly like that.' You have built an image in your mind of what a

peaceful state is or must be. That is what creates restlessness. You become aware of restlessness and so you say: 'Oh my God, I am restless, I have no peace of mind.' And you create an image of God that is absolute peace. Or I see someone smiling all the time, and since I am not able to do this, I think that I must be unhappy, and looking at him, I have an unhappiness within myself. Now the chain reaction continues again. Because of my self image of an unhappy person, I have another image of God who is bliss. I am still not saying that all this - that God is Peace, Bliss etc. - is not true. It may all be true. But as images they are deadly. Clinging to one of these images is as good or as bad as clinging some other image.

There maybe other points of view. We are told to think positively. 'As you think so you become.' For instance take the phrase 'If you constantly meditate upon God with great and intense faith and feel that God is blissful, you will also become blissful.' Every word, of that phrase is important. The person who laid down this formula is unbeatable. You can do this for ten years and then go back and say, 'Look it hasn't happened to me.' You will be asked, 'Did you meditate constantly?' 'No.' You go back, and for another ten years think God as bliss. But when you return you will be told, 'I said remember God constantly with great and intense faith. Your intensity of faith is useless.' You are foiled again. Each time you forgot to follow one of the important rules in the sentence.

So, it is quite possible that all these formulas and doctrines may have a grain of truth in them, but we are pursuing a different path. Why does the mind build an image at all? The mind builds an image of God to suit its own image of itself, and that is the basic problem throughout our life. Even your day to day affairs are all guided by this. I have an image of myself and I want to seek something which will complement it, redress it. If that image is one of unhappiness, I want something to redress it. If the image is one of incompleteness, I want to complete that.

Instead of beating about the bush, Patanjali says, 'Why do you not look within and see where the image is born.' This looking within is meditation. Then suddenly you discover that, in meditation, you are building another image. Perhaps that is the only time when the fact that there is a self image becomes clear, otherwise it is not clear. For instance, I told you a few minutes ago that even the feeling that I am a man is an image. But now it looks absurd. Do you mean to say, 'I am not a man, I am a dog?' I am not aware that this business of being a man is also an image that is formed in the mind, because I have got reconciled to it. What we call a fact in our waking state is nothing but an image put together by the foolish ignorant mind, and repeatedly affirmed each day. That is how it becomes a reality.

Substituting one image for another image is not going to help us either, because the image is still an image. Changing the hair style does not make a woman a man or a man a woman. Putting on a different kind of dress does not change anything. A charming girl I knew in Canada enjoyed carrying heavy loads. If a young man suggested that he could help her she would protest, 'You are treating me as a girl.

I do not like being treated as a girl.' If I am carrying a heavy load and the same young man offered to help me, I would not feel he was treating me as a girl. Why should one person not help another? Why do you protest? Because you have an image in yourself that you are a girl, and you are creating another image, a unisex image, and hoping that it will take over the first one. It does not happen that way. It only leads to a certain amount of confusion. So that the person who thinks that he is unhappy or has no peace of mind, and that God is peace and bliss, may end up in some kind of confusion like the girl.

Instead, raja yoga suggests, 'Look within and try to see where the image is made.' Why am I craving for something; why is there craving for comfort or for companionship? Why is there this ambition? Why do I desire anything at all? It is because there is the thought that I lack something. How do I know? What is the origin of that thought? I may have an image in my mind of what a perfect swami should be. First this image arises, and then that image looks at whatever there is and suddenly feels inadequate. 'I am not like the image that I have of what a swami should be.' In relation to that, there arises frustration, disquiet, despair and restlessness, and then to balance all this, I bring in hope, positive thinking, God and an after life. I feel, 'Never mind, if I am miserable. I will go to heaven and enjoy it.'

So, why not look at this phenomenon of image building itself. When you learn to look at it, you are meditating, whether you are sitting quietly with closed eyes, or running around with open eyes, you are meditating. Incidentally that was realisation too. On the day of enlightenment he is reported to have said, 'You builder of images, you will not build any more images, neither an image of enlightenment nor an image of liberation or salvation.' Even an image of moksha or liberation is a trap. Can I free myself completely and totally from all self images?

IV.6 - tatra dhyanajam anasayam.

There should be meditation, there should be observation without an observer, there should be meditation without a goal of meditation. There is a constant seeking without an object be sought. There is love without an object to love or to be loved. That is what raja yoga is all about.

IV.7 - karma 'sukla 'krsnam yoginas trividham itaresam

The yogis' actions, springing from such no-image are therefore neither pure nor impure, whereas in the case of others, actions are of three classes, kinds or types - viz., pure, impure, and mixed.

In the case of such a yogi, whatever action takes place in his life, such actions appear to be done by him in the eyes of the observer. But as far as he is concerned, those actions, although they take place, are colourless and untainted. I am deliberately avoiding the use of the word 'pure'. It is better to phrase it

negatively, and say untainted and without any colour.

IV.7 - karma 'sukla 'krsnam yoginas trividham itaresam

They are neither white nor black, because there is no self image and therefore there is no aspiration, no craving, no desire. There is no goal other than life itself, truth itself, consciousness itself. When the self image of the yogi has been destroyed, or there is no image, from where do these actions flow? In our case, the actions flow from the image that we have of ourselves, and they are naturally directed towards a goal, towards an achievement. The achievement is the complement to what we are. I need something, I lack something, there is something wanting in me, and I want to fulfill that want, that craving, and therefore I strive. When these things are not there, there is no ego motivation, no image motivation.

From where do actions arise and what is their destination? That is totally unpredictable. They arise in whatever it is that gave rise to the whole universe. The yogi's actions arise where the creation of the universe took place. Call it God if you wish. So only he, in the eyes of others, is a channel for divine will. But he does not go around saying, 'I am performing the will of God,' for then there is an image. He does not say that he is an instrument in the hands of God. He might use the formula, but he does not mean it, because then there is an image. He might or might not use the word 'I'. There are some great yogis who refuse to use the word 'I', but that does not mean that they were enlightened.

So, the yogi is one in whom there is no self image. But he is also alive, he is also functioning here in the eyes of others. So, from where do his actions arise? In that power, in that consciousness, in that energy that gave rise to this whole universe. His actions are governed by the divine will. They are totally uncoloured by likes and dislikes. There is no image to form a relationship with others, and uncoloured by likes and dislikes, there is therefore neither a definition of goodness nor a definition of condemnation as evil. You may look at him and say, 'Look what a vicious thing he has done or what a great thing he has done,' but so far as he is concerned, these things do not exist. Good and evil do not exist in his case, and therefore he does not incur karma. In our case, our karmas are not only black and white, but also a lot in between. Some actions are diabolical, some are very divine, some are human, some are half animal.

IV.8 - tatas tad vipaka nugananam eva bhivyaktir vasanam

The images that are built in the mind and the actions that flow from them, colour the mind, creating tendencies, which manifest when conditions are favourable.

When these actions arise in the self image, they confirm that image. This is probably a reply to some people who say, 'Work it out'. You cannot work this image formation out because every time the image is allowed to act in that manner, in which it is bound to act, the image is being confirmed, and what

originally was merely imagination, becomes almost real. What was a vague curiosity in the beginning, becomes an action, and then becomes confirmed as a tendency.

Take for instance smoking or drinking coffee. You might smoke just out of curiosity, then an image is formed, that 'All important people smoke'. This image then craves for a cigarette, which then makes me feel happy or elated. By starting as a curiosity and then being indulged in repeatedly, it becomes a tendency. How do you avoid this tendency being formed? Not by fighting it. You can change a tendency from one to the other, slightly modify it. If you are ashamed of your own drinking habits, you will organise a cocktail party. This tendency cannot be overcome either by satisfying it or by suppressing it.

It is not possible to deal with it unless the whole dynamics of action and reaction is understood. I am compelled to do this because there is something which says, 'I need it'. Why did that something say that this is desirable? Because it had a desire. Because there was a desire, the object became desirable. It is not the other way around. A thing is not desirable unless I desire it. There is nothing in the world which everyone desires. I am talking about an object, not abstract qualities. It only becomes desirable because I desire it, and I desire it because there is something lacking in me, or there is an awareness, a consciousness, a feeling that I lack something. That is the image. Since this self image is dented, it is looking for a fulfilling complement. If you still cling to the idea that the self image is dented, imperfect, you try to repair it, make it whole and that leads to other complications.

The next question is, why is there this image at all? Who builds these images, and what is the content and character of these images? This is called vicara. Since it is a quest without a goal, and since meditation is an observation without creating the image of an observer, it has nothing whatsoever to hang on to. People get frightened of this. Perhaps for a few minutes you feel that you are falling into nothing. Then you realise that, if you are dropping into nothing, there is no harm, there is no 'fall'. If I fall from here into the ravine, I might hit a rock, but if I fall into nothing, that's marvelous. So, although there may be an initial fear, a frightening experience, that passes away.

Tendencies

This same self image that we have creates an image in the other, creates an image called the other. It is not as though the other exists and I create an image of it. It is the self image that creates the other. If the self image is not there, the other is not there. And even in the absence of the other, the self image creates what is called the other. You may say, 'I see you. You are something which is existent. Since I am also something, that is existent, I see you as the other. Later I create an image of you as a friend, an enemy, a rival etc.'

But that is not necessary. For instance, in dreams there is nothing called the other. In a dream, a self image is created. The dream creates within me another thing called me, experienced as the me during the period of the dream. And that dream image creates another one within itself. It is the self image that creates the other. If that self image is not there, the other is not there. In the place of both of these, there is oneness, but that is beside the point.

So, it is this self image that creates the other and then establishes a so-called relationship. All actions originate in this funny fictitious relationship. This fact is seen in meditation. Because of the recurrent arising of this phenomenon of the self image and the other image in meditation, one becomes aware of one's tendencies. A tendency is a groove, and it is formed by this chain reaction. I do not know if we dream the same dream again and again, but in this thing called the waking state, we tend to cut the same groove again and again. I am looking for the same phenomenon, because in so far as the waking state experience is concerned, the self image is dug in, confirmed - 'I am Swami so and so, I am a man etc.' By repeated confirmation, this is taken as a fact. Even one's own defects and deficiencies are dug in, and since they are rooted, the factors that compose the self image are also rooted.

You also project the self image onto what is called the other in the same fashion. A tendency is formed, the same actions are repeated, the same experiences are experienced, but not exactly repeated. It gives me pleasure to meet a friend. We have not met each other for 10 years and suddenly I meet you and I am thrilled. The next time I meet you there, it is not the same thrill, but I have overlooked that fact. Because of this tendency of regarding you as my friend, I keep on thinking that I am delighted to meet you. I am not delighted to meet you to the same degree. But the tendency is there, the groove has been cut and I keep on regarding you as my friend until something shocks me out of that complacency and awakens me to the reality that you are neither my friend nor my enemy. You are you and I am I. So when this action is repeatedly performed by the self image, it is coloured by the self image and becomes black, white and grey. Unless the actions arise from a no image consciousness, the actions themselves are coloured in various ways. It is the self image that projects this coloured action towards an assumed relationship, and when this bears fruit, it becomes a tendency. The fruition of action is tendency.

Students of yoga are really not very worried about the action-reaction syndrome. For instance, I hit you, either in this birth or in a previous life-time, and you give it back to me with a bit of compound interest. That is not a serious thing so far as my present life is concerned. If I can understand the dynamics of this action-reaction, then I take care to see that I do not react afresh, if for some reason known or unknown, you come and hit me. And if I have understood the dynamics of karma, action and reaction, I say, 'All right, I must have given him something earlier on in this life or in an earlier life. Thank you very much for repaying the debt you owe me.' It comes to an end.

But what does not come to an end is the fruition of past action, coloured action, action based on the self image which has matured into a tendency. This wretched thing keeps on repeating itself, in spite of myself and unbeknown to myself. The tendency takes me unawares. When the condition is ripe, it arises and manifests itself. If you are really and truly aware of this chain reaction, you are able to cut it and say no. You are able to see that this is not something natural, this is not an action that arises from the no image state, this is not natural action, life action. You are able to see that this is something which arises because of a tendency formed by previous actions, committed in a state of ignorance. When you are aware of this, it does not arise, it just bubbles within and does not really become an action.

But when you are unawares and the circumstances are favourable, you are taken for a ride. These tendencies are called vasanas. Vasana is a mental conditioning; in common language vasana also refers to aromas, scents, smell. If you handle garlic for instance, it continues to smell on your hands for a long time after you have washed them. You take the usual steps to eradicate the smell by washing, or perhaps even trying to mask it with some other scent, and for a little while it seems as if the garlic smell has gone and the perfume has come. But the perfume wears out and the garlic comes again. When the circumstances are favourable, the tendency that is hidden within you comes up again.

That is what the yogi is concerned about. The yogi is not concerned so much about the reaction of the action that is performed by him in the form of good luck, bad luck, happiness unhappiness, pain, pleasure, but he is seriously concerned with this inner tendency that the action of the self image generates within himself. Because that is what hits you, and that keeps the whole thing going.

IV.9 - jati desa kala vyavahitanam apy anantaryam smrti samskarayor eka rupatvat

The relation between the actions, the tendencies they create, and the manifestation of these tendencies in behaviour may be vague, especially when the behaviour and its antecedents are separate in time, place, and embodiment - yet the latent impressions - tendencies - and memory are identical in nature.

It is possible that a tendency does not get a favourable opportunity to spring into

action for a long time. You have not smoked a cigarette for years and you feel you have completely eradicated the habit. That is what you think. The sutra goes so far as to suggest that you may not have smoked a cigarette for a whole life time and you think you have beaten the habit, but you have not. Do you remember having smoked a cigarette about 30 years ago? People often say they remember and boast about it. They say that when they were 15 years old they used to have a cigarette now and then, but they have not smoked for the past 25 years. Is the memory still there? Then the tendency is also there. If you are able to remember, then the tendency is still there.

IV.9 - jati desa kala vyavahitanam apy anantaryam smrti samskarayor eka rupatvat

What you called memory is a tendency, the memory itself is the tendency. There is no difference. The difference is merely verbal, we make a verbal distinction. 'I remember that I was a fool but I have completely discarded that foolishness, and now I am a wise person.' Be careful. As long as you remember that, the devil is still there. The converse is not true. You may say that because you do not remember, it has gone. It has not gone. Another problem has arisen, but the tendency is still there, you have merely forgotten the past experience. If you scratch it, it will come up. When a favourable opportunity presents itself, the memory will arise, and the samskara or the tendency, the scar, will also arise.

Such a dreadful situation exists as long as there is a self image and the self image is born of ignorance. The self image creates the other on account of this ignorance. Since the self image and the action and the reaction which is the experience are based upon the tendency, all these things lead to the experience of what is called pleasure and what is called pain.

First there is ignorance and this ignorance gives rise to a self image. The self image creates all sorts of other images, enters into relationships, and the feedback is experienced as pleasure and pain, happiness and unhappiness. The experience of happiness and unhappiness in this relationship gives rise in its turn to desire, craving, hate and so on. The desire may take the form of a hope that the pleasant experiences may be repeated and the unpleasant experiences may go away. It can take the form of a liking for pleasure and a dislike for pain, a liking for happiness and a dislike of unhappiness. All these are born of the self image. The self image creates the other and a relationship is established between the two, the feedback being pleasure, pain, happiness, unhappiness. When these experiences arise there is hope, fear, frustration.

IV.10 - tasam anaditvam ca 'siso nityatvat

However, it is difficult to determine their exact operation, and it is futile to analyse them. These memories and these tendencies are beginningless - for hope or desire-to-live is permanent.

All these, including this chain reaction, are beginningless. Do not try to trace them back to their origin in time. In this, one has to be very careful. They are beginningless in time, so do not try to trace them to their beginning, to find out when they commenced. That is one remarkable and wasteful pastime we indulge in when we psycho-analyse ourselves. We try to isolate this tendency and trace its origin back to childhood. It is a useless game, because there you are assuming that this tendency has got a specific origin in time.

Ignorance is ageless, self image is ageless. From one point of view one may say that the child is innocent and that all the other bits and pieces of conditioning are infused into the child right from birth. Or, from another point of view, before birth there was a self image which gave rise to this birth. It is another form of self image. The infant is not aware of its own self image for the time being, just as in sleep you are not aware of the self image. It does not mean that the self image has gone. It has not, because it wakes up. It is the self image that wakes you up from sleep and it is the self image, that gives rise to birth, to the conception itself. It is the self image that is floating around looking for a vehicle in which to embody itself. So when we try to analyse the present problem and take it to its origin in time, we are frustrated. Ignorance is beginningless, the self image is beginningless, and the relationship that the self image creates is also beginningless. The experience of pain and pleasure is beginningless. And therefore, desire, craving, hope are also beginningless.

But there is a beginning in another sense. That is, one is able to understand the origin of this chain reaction which is ignorance, not in time, but in truth. One is able to look at this chain reaction, see and understand the links in the chain, and arrive at the origin of this whole scheme.

IV.11 - hetu phala 'sraya 'lambanaih samgrhitatvad esa 'bhava tad abhavah

Yet, since these tendencies have a cause-and-effect relationship with ignorance - that is, they are the result of ignorance and also the cause of its perpetuation - they disappear when the cause - ignorance of the spiritual truth - is dispelled, and vice versa - they support and promote each other and are bound to each other.

One depends upon the other. Why does the self image arise? Because of ignorance, because I do not know what I am, because I do not know who I am. Can I roll up this carpet, can I go back on those links, not in time, but immediately? Can I see the whole pattern immediately? I see that there is constant hope, craving, desire, and I see that that desire arises because of the experience of pleasure and the experience of pain, the desire is for prolonging that pleasure and avoiding this pain.

The experience of pleasure and pain arises on account of the relationship that I have with the other, whether the other is an object, another human being or psychological experience. All these constitute the other. Because there is this contact with the other and some experience arose from that contact, that

experience is divided. So, what is the cause of experience? The immediate cause of experience is the relationship. What is the cause of this relationship? The creation of the other, the existence of the 'me'. This self image 'me' creates the other, and the rest of the other things follow. What is the self image? I do not know, and because I do not know who I am or what I am, the whole wretched thing started from there.

This you can become aware of immediately, without waiting for time, without linking it with time, without saying, 'I will do it the day after tomorrow or without saying that all these arose 25 million years ago. Whereas in time these things are beginningless, in truth they have a beginning, and that is the root of the whole thing - ignorance.. When the ignorance is dispelled, all these are also dispelled. When the ignorance is dispelled, the self image is dispelled, contact is dispelled, and experience, hope, frustration, all come to an end. That is liberation.

Individuality

In a sense the Yoga Sutras are more practical than any other philosophical text. The Yoga Vasistha, the Bhagavatham, and the Bhagavad Gita all make sense, but usually after listening to the philosophies of these texts you come up with one 'but' - but, look at this world. When Krishna says to not worry about the past or the future, you begin to wonder if they exist, and must I not take into account something which exists? One must also realise that perhaps the author of the Yoga Sutras was aware that there was a school of thought which said that the whole world which you see is a total illusion. The past does not really exist, and the future is totally non-existent, except in your own fears and hopes. Abandon all these, for there is neither past nor future. This is the Yoga Vasistha's doctrine.

Perhaps, the master of yoga, Patanjali, was aware of this and so he adds some very interesting sutras:

IV.12 - atita 'nagatam svarupato 'sty adhva bhedad dharmanam

But that does not imply that the past - the memory and the tendencies - is false and that the future is abolished - by their disappearance. The past and the future exist in reality, in their own form - because the characteristics and the natural differences of countless beings follow different paths.

The past and the future exist, 'svarupato' - 'in their own form'. The past exists as past, the future exists as future. When you plant a seed, a tree grows out of that; the tree was in the seed only potentially. In relation to the plant that you see now, the seed was the past and the 'full-grown tree is the future. In the young, child there is the potential adult; the adult has the potential of old age and death. There is the past in reality - in its own form. When you say the past is, it is not as if it is present physically now; but the past is present now as a memory.

By accepting the reality for what it is, Patanjali leads you on to the same result as you find in the Bhagavad Gita or in the Yoga Vasistha. He is also going to tell you the same thing, while at the same time accepting existential facts without sweeping them off as though they do not exist. In their own forms they are. Do not think that a tree has dropped from heaven. It has not, it has grown out of a seed. The seed stage has passed and the plant stage has come. This plant will one day grow into a big tree. That which has not yet happened is also there, potentially. This girl, though not yet a mother, is potentially a mother; given the right opportunity and the circumstances she will become a mother. Why is it so? There is the potentiality in her. There are some people who are not even potentially capable of being mothers; those people who have got some problem - barren women for example. The past is not present as it was present when it was present, but the past is present as a memory; you cannot object to that. You cannot sweep it away, you cannot pretend it does not exist. It is a very clever and beautiful argument.

The future also exists in the present as a potentiality. How do you know? You see that some of the seeds look alike; some of the seeds even look like cockroach droppings. You do not know which is a seed and which is something else. When you throw them into the soil, and they start growing, the cockroach droppings do not grow but the other does. Why? The potentiality of germination was in the seed, and not in the cockroach dropping - anagatam, the future, svarupato - in its own form. This is the trick. Do not look for the tree in the seed. It is not there, but it is potentially present.

After Patanjali has declared that these things exist in the person- the past as memory and the future as potentiality - you might ask, 'How do you know that these are true?' The nature of one leads in one direction and the nature of another one leads in another direction. 'Is this direction good and that direction bad?' 'Leave it alone,' he says. 'Simply recognise that since these distinctions do exist, they point to the simple truth and fact that the past and the future exist in their own form.' It is possible that potentially you are supposed to be a holy man; you will become a holy man. It is possible that potentially you must become a violent aggressive person; you will grow into a violent and aggressive person. There is no problem there. If you realize that this is what was potentially there, and this is what has become manifest, there is neither glory in it, nor is there a fault in it. Society may applaud you, society may punish you; that has nothing to do with you. The potentiality having manifested, 'I' has nothing to do with it. There was the potentiality of motherhood in you and you have given birth. You have manifested that potential. Full stop, there is nothing more. Can you do that? Then you are liberated. You go out into the garden, plant the seeds and do all sorts of fantastic things and then a cyclone comes and pulls them down, or some vandals come, pick all the fruits and take them away. Why should you be worried? There was the potentiality of action in your arms and that potentiality has been made manifest. What you had to do, what you could potentially do has been done.

This philosophy, which seems to be more realistic than the Bhagavad Gita, takes us to the same point. The past is there in its own state as memory, and the future is there in its own form as potentiality. One cannot deny the existence of the past and the future because, when one observes nature, there is growth. Growth implies change and change implies moving from one state to the other. In that which has grown there are the growth symptoms and there are the signs of growth. This was a child, this was a young person. You are able to see that symptoms of having grown up are seen in the grownup. And symptoms of the future are there in that person, as potentiality.

How do I know that the future is present as a potential, and the past is present as memory? All things do not grow in the same way. As you go on contemplating this statement, meditating upon it, it grows more and more beautiful. 'All things do not grow in the same way.' When this is truly seen then all your prejudices disappear in an instant. This is how he grows, this is how she grows, this is how this grows. So, by observing the different patterns of growth, one realises that

there is something called the past and there is something called the future.

IV.13 - te vyaktta suksma gunatmanah

These differences are of the quality of the beings, not of the being itself. And they may be either subtle or obvious.

These inherent distinctions could be apparent, gross, very easily detected and perceived, or they could be subtle. The differences exist only in their qualities. There is a slight distinction here, but not in the essential being. Fundamentally we are all one, there is no problem about that. As living beings we are all one, but as human beings we differ from animals and plants. As plants all are equal, but in certain qualities each plant differs from the other. As human beings we are one, but as 'you' and 'I' there is some difference and some distinction; and these distinctions belong not to our fundamental essence as human beings, but to something else, to the individual. Not your nature, but your quality is different from mine. You are a human being, I am also a human being. There is no difference there, but in our qualities we are slightly different. You have a certain quality, I have a certain other quality. Neither that quality, nor this quality is necessarily good or evil, but in relation to something else it may be considered good, or evil. Your essential nature is not tainted by these qualities.

IV.14 - parinamai 'katvad vastu tattvam

Surely, the material world exists, though it is seen that it constantly undergoes change, there is some substance which thus undergoes change.

Yet you exist as an individual. Even that is not denied. You and I are very similar at a certain level and very dissimilar at a certain other level; it is not as though you and I are completely one. This is the beauty of the Yoga Sutras in contradistinction to the other Vedantic texts. They say that individualities are nonsense, but Patanjali says, no, you exist as an individual. How do you know? Because you grow into something other than me, something which is not me. The individuality is there, and it is that individuality which continues to undergo change. That individuality blossoms as a teacher or a doctor, and this individuality becomes a psychologist. Where your quality flourishes, here the other quality flourishes. As 'individuals' you are both the same. Of course you are there as an 'individual', but just as you are an individual, so the other person is also an individual.

So, while accepting what seems to be irrefutable fact, Patanjali turns round and brings us to the same goal as the Bhagavad Gita and the Yoga Vasistha. Accept the truth, but don't blindly extend it to cover whatever you want to cover. Come down. You'll recognise the reality for what it is, but don't go beyond that. Rigorously train and discipline yourself to cut it straight. One individuality goes that way, the other individuality goes this way. Although they are apparently different, fundamentally they are one and the sane.

Modification and Condition

Even if we observe the fact of change, there must be something in order to undergo that change. It is some substance that undergoes change - never a non substance, or a non existent thing. In order to undergo a change there must be something, which is. The change may be there, but there is a substance which undergoes the change, so that one cannot deny the existence of the object, the existence of the world, or the existence of matter. Shall we regard matter itself as perpetually diverse? It is possible. Yes? This is another point of view. That is, the human is something, the animal is something and the plant is something. These keep on changing.

There is also a school of thought which says that some beings called the asuras are eternally damned, and some beings who are called the gods are eternally blessed. They keep on being eternally good and eternally evil though there is some change among the good and some change among the evil. There are eternally beautiful things and there are eternally ugly things - good and evil are the basic factors of this dichotomy.

Patanjali does not agree with this theory.

IV.15 - vastu samye citta bheda tayor vibhaktah panthah

The world of matter is entirely neutral and homogeneous. Differences - like good and evil, beauty and ugliness - are perceived because such differences are created by viewpoints oriented to different directions or goals.

The world outside exists, but it does not come and hit you and say, 'I am a good person', or 'I am a beautiful person'. There seems to be a big difference between the Yoga Vasistha and the Yoga Sutras to begin with; but once you understand, once you scratch the surface, you find the message is the same - 'vastu samye'. You look at the objects of the world they do not proclaim anything. The carpet does not even say 'I am a carpet'. Scientifically it is possible to declare that the carpet is definitely different from this table fan; but the carpet does not say, 'I am a carpet', and the table fan does not say, 'I am a table fan'. They are neutral, and silent. When you extend it a little further, no object in the world says, 'I am good', and definitely no object says, 'I am bad'. Even poison does not proclaim 'I am a killer, be careful'. A lion lies there as quietly and as beautifully as a deer lies somewhere else. Nature has not written on the forehead of the lion, 'This is a vicious animal, do not go anywhere near'. Nature has not written on the forehead of the cow, 'This is beautiful, worship it'. Both these objects which are real and diverse, one very different from the other, are yet 'samya' - neutral.

They are 'samya' - they are what they are, 'citta bheda' - but the distinction arises in your mind. In the original form in which the word citta was used, it seems to refer to undivided consciousness. Here this citta is used in the broad sense of 'mind', a mind that has all the conditioning in it, that is polluted - 'citta bheda'.

Your mind is different from my mind. And therefore the object is seen not only differently but - 'vibhaktah panthah' - from a different point of view.

Now we have two things. First of all there is an external objective distinction; the leaf is different from the carpet. Secondly there is an internal, subjective division. Whereas objectively both carpets are the same, Kashniri prayer mats, the conditioned mind says or thinks, that this is better than that one, this is more elegant than that one. The subjective distinction is based upon 'citta bheda', my mind is different from yours.

Why is my mind different from yours? My mind is conditioned in a different way; my background is different, my upbringing is different, and my scale of values is different. The culture in which I have been brought up is different from yours, and therefore my culture has conditioned my mind to look upon this as civilisation and that as barbarism. My upbringing, my training, my education, says that this is bad and that is good. A glass of whisky is an insignia of civilisation, and smoking ganja is deadly, terrible. One is accepted socially and the other is not.

So here is a point of view, and this point of view distorts the perception of the object still further. 'Then why do not we say that it is the perceiving mind alone that determines, the existence of the object?' asks the objector. 'Just as one says, 'That this is beautiful, that is ugly', it is possible for one to say that this is a carpet only because I recognise it as a carpet. If the mind did not recognise that as a carpet, it would cease to be carpet. This is another extreme argument. In answer to that Patanjali says:

IV. 16 - na cai 'ka cittatantram vastu tad apramanakam tada kim syat

An object or a substance in this world is not dependent for its existence on one mind. Else, would it not cease to be if that mind does not cognize it?

The object does not depend upon one mind. Supposing my mind is completely deranged and I become completely mad. Will the carpet cease to be a carpet at that time or not? You can go on taking this to the other absurd extreme. If I become raving mad and I start scratching this and eating it, does it suddenly become food and not carpet? You have seen mad people behaving in strange ways like this. Supposing I go and embrace that tree, does it become a friend and cease to be a tree? Thus I may be raving mad, the mind may become temporarily insane, but the object remains what it is.

There is of course the famous question: 'If a tree fell in the Himalayas 200 miles away from all human habitation, did it make any sound at all?' Patanjali says 'yes'. Independent of your viewpoint the object exists, and independent of your hearing ability that which exists, exists. Vasistha might come in and say that that's because the cosmic consciousness recognises it. Here Patanjali says that things exist in themselves whether or not you, the individual, comprehend them.

That is, even before a virus was seen or detected by the scientists, it already existed, it always existed. Even before the laws of nature were discovered by the scientists, the laws themselves were there as a reality. Nobody could question that.

The existence of the object does not depend upon one mind comprehending the object.

IV.17 - tad uparaga 'peksitvac cittasya vastu jnata 'jnatam

However, a particular object or substance is comprehended or ignored in accordance with whether the mind is or is not coloured by that object, and is therefore attracted or repelled by that substance. Hence the quality or the description of the substance is dependent on the mind, whereas its existence is independent of it.

Why do we become aware of some objects and remain ignorant of some other objects. The object exists, our diverse minds exist, and the different points of view also exist. When we say different minds, it only means different points of view. All these innumerable, infinite number of objects also exist in themselves as they are. Depending entirely upon whether you like something or are indifferent to something - it is not so much a dislike as indifference, an object becomes known to you or remains unknown to you. If you like an object, it becomes known to you. If you are indifferent to it, it remains unknown. They are not dependent upon your mind, but their qualities are dependent upon your perception, and they become known to you when you establish a relationship with them. They remain unknown to you when you do not establish such a relationship, when you remain indifferent.

There are billions of people on earth whom you do not know. Why? They do not matter, 'I do not care' - 'uparaga' - life is not dependent upon them. Their existence is of no consequence to me and therefore I do not know of them. Once their existence, or the existence of these diverse objects, means something to me, once I begin to like them, and depend upon them, then I will know them. This is a fairly scientific and realistic appraisal of the world and the objects, as well as an appraisal of the subjective mind and its modifications, its points of view and its conditioning. Patanjali points out that these two constantly interact one on the other.

Inner Intelligence

In the last discussion, it looked as though the yogi or the master accepts almost an absolute dichotomy between the object and the perceiving subject: the object, the world being absolutely real, independent of the mind; and the mind being real in itself, accepting, recognising or ignoring as it chooses. If I am interested in something, then the mind recognises its existence. If I am not interested in something, the mind does not recognise its existence. Though the object exists independent of the mind, its recognition is dependent upon the mind. It almost appears as though there are two distinct realities.

Having suggested that much, Patanjali goes on to find a synthesis.

IV.18 - sada jnatas citta vrttayas tat prabhoh purusasya parinamitvat

All such changes, colourings and modifications of the mind are always known to the lord of the mind, the indwelling intelligence, since that intelligence is changeless.

The objects keep on changing, from yesterday, today to tomorrow. There was the seed, then the little sapling with all the potentiality of growth, and then the big tree. That goes on in what is called the external world, and internally also all sorts of changes go on. I expect something, I look at something, I recognise something, I ignore something. What I ignored at one point, I recognise now, what I liked at one point, I dislike now, what I disliked at one point, I like now. It seems to be a totally disorderly situation, and the mind, or the intelligence within the mind, or beyond the mind, cannot function in a state of confusion.

There cannot be orderly, predictable growth, and yet all that we have been discussing so far implies an orderly predictable growth. Even in the earlier chapters, change was discussed as predictable because it follows a certain pattern. There is a certain growth pattern for a tree, and there is a certain growth pattern for a man or a woman. All these potentialities are inherent and the manifestation of the potential demands orderly growth, otherwise there is no sense, no order in creation. We observe that the sun rises everyday in the east and sets in the west. You do not say, 'Where is the sun going to set today, northeast or southwest?'. There is an order in this universe, in spite of the fact that the world keeps changing and the mind keeps on changing.

Yet all this does not lead to perpetual confusion. Why is it so? 'sada jnatas citta vrttayah'. All these changes or modifications in the citta, in the mind, are forever known to somebody, to something, to some intelligence. These citta vrttis are your own mental modifications or moods. 'citta vrtti' can also be translated into 'the mind's effort at measuring the external world'. What do you call a thought or a notion or an idea or a concept? A concept is something with which the mind measures what it sees.

First of all there is an acceptance of the ignorance of the external world. What the world is, I do not know. The mind measures the world in terms of its needs. If you are a botanist, when you look at that tree, you are looking at it for the botanical names, the characteristics, the properties and so on. She is a dietician who is interested in diet, not in botany. When she looks at that she says: 'Ah, there are plenty of avocados, that's good protein'. Another is neither a botanist nor a dietician. He has a fruit shop and he says, 'If there is no cyclone before the fruits ripen on the tree I will make 5,000 rupees'. Nobody is seeing the tree for what it is. If you did not have any of these, what would the tree be? That is the reality. That probably one cannot know.

Now, to whom are known all these games that go on in the mind? They are known by 'prabhu purusa'. Purusa is defined in some texts as 'one who rests or sleeps in a city'. What is a city? The body is often called in these yoga vedanta texts 'a city with nine gates'. This is a whole city, billions and billions of people are living in it; there are canals, there are trees coming out of the head, there are rocks and mountains, there are rivers running along, a drainage system all kinds of systems.

What is purusa? I do not know. One might say personality. It is not the mask, but something underneath that mask. Persona means mask. The I, the ego is the mask. That which is behind the ego, that intelligence that says, 'I am Swami Venkatesananda', that which wears the mask, that is what rests in this body. That is purusa, prabhu. That purusa is not deceived by the mind and its thoughts, its measurements, its vrttis or its moods.

That prabhu, that lord, that purusa, that soul, that intelligence within observes and knows all these goings on in the mind. Why? He does not change. If he is also changing, then he is also caught. If both of us are dancing, you do not know who I am, I do not know who you are. We do not even look at each other properly. In order to observe properly, at least one of us must stand still. If I am being whirled around, and you are also being whirled around, we never get a correct idea of each other. So here the master says 'sada jnatas citta vrttayah'. These citta vrttis, the mental modifications, or thoughts and notions which arise and fall in the citta, are from moment to moment known to the purusa, or the spirit, whichever you wish to call it. The intelligence within that shyness without undergoing any change, whether you are awake or asleep, or dreaming, building castles in the air, or thinking that you are thinking, or thinking that you are meditating, whatever is happening to you, that intelligence is absolutely steady.

That prabhu is like water in the ocean. Citta vrttis, being like the waves, are rising and falling all the time. It is not possible for one wave to observe another wave, because by the time it is collapsing the next one is rising. To the water, all these waves are known. If you can imagine that, the water has tremendous intelligence, and the water has powers of observation. Water knows from moment to moment how many waves are there, how these waves rise, exist and fall. What water is in relation to the waves in the ocean, this intelligence is in relation to all these nodes

and moods and thoughts that arise and fall in the mind. While waves rise and fall, water does not undergo any change in the ocean; it may appear to undergo some change, but it stays as water.

IV.19 - na tat svabhasam drsyatvat

Surely, it cannot be said that the mind is self-luminous and can know itself; it - its changes and modifications - is perceived only by the inner light or the indwelling intelligence.

It looks as though it is the mind that knows, the mind that thinks, the mind that has knowledge. But the master says that it shines because of an intelligence within, that it is that intelligence that really knows all this. Why? Does the mind not have power to know? Patanjali says 'no'. Why not? We suffer under the delusion that the mind is the knower, the thinker - but the mind is not the knower of any knowledge. The mind itself is known by the intelligence within, so that you are able to observe what goes on in the mind. When we are asked to engage ourselves in vichara - self-observation, I start thinking who am I, what I am, I, what is this thought, how does it arise? I am thinking. As long as I am thinking, the observer is also the mind, or one thought observes another thought, one wave observes another wave. By the time the observer wave arises, the observing wave is collapsing there. So, the observer says, 'Oh, I looked into myself, all is quiet now'. Why? Now instead of the observed wave you have replaced it with an observer wave. You are angry, and you try to observe that thought, but because you hate created a new wave in the mind called the observer, the observing wave seems to have collapsed, though it is still there. Thinking about thought, observing the mind with the mind itself is of no use. The mind itself is an object of observation, an object of knowledge to this inner intelligence. The mind is like a mirror, it seems to shine, to reflect, but in itself it has no power at all, no power to know. It shines only in the light borrowed from this inner intelligence.

IV.20 - ekasamaye co 'bhaya 'navadhararam

Nor can it be said that the mind is simultaneously both the perceiver and the perceived, the observer and the observed. For, then there would not be rational comprehension.

Is it possible, asks someone, for this inner intelligence to know the mind and the mind to know the object? Patanjali says it is terribly silly. Who is the observer now? Are there a string of observers? The mind observes the external object, the intelligence observes the mind and the mind can cheat the observer, the intelligence can cheat the mind; there is confusion, chaos. Whereas we see that there is no such chaos in life, life goes on smoothly, there is order in all this, there is order in the functioning of the intelligence.

This means that there is only one observer, one real observer, and that is the

intelligence, the witness. It is that intelligence which is the witness of the mind and of the world, which is not involved in the mental modifications, the change that the mind undergoes, and which does not undergo the change that the world undergoes. It is this intelligence that links the mind with the object. In other words, that intelligence is one and indivisible, and like waves arising in the one mass of water called the ocean, the thought arises here, an object arises there.

Thus the world and the mind are not two eternally separate beings but two aspects of one cosmic totality, very much like what goes on in dream. In dream I create myself and also others, and that myself in the dream talks to and plays with the others whom I have created, treats some as enemies, and treats some as friend. That is what is suggested here. There is this inner intelligence which is undivided. At one point it is the mind which thinks, which observes, which sees the objects outside, which measures, because it is ignorant of their real nature. It creates notions about them, concepts about them. All this happens in this undivided inner intelligence, which is uninvolved in the changes that take place in the mind and in the changes that take place in the external world of objects. That is cosmic intelligence and it is what it is, for ever and ever.

Self-knowledge

The sutra that we began to study yesterday is remarkably beautiful. If the mind itself is considered the source of knowledge or understanding, if you think that there is nothing other than the mind, then there is no comprehension. If you consider that it is the mind that knows the world and itself, all the modifications and changing moods that go on that you and I are aware of, that it is the mind itself that is aware of all this, then there is no understanding. It is very crisp, terse, and enigmatic. It merely says that if the mind is both the perceiver and the perceived, the observer and the observed, there is no comprehension, but hallucination. If it is possible for one to analyse or to understand the mind with the mind, it is like water being diluted by water. Nothing happens and yet there is a tremendous illusion of a comprehension. It is also a serious blow to most of the techniques that people adopt - meditation, self-comprehension, self-understanding and science of the mind. Patanjali says it is impossible.

One can see this in one's practice - spiritual or religious, whatever it is. It is the mind which conjures up an image called God, chews it, experiences it, sees it and pats its own back, saying, 'I have seen God'. Much of what goes by the name of religious experience as well as hallucination falls into this category. The mind thinks that it is able to know, that it is able to understand. As a matter of fact, even our normal emotional experiences fall into this category. One must understand that, what is a painful experience, is nothing but what the mind itself regards as a painful experience and then suffers from. Who is it that created it, that named it painful experience, that has converted an experience into a painful experience? The mind.

We discussed in a previous sutra that the world in itself is a neutral object, it is neither good nor bad, pleasant nor unpleasant, and it does not have pleasure or pain inherent in it. It is the moods of the mind that determine whether these experiences or objects are painful or pleasant, happy or unhappy. That applies even to your own psychological experiences. What are they, except what the mind has decided to create within itself? I dislike this experience, I hate it, and it becomes painful from my point of view; since I am involved in it, it hurts me. The mind decides another is a pleasant experience, then it becomes a pleasant experience, otherwise it does not. The same mind says I am experiencing pain or pleasure. It is a vicious circle, and therefore there is no comprehension of the reality. You are experiencing, chewing your own ideas; you are a cannibal. The thing itself is not experienced. One does not know what it is.

Since it is the mind that plays its own game within itself, it creates a relationship with an object - I like it, I do not like it. If that relationship was not there, then the object would be cut off, independent of the mind. Then at least you would know, 'Oh my God I do not know what this is'; then you free it, and it is possible for observation to take place without creating an observer in the mind. The mind alights on the object, just as the mirror is turned towards the wall, and it says, 'I do not know what it is. I can only reflect the object, the real knower is somewhere

else.' Can this observation be without the mind creating an observer; the mind being a mere reflecting medium, something which receives an impression of the image or the object? The object is neutral, neither good nor bad, pleasant or unpleasant. The mind merely reflects all this, reflects the world. There is no observer here. The mind goes on changing its moods, the object goes on changing its shape and there is an observer of the whole lot. That observing intelligence is supreme; it is a mysterious, connecting link, a mysterious synthetizer, the substratum for both the object as well as the mind. It is like the sun that shines on the mirror which is reflected on the wall. The light belongs to the sun, the light is that, there is only one light, the mirror is a reflector, not the source of light.

One who does not accept this inner undivided intelligence which is god or atma, might well argue that, 'Well what is wrong with that, there may be two minds?'

IV.21 - citta 'ntara drsye buddhi buddher atiprasangah smrti samkaras ca

If it is assumed that there are two minds - the observer and the observed - this would result in logical absurdity, since both are based on the same intelligence, who designates the distinction? - and also confusion of memory or universal schizophrenia, which is not found to be the case.

Supposing you say that, 'Well, I understand that the external world is reflected in the internal mind. While the mind goes on throwing up all sorts of feelings, thoughts, notions, ideas and hallucinations, there is another superior mind, independent of the other mind, this superior mind goes on playing a game in this world. It sits on top of the medulla oblongata, looks at all this and decides, directs and knows. That is the observing intelligence or monitor.'

Patanjali says no. There are not two minds. 'buddher atiprasangah'. If there were, you would probably go on limitlessly asking, who is observing that, who is presiding over the destiny of that mind, is there something superior to that? It goes on in pyramidal fashion.

Instead of endeavouring to find the substratum for the whole thing, one light shining in all, apparently and yet not divided, you are creating an endless hierarchy, because you have decided that one is totally independent of the other. If you go on creating an observer, then you are asking for trouble. If you think that you have two completely different minds, one overseeing the other, one controlling the other, one directing the other, then there may be such a terrible confusion that there will be universal schizophrenia. 'smrti samkaras ca' is a confusion of memory - which mind is going to receive what kind of impression? When you do something what you call the lower mind says, 'Ah, well done, beautiful', and what you call the upper mind says, 'Oh my God, it is terrible, how could I do this?', there is a conflict going on here between the mind and the supermind, the ego and the superego. Is that what we are looking for? If that is so, then schizophrenia will be a normal thing. Universal schizophrenia means universal abnormalcy, but we are unable to function intelligently or sanely in

such a condition, because such a condition is not the true, real condition.

This is the experience of everyone: that this inner intelligence is undivided and indivisible and therefore in it there is observation without an observer. The mind is an observed object. Just as you are able to see another, even so the moods of the mind are also observed. One is able to say, 'My mind is disturbed, the mind is dull, I am confused, or the mind is clear', so that the mind itself becomes an object of observation.

IV.22 - ceter apratisamkramayas tad akara 'pattau sva buddhi samvedanam

The undivided intelligence or homogeneous consciousness in which there is no movement of thought is aware of its own enlightened or awakened nature on account of its awareness of the apparent movement of thought. There is paradoxical movement in non-movement which is the total intelligence.

Suddenly the great master uses another word. One who studies these Sutras has to take note of these special Sutras where a new word or a new concept is introduced. I pointed out the other day the word 'citta'. It can be and has been used both in terms of the substratum for the mind or the undivided intelligence, as also for the ordinary mind or the individualised consciousness. Now suddenly Patanjali says 'ceter'. This 'ceter', in contradistinction to 'citta', is intelligence. Suited to the context one has to understand these words. One has to study and contemplate, meditate deeply upon these Sutras and then arrive at a proper understanding.

'Ceter' is consciousness, undivided and indivisible intelligence. Thus it encompasses, synthesises, and links the object with the mind. Let us go back to the mirror. The sun shines on the mirror, the mirror directs a beam of light onto the wall, and the light links all these three. What are the three? The three are one; the same light is reflected in the mirror and projected onto the wall. Somehow there seems to be a link, but the link is also light. It is not as though there is a light there, another light in the mirror here and a projected light there. The light is in effect one, single and indivisible. If you obstruct that light, the mirror becomes dead, useless, and the object is not illumined. In this indivisible intelligence the mind seems to shine as if independent, and it seems to have the power of comprehension. It seems to be an apparent reality, but that is not so. When it faces this inner light, it seems to have a luminosity of its own, and in that luminosity the external object is seen.

All these are dependent upon this one, single, undivided, and indivisible inner intelligence. In this inner intelligence there seems to arise an entity called the mind, which is not an entity totally independent of this inner intelligence. It reflects this inner intelligence in such a way that it seems as though that mind itself is intelligence. That intelligence comprehends a thing called an external object, projects its own ideas, its own notions and its own definitions upon it, and then says, 'I know this to be so and so'. What sees? It is this inner intelligence

that really sees. That being consciousness, it is always conscious, ever aware. Whether the mirror is turned towards the sun or away from the sun, the sun always shines. Whether the mind functions, thinking, feeling or experiencing, or whether the mind goes fast asleep, that intelligence is always there. You and I are conversing with each other - you are listening and I am talking - and the mind is very active. In that state obviously this mind-mirror is facing this inner light, this intelligence. Therefore the intelligence is reflected in the mind, enabling it to function, even to feel that it is an independent entity capable of knowing and understanding an object. Then later we fall asleep; the mind covers itself with a veil and goes to sleep, but that inner intelligence is awake even then. The sun never sets; it is the earth that turns around. Even so, this inner intelligence is forever awake, forever alert, forever intelligent, forever conscious. It is always aware, it is awareness. Why does it shine? It shines because it is awareness.

That consciousness indeed exists here, knowing 'I cannot be cut, I cannot be burnt, I cannot be made wet, I cannot be dried; I am eternal, omnipresent and unchanging and unmoving.'

This is the truth. People like to argue and confuse others; they are indeed confused. But, O Rama, we are beyond confusion. Changes in the unchanging are imagined by ignorant and deluded people. But in the vision of sages who have self-knowledge, no change whatsoever has taken place in consciousness.

O Rama, consciousness alone has spread itself out as space, without undergoing any change in itself. After that, consciousness alone appears as the wind that has the quality of motion. And then consciousness alone appears as fire, water, and the earth with its minerals, and also the bodies of living beings.

When the notion of an external knowable has been removed, self-knowledge arises - and when in it there is the notion of inertia or ignorance, the state of deep sleep has come to it. Hence, since consciousness alone exists at all times, it may be said that space exists and does not exist, the world exists and does not exist.

Even as heat is to fire, whiteness is to a conch-shell, firmness is to a mountain, liquidity to water, sweetness is to sugarcane, butter is to milk, coolness is to ice, brightness is to illumination, oil is to mustard seed, flow is to a river, sweetness is to honey, ornament is to gold, aroma is to a flower - the universe is to consciousness. The world exists because consciousness is, and the world is the body of consciousness. There is no division, no difference, no distinction. Hence the universe can be said to be both real and unreal - real because of the reality of consciousness which is its own reality, and unreal because the universe does not exist as universe, independent of consciousness. This consciousness is indivisible and has no parts nor limbs. In it the mountain, the ocean, the earth, the rivers, etc., do not exist as such, but only as consciousness; hence there are no parts nor limbs in consciousness.

But, because of the unreality of the universe, etc., it cannot be said that their own

cause, viz., the consciousness is also unreal; such a statement would only be a set of words with no meaning - for it runs counter to our experience, and the existence of consciousness cannot be denied.