

The Sunlit Path



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Editorial

My dear friends,

I am happy while bringing to you the 15th June, 2014 issue of The Sunlit Path.

'Living Words' provide us a 'connecting link' with our inner being.

'Integral Education' describes the criteria which can qualify one to interpret the scriptures.

'Integral Life' offers a very useful advice to follow in life.

I do hope that you will find the contents inspiring.

Sincerely yours,

Dr Bhalendu Vaishnav

15 June, 2014



Living Words

Spirit, Soul and The New Birth

The Mother

All that opens to us the road to the supreme realities, pulls us out from the mud of the Ignorance in which we are stuck, opens the doors to us, shows us the path, leads us to where we have to go — this is what man has called “spirit”.

It is the atmosphere created by the Divine Grace in the universe to save it from the darkness into which it has fallen.

The soul is a kind of individual concentration of this Grace, its individual representative in the human being. *The soul is something particular to humanity, it exists only in man.*

...

One might say that the soul is a delegation of the spirit in mankind, a special help to lead it faster. It is the soul that makes individual progress possible.

The spirit, in its original form, has a more general, more collective action.

For the moment the spirit plays the part of a helper and guide, but it is not the all-powerful master of the material manifestation; when the Supermind is organised into a new world, the spirit will become the master and govern Nature in a clear and visible way.

What is called “new birth” is the birth into the spiritual life, the spiritual consciousness; it is to carry in oneself something of the spirit which, individually, through the soul, can begin to rule the life and be the master of existence.

But in the supramental world, the spirit will be the master of this entire world and all its manifestations, all its expressions, consciously, spontaneously, naturally.

In the individual existence, that is what makes all the difference; so long as one just speaks of the spirit and it is something one has read about, whose existence one vaguely knows about, but not a very concrete reality for the consciousness, this means that one is not born into the spirit.

And when one is born into the spirit, it becomes something much more concrete, much more living, much more real, much more tangible than the whole material world. And this is what makes the essential difference between beings.

When *that* becomes spontaneously real—the true, concrete existence, the atmosphere one can freely breathe —then one knows one has crossed over to the other side.

But so long as it is something rather vague and hazy—you have heard about it, you know that it exists, but... it has no concrete reality —well, this means that the new birth has not yet taken place.

As long as you tell yourself, “Yes, this I can see, this I can touch, the pain I suffer from, the hunger that torments me, the sleep that makes me feel heavy, this is real, this is concrete...” that means that you have not yet crossed over to the other side, you are not born into the spirit. (1)

Integral Education

The Interpretation of Scripture Sri Aurobindo

The spirit who lies concealed behind the material world, has given us, through the inspiration of great seers, the Scriptures as helpers and guides to unapparent truth, lamps of great power that send their rays into the darkness of the unknown beyond which He dwells, *tamasah parastat*.

They are guides to knowledge, brief indications to enlighten us on our path, not substitutes for thought and experience.

They are *shabdham Brahma*, the Word, the oral expression of God, not the thing to be known itself nor the knowledge of Him.

Shabdham has three elements, the word, the meaning and the spirit.

The word is a symbol, *vak* or *nama*; we have to find the *artha*, the meaning or form of thought which the symbol indicates. But the meaning itself is only the indication of something deeper which the thought seeks to convey to the intellectual conception.

For not only words, but ideas also are eventually no more than symbols of a knowledge which is beyond ideas and words. Therefore it comes that no idea by itself is wholly true. There is indeed a *rupa*, some concrete or abstract form of knowledge, answering to every name, and it is that which the meaning must present to the intellect.

We say a form of knowledge, because according to our philosophy, all things are forms of an essentially unknowable existence which reveals them as forms of knowledge to the essential awareness in its Self, its Atman or Spirit, the Chit in the Sat.

But beyond *nama* and *rupa* is *swarupa*, the essential figure of Truth, which we cannot know with the intellect, but only with a higher faculty.

And every *swarupa* is itself only a symbol of the one essential existence which can only be known by its symbols because in its ultimate reality it defies logic and exceeds perception, - God.

Since the knowledge the Scripture conveys is so deep, difficult and subtle, - if it were easy what would be the need of the Scripture - the interpreter cannot be too careful or too perfectly trained.

He must not be one who will rest content in the thought-symbol or in the logical implications of the idea; he must hunger and thirst for what is beyond. The interpreter who stops short with the letter, is the slave of a symbol and convicted of error. The interpreter who cannot go beyond the external meaning, is the prisoner of his thought and rests in a partial and incomplete knowledge.

One must transgress limits & penetrate to the knowledge behind, which must be experienced before it can be known; for the ear hears it, the intellect observes it, but the spirit alone can possess it. Realisation in the self of things is the only knowledge; all else is mere idea or opinion.

.....

The interpretation of the Veda is hampered by many human irrelevancies. Men set up an authority and put it between themselves and knowledge.

.....

They forget that Shankara and Sayana are themselves moderns, separated from ourselves by some hundreds of years only, but the Vedas are many thousands of years old.

...

What then are the standards of truth in the interpretation of the Scripture?

The standards are three, the knower, knowledge and the known.

The known is the text itself that we seek to interpret. We must be sure we have the right word, not an emendation to suit the exigency of some individual or sectarian opinion; the right etymology and shade of meaning, not one that is traditional or forced to serve the ends of a commentator; the right spirit in the sense, not an imported or too narrow or too elastic spirit.

The knower is the original *drashta* or seer of the *mantra*, with whom we ought to be in spiritual contact. If knowledge is indeed a perishable thing in a perishable instrument, such contact is impossible; but in that case the Scripture itself must be false and not worth considering. If there is any truth in what the Scripture says, knowledge is eternal and inherent in all of us and what another saw I can see, what another realised I can realise. The *drashta* was a soul in relation with the infinite Spirit, I am also a soul in relation with the infinite Spirit. We have a meeting-place, a possibility of communion.

Knowledge is the eternal truth, part of which the *drashta* expresses to us. Through the part he shows us, we must travel to the whole, otherwise we shall be subject to the errors incidental to an imperfect knowledge. If even the part is to be rightly understood, it must be viewed in the terms of the whole, not the whole in the terms of the part. I am not limited by the Scriptures; on the contrary I must exceed them in order to be master of their knowledge. It is true that we are usually the slaves of our individual and limited outlook, but

our capacity is unlimited, and, if we can get rid of *ahankara*, if we can put ourselves at the service of the Infinite without any reservation of predilection or opinion, there is no reason why our realisation should be limited. *Tasmin vijnate sarvam vijnatam*. He being known, all can be known.

To understand Scripture, it is not enough to be a scholar, one must be a soul.

To know what the *drashta* saw one must oneself have *drishti*, sight, and be a student if not a master of the knowledge. *Atha para yaya tad aksharam adhigamyate*. Grammar, etymology, prosody, astronomy, metaphysics, logic, all that is good; but afterwards there is still needed the higher knowledge by which the Immutable is known. (2)

Integral Life

Guidance in Daily Life

The Mother

Question: *Why does one always go in for useless talking? Why do we speak uselessly?*

Answer: Why do people speak uselessly? Yes, that's probably because man is instinctively very proud of being able to formulate words.

He is the first being on earth who can speak, who emits articulate sounds. So it is a kind of... it is like a child who has a new toy it likes to play with very much. Man is the only animal on earth who has articulate sounds at his disposal, so he plays with them, you see... I think it's that....And then there's all the stupidity.... You know, I also said that some people could begin to think only when they talked.... When they do not speak, they do not even think! They are not able to think in silence, so they get into the habit of speaking. But the more developed one is, the more intelligent one is and the less need one has to express oneself. It is always at a lower level that one needs to talk. And truly, a being who is very conscious, who is mentally, intellectually, very developed, talks only when it is necessary. He does not utter useless words.

In the social scale it is like this.... Take people right at the bottom of the scale: they talk the most, they spend their time in talking. They can't stop! Whatever happens to them they express immediately in words. And to the extent that one is developed and on a higher level of evolution, one feels much less need to speak.

It comes from two causes: one, because it is a new faculty which naturally and instinctively has the attraction of new faculties; the other, because it helps you to become aware of your own thought. Otherwise one doesn't think, one is not able to formulate his thought unless he expresses it in words, aloud.... Except those who are talkers by profession—that is, those who are in the habit of giving lectures or political speeches, or taking classes, giving

lessons—except these people who, obviously, can be both intellectual and talkative at the same time, as a general rule, the more talkative people are, the less are they intellectually developed!

What should be done to refrain from talking?

Think! You have only to reflect a little more. If only you make it a habit to think before speaking, that saves you at least half of what you say. To think before speaking and to say only what seems absolutely indispensable to you—then you very quickly become aware that very few words are indispensable, except from the practical point of view, in work, when one is working with somebody and is obliged to use words: “Do this”, “Give me that”, or “Like this”, or “Like that”. And even so, this can be reduced to a minimum. (3)

Companion for All

No words, act.

The Mother

Acknowledgements



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1. Sri Aurobindo, Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo , CWSA, 9; 420-30
2. Sri Aurobindo, Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, CWSA, 12; 33-36
3. The Mother, Collected Works of The Mother, CWM, 6; 222-3

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