

Transmutation of Personality Through Preksha Meditation



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GANADHIPATI TULSI

Translated into English by

R. K. SETH

JAIN VISHVA BHARATI

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**Transmutation of Personality
Through Preksha Meditation**

Editor

Sadhvipramukha Kanakprabha

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

I have to date translated into English five books of Yuvacharya Sri Mahaprajna, but of Acharya Sri Tulsi's numerous works, I have had the privilege of translating only two. The present volume is a free translation of *Preksha-Anupreksha*, whose subject is the background and technique of *preksha* meditation and other related topics.

During the course of translation, I practised each and every precept given in this book and found the whole exercise most invigorating. The purpose of religion, according to Acharya Sri, is to render the mind clean and this purpose can only be accomplished by a regular and continued practice of meditation.

Meditation, thus, constitutes the soul of religion. May the present reader discover it for himself!

Acharya Sri's Hindi couplets at the head of various chapters outlining the different stages of meditation, I have rendered into free verse, with a view to imparting to the English-knowing reader some flavour of the original. How far I have succeeded, only the discriminating readers can tell.

As usual, I take this occasion to reiterate my heartfelt gratitude to my friend, Dr. Prem Nath Jain who first introduced me to the great Jain saints of modern India. I am also most grateful to Jetha Bhaji and Muni Shri Mahendra Kumariji, whose loving guidance and active cooperation have helped me rid this translation of many inadequacies. The title in English, "Transmutation of Personality Through *Preksha* Meditation" and certain

modifications in the text in keeping with the spirit of the original were decided in consultation with them.

Grateful thanks are due to Jain Vishva Bharati, the sponsors of the present series of translations, who have provided me with all amenities for the prosecution of my work. Indeed, Jain Vishva Bharati has become for me a cherished home in the evening of my life. What I have gained here—supreme ecstasy—I regard to be the *sum-mum bonum* of life. It would be my constant endeavour, through my work, to repay in some measure, however inadequate, the immeasurable benefits I have derived from living in close proximity with the saints, sadhvis, samans and samanīs. For me, in the words of a poet :,

If there is a heaven on earth, it is here, here, here!

Finally, all great work in the Terapanthic Order gets done with the benediction of its eternally dynamic Preceptor, Acharya Sri Tulsi. Both my wife and I are fortunate to have in ample measure his love and blessings. No words can repay our debt to him.

Jain Vishva Bharati
Ladnun 341 306

R. K. Seth

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

“Observe the soul through the medium of the soul”—this saying of Lord Mahavir arouses in the mind an unquenchable thirst for self-knowledge. Even otherwise, the desire for self-knowledge is innate in man. Man wants to see himself as he is, and he wants to know what other people think of him. Until he learns the technique of inner observation, man’s gaze is confined to the exterior organism. He wants to feel that his body is beautiful and he wants to display this beauty to others. For this he even resorts to the use of cosmetics. When, after a thorough make-up, he holds a mirror in his hand and looks into it, or sees his image reflected in a full-sized mirror, he stands fascinated by his own beauty. Man does not know that there is an element in his body which is naturally sublime, whose splendour never palls and remains unaffected by disease and old age. Physical beauty is transient, liable to be marred by the cruel stroke of time. Should we not then strive for a glimpse of that beauty which is beyond time and matter?

That inner beauty is the beauty of the soul. To witness that requires the opening of the inward eye. One with the eyes of the flesh alone can never approach it, because it is formless. Preksha is one of the ways in which that immortal beauty may be observed. The word ‘preksha’ is generally used in the sense of seeing; but here we mean by it a special technique, which takes us from the gross physical world to the subtle world of the soul; which makes the unknown manifest itself. In fact, it is a method of meditation, the user of which experiences within himself a unique transformation.

Yoga-vidya or the technique of meditation is a prominent feature of our spiritual heritage. Many kinds of yoga-systems are prevalent in our country. Among these, the technique of preksha dhyana has newly emerged. Despite its recent emergence, however, this technique has proved its utility and has attracted the attention of the intelligentsia. A question may arise as to the reason behind the popularity of this new technique as compared to other techniques of meditation which have been prevalent in the country for thousands of years.

In my opinion there are two reasons for it :

- (i) This method is not traditional or based upon hearsay, but upon direct experience; and
- (ii) No method of meditation can be acceptable today unless it is scientific. Preksha is a scientific system. Many doctors have examined its working through the use of scientific instruments, and the results have been astounding indeed.

Most of the people who have practised preksha meditation, are of the view that this method is in no way inferior to any other system of meditation prevailing in the country. If properly practised with deep faith, preksha dhyana can greatly help in the attainment of self-realization.

There is no correspondence between words and direct experience. When an individual touches the profundity of experience through consistent endeavour, he does not want to abandon it. Somewhat similar is the attraction of preksha dhyana. Until a man passes through the practice of preksha, everything looks as in a dream. Sometimes he takes the transformation or his unique

experience to be fanciful exaggeration. But good wine needs no bush. We often tell the seekers that in order to know what preksha dhyana is, they must listen to what they are told, and then experience it for themselves through practice. To practise merely for the sake of practice is one thing, but when one assimilates through practice what one has heard or read, with the development of the capacity for dispassionate knowing and seeing, one experiences within oneself an indescribable joy. This joy can only be felt, not expressed in words.

The system of preksha meditation is very simple; it is also very effective. Its theory and practice are fully explained at various preksha meditation camps and the campers are made to do practical exercises. In this context, scientific study and experiments have laid bare many secrets, and it may be said that the door to new possibilities in the future is wide open.

One of the reasons for increasing interest in preksha meditation is its literature. It is through this literature that many intellectuals have had their first acquaintance with preksha meditation; after having gone through it, they are inspired to establish a direct contact with us and to participate in a meditation camp. While literature on preksha meditation was being contemplated, need was felt for books which would arouse the readers' interest in this subject and fill them with a new ardour. Keeping this in mind, some verses were composed in Hindi and on the basis of those Hindi couplets a book, couched in the form of questions and answers, was prepared to primarily serve as an introduction to preksha meditation. It was entitled *Preksha-Anupreksha*.

In the exposition of the questions forming the basis of this book, we have had ready cooperation of Yuvacharya Mahaprajna who has, in fact, spent most

valuable moments of his life in evolving the technique of preksha meditation. His discovery of the elements of preksha broadcast in the Agamas through profound study of Agamic literature and his steadfast practice of those elements in his personal life, are known to all. Even today he is fully engaged in developing further the technique of preksha meditation.

Mahashramani Sadhvipramukha Kanakprabha's contribution in the collection and editing of *Preksha-Anupreksha* is a matter of deep gratification to herself. Indeed, the editing of my literature forms the principal part of her literary sadhana.

This English translation of *Preksha-Anupreksha* (entitled *Transmutation of Personality Through Preksha Meditation*) is meant for those seekers who are interested in preksha literature but are not conversant with Hindi. To ensure that language does not constitute an obstacle in the resolution of their queries, the present endeavour of Jain Vishva Bharati, it is hoped, would prove to be extremely beneficial.

That this detailed commentary on the system of preksha meditation should help in awakening the readers' inner vision and take them to the point of observing their soul through the soul itself, is our main objective.

Jain Vishva Bharati,
Ladnun

— *Ganadhipati Tulsi*

26 January, 1994

EDITOR'S NOTE

The French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte said, "There are only two powers in the world—the sword and the pen. The power of the sword is manifest, but in the end it is always conquered by the pen." That this is the opinion of all thoughtful people of the world, cannot be said with certainty, but undoubtedly, the point of the pen is no less sharp than that of the sword. When a writer touches paper with the point of his pen, it embodies all possibilities of creation and destruction. The writer is an independent thinker. However, he cannot ignore the demands of space and time, of the individual and social environment in which he lives. A writer's first objective is to coordinate whatever he hears, sees and experiences at the level of sensation with his creative moments. Only he who has achieved this first objective can truly fulfil his responsibility as a writer.

Acharya Tulsi is the Acharya of a religious organisation, but first and foremost he is a saint. And in his individual capacity his sainthood touches the highest point of excellence. In the eyes of the community, he is an administrator. Fifty years' mature experience in the field of administration has made administering also a part of his sadhana. Acharya Sri's style of discourse is also unique and highly effective. To be an orator is nothing unnatural for an administrator—the two go together. Some administrators are also writers. However, the administrator and the poet move in opposite directions. Poetry is an expression of exquisite feelings being nurtured in an individual's inmost consciousness, whereas feeling as such has very little to do with

administration. Acharya Tulsi is an orator, a writer, and an administrator. But above all, he is a poet.

The seed of poetry sprouted in Acharya Sri's heart very early. Although he was basically interested in teaching, his revered Gurudev Kalugani also did not want him to devote himself to literary creation before he had firmly established in himself the ground of classical knowledge. So during his early ascetic life, Acharya Sri seldom found leisure to translate his feeling into an artefact. But it was Kalugani's special passion to see the sadhus and sadhavis achieve high proficiency in Sanskrit. From Gurudev Kalugani came to Acharya Sri the inspiration for writing poetry in Sanskrit and following "Kalyana Mandir Satotra" stanza by stanza he wrote *Kalu Kalyana Mandir* which greatly helped to develop his creative talent.

After being elevated to the position of Acharya, he first wrote *Kalu-Yashovilas* in Rajasthani—the remarkable life of Kalugani and a marvel of Acharya Sri's penmanship! No wonder this biography has been hailed a superb example of Rajasthani poetic literature. He wrote many works afterwards, each work perfect and unique in itself. The reader, immersing himself in these works, gets so carried away that every line, and every word, seems to impart to him a new understanding, inspiration and vigour.

Acharya Sri's creative work is not confined to any one individual, class, or subject. Whereas many of his works display his profound erudition, some have been specifically written for the general public. *Preksha-Sangan* (in Hindi) is his latest work. It is not yet complete, but as an elementary introduction to *preksha dhyana*, it has great importance. Here, Acharya Sri has propounded in verses a very intricate subject in such a natural, simple

and delightful manner that the reader, even as he goes through these verses, becomes impatient to delve into the depths of dhyana. If these verses are learnt by heart and recited with devotion, it would establish the great significance of this work as regards both the understanding and practice of yoga.

Preksha-Anupreksha is the result of an exposition of 175 verses of *Preksha-Sangan*. Imbued with the fragrance of his presence, I had the privilege of recording the critical discussions that took place between Acharya Sri himself and Yuvacharya Sri. The fifty-one essays of the present book, written in the form of questions and answers, have been prepared on the basis of that discussion. In this context, another book of Acharya Sri, entitled *Khoye So Paye* ("He who loses, finds"), has already been published. But from the point of view of making manifest the system of preksha dhyana, the present work has a special importance. Of all the literature on preksha dhyana published so far, *Preksha-Anupreksha* has a style of its own. The simplicity, the logical sequence and the lucid exposition clearly prove its great utility. It will be particularly valued as a guiding light by those seeking and practising the truth of preksha dhyana. It is hoped that even tardy sadhaks like me would be inspired by it to explore the depths of preksha dhyana.

Ranawas
30 September, 1982

— *Sadhvipramukha Kanakprabha*

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THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF PREKSHA DHYANA

Q. While mentioning the objectives of your Punjab — tour, you said that in your work you are guided by two viewpoints—that of anuvrat and preksha dhyana. Anuvrat is a unique achievement of your life. This fact is now well proved by the activities of the past three decades. The talk of preksha dhyana is somewhat new. There are many questions in the public mind about it. How did it originate and why? What values do you wish to establish through it in society? Is this also an extensive movement like Anuvrat? There are some other questions, too. Will you kindly tell us about it at length?

Ans. Jain munis do not stay at one place for long. So — travelling on foot becomes an indispensable part of their life. They are, in fact, pledged to a life of travel and are always on the move. But if their journey is imbued with some special aim, it acquires greater significance. I have been travelling on foot for the last 53 years. During the first 23 years, the scope and aim of my pilgrimage

were limited. The frontiers were, however, extended; the objectives became more clear and comprehensive, and my foot-pilgrimage took a new turn. This turn occurred 30 years ago when I began my anuvrat journey. The journey extended much farther. Pilgrimages were made from the north to the south, i.e. from Punjab to Kanya-Kumari. During these tours, foundations were laid of a religion, which was finding recognition as simple religion without any epithet before it. Through it communal prejudices began to be demolished, and a pure non-sectarian religion emerged.

Anuvrat started a new experiment of bringing about a revolution in thought in the field of religion. Treating the external structure of religion as secondary, it has given primary importance to its essential spirit. Earlier, formal worship which is a secondary aspect of religion, was mistakenly given precedence over spirituality which is the soul of religion. Anuvrat halted this reversal of values caused by relegating the primary to the secondary and accepting the secondary as primary. It gave precedence to spirituality. A widespread, illusory conception was abandoned resulting in greater clarity and the re-establishment of spiritual values. It once again awakened people's faith in spirituality. They displayed greater interest and the urge to practise religion in the laboratory of life became stronger.

The discussion on spirituality unwittingly created the background for preksha dhyana. The seed of preksha was sown the day anuvrat started its campaign for a revolution in thought. For years, this seed was nurtured within. After maturing inside, it sprouted forth and flowered at the appropriate time. From this viewpoint, preksha is no unexpected happening. It is not a sudden jump out of the void. Its origin is the culmination of a process; it has a whole history behind it. It emerged into existence after creating for itself a solid base.

Q. You are the preceptor of the anuvrat movement. — Did you have any concept of *preksha dhyana* in your mind at the time of starting the movement? Or is it only in the present decade that emphasis is being laid on *preksha dhyana*, keeping in view people's growing interest in meditation and yoga? You just said that *preksha dhyana* is no sudden achievement. But then why did it remain unprojected before the public for so many years?

Ans. Anuvrat and *preksha dhyana* originated almost — together; though at the time I had no conception of 'preksha' in my mind. But, for the creation of the kind of ground I required for anuvrat, it was not possible to ignore the inevitable requirement of *dhyana-sadhana*. The sapling of anuvrat bloomed earlier because it was connected with the gross world, with the behavioural aspect of life. But *preksha* is concerned with the subtle world, the inner aspect of life, and it took a long time to develop, and still longer to bear fruit. As the conception of moral values took root among the people, the spiritual thirst increased. For the individual smitten by spiritual thirst, *preksha dhyana* is an infallible means of self-realization.

At the very outset we had proclaimed that spirituality is the basis of morality. Some thinkers recognize patriotism as the basis of morality; others recognize social welfare to be the inspiration behind morality. The Chinese philosopher, Confucius laid great emphasis upon moral values for achieving happiness, prosperity and equilibrium in life. Again, the preceptor of Taoism, Laotse, too, conceived of an ideal society and held simplicity and straightforwardness to be the most excellent behaviour. The Indian ethics also give outstanding importance to the concepts of this world and the other world in the perspec-

tive of morality. But our perception is quite different. We have accepted spirituality to be the fundamental basis of morality. Because it is only in the spiritual man that moral action can flower. Similarly, spiritual development, too, is more likely to flourish on the ground of moral behaviour.

In the initial stages of the anuvrat movement, we had not laid any special emphasis upon dhyana-sadhana. But once the principle of morality was well established in the public consciousness and faith in moral conduct was strengthened, need was felt for special experiments of sadhana with a view to making that conduct stable. For this, anuvrat training shivirs were organised.

The form of preksha dhyana first emerged at the 21-day shivir organised at the Spiritual Meditation Centre, Mehrauli, in Delhi. This shivir was held in 1966 and in respect of both time and technique stood distinct from all the shivirs held till then. In that shivir, beside morality, a good deal of discussion was held on spirituality, and some exercises were also performed. During this programme of spiritual churning, there were present many people who were vitally interested in spirituality. Notable among these were Morarji Bhai Desai, Srimannarain, Dada Dharmadhikari, Gopinath Aman, Jainendra Kumar, etc. Since at that time I was not in Delhi, I was not present at this shivir. However, in close proximity with and under the direction of Muni Nathmalji (now Yuvacharya Mahaprajna) good work was accomplished there. In a way this camp became a meeting point of spiritual and moral ideologies. Referring to this fact, Srimannarainji said at that time, "It appears to me that this sadhana-site will become a centre from which rays of spirituality will transmit light to all the people of the world."

During that long shivir, some spiritual books were also studied. Comprehensive discussions took place on

important topics relating to mental peace. Deliberations were held on spiritual experiments in the context of the present-day problems of the world. In all, this shivir created a stir in the intellectual world. It was after this shivir that the seed of preksha began to sprout forth. Emphasis was now being laid on meditation, along with anuvrat. To the Anuvrat Code of Conduct, we added two more items—meditation and study. This created a distinctive atmosphere and it seemed as if preparations were on for the manifestation of some important element.

Now began to be held more meditation camps than anuvrat shivirs. Adequate interest was created among the people in respect of dhyana-sadhana. But still no shivirs were held under the name of preksha dhyana. About 2-3 years ago, an organised and comprehensive form of meditation technique was developed which came to be recognized as preksha dhyana. Preksha dhyana is the next stage of the anuvrat programme. From one point of view it is a developed form of anuvrat, from another, a successful method of giving a practical shape to the theoretical aspect of anuvrat.

Thirty years ago (in 1950), I toured Punjab. Anuvrat was the main objective of my pilgrimage then. The matter of spirituality or meditation was secondary at that time, and therefore was only incidentally touched upon. Now that the next stage of anuvrat had been developed, in my second tour of Punjab I added to anuvrat, preksha dhyana as well. In fact, anuvrat and preksha dhyana are complementary to each other. We believe that their fullness and vigour would serve to make public life, too, more vital and complete.

THE PROGRAMME OF PREKSHA

Q. Anuvrat has its own comprehensive programme. — The work accomplished through it in the direction of change of values has been unique. Has any such programme been formulated for preksha dhyana? If yes, what type of programme is it?

Ans. Preksha has no programme. It is beyond programmes. It is an art of renouncing all activity. The greater the activity, the lesser the preksha. To understand preksha, one must know what non-action means. Generally, a man is absorbed in some activity or the other. Over-activity results in the dissipation of energy. Because of the loss of energy a man cannot fully utilize his capabilities. Whatever capacity is utilized is mostly exhausted in mundanities. This makes a man extraversive.

There are three sources of activity—the mind, the speech and the body. A man thinks too much, speaks too much, and moves too much. That is the schedule of all worldly activity. If preksha has a goal, it is to mod-

erate worldly pursuits; to think less, to speak less, to restrict the movement of the body as much as possible. That is, non-thinking, non-speaking, and keeping the body motionless—that may be said to be the programme of *preksha*. In order to fulfil it, one has to abjure other activities. The consummation of such a programme of non-activity is religion and spirituality.

We accept religion as the truth which gives us something extra. If religion gave us merely that which is got through the acquisition of material goods, it would cease to have any special utility. Religion gives us that which material objects do not, cannot give. Therefore the contribution of religion is a special one. Engaging in mundane activity is a part of the nature of a living being. Normally, no living being can survive without indulging in some form of mundane activity. However, there is nothing remarkable about the gains to be got from worldly pursuits; whereas what the renunciation of thought, speech and action gives us, is something unique.

The fundamental objective of *preksha dhyana* is the practice of three-fold steadiness (*triguṇti*). *Triguṇti* means renunciation of three-fold activity. The mind, the speech and the body are the means of worldly activity. In order to negate worldly pursuits, it is necessary to understand these. Because unless a phenomenon is properly understood, its goodness or badness cannot be ascertained. Knowledge available to man through the mind, speech and the body is limited to the physiological or the psychological sphere, but it is not capable of touching the farther levels. Those whose understanding is based upon these two disciplines, know very little about the mind from the spiritual point of view. As in the case of the mind, spiritual views about speech and the body are also quite different.

Q. You just said that the physiological and psychological points of view as regards the mind, the speech and the body are very superficial, whereas their spiritual analysis is profound. Hitherto, I believed that spirituality related to the soul alone. But according to the new vision projected by you, what are the points to be kept in mind for understanding the spiritual aspects of the mind, the speech and the body?

Ans. The mind has two levels—conscious and unconscious. If the mind is awake, its spiritual understanding offers no special difficulty. Because awareness is in itself a spiritual attribute. A mind that is asleep becomes a hindrance to an understanding of its nature. The urge to awaken the unconscious mind is a spiritual movement. Here, many other questions arise, such as, How can we avoid mental tension? How can the impurities polluting the mind be cleansed away? How can the mind be made to embrace the truth? How can the knots of attachment and aversion be dissolved? What is the cause of the mind's restlessness? Is the mind really restless? How does the mind come into being? And there are innumerable problems whose solution is possible only on a spiritual basis.

Certain spiritual factors arising out of the disposition of speech can also make an individual introversive. How does control over speech influence one's life? What achievements flow from silence? How does it affect the course of one's life? What are the means of reducing mental contradiction and confusion? How is it possible to realise a condition of the mind where thought is totally absent? What role do sound-waves play in the evolution of personality? How is it possible to save the energy lost in constant talking? With a full realisation of the importance of speech-control, many experiments can be made in this context.

The requirements of the body, the mind and speech are gross. Science has provided extensive knowledge about the body. But all this knowledge is partial and one-sided. From the spiritual point of view, the noteworthy thing is, How to reduce the activity of the body? Or how can the functioning of the brain and the nervous system be controlled? By what process can the psychic centres in the body be developed? How can the endocrine secretions and chemicals be changed? How to awaken the capacity for objective observation of the happenings inside the body? How to create a pure and powerful aura?

Such questioning invests an individual with a spiritual vision, with whose help he may gain an insight into those aspects of the mind, speech and body which physiology and psychology have failed to illuminate so far, or have only partly illuminated. The programme of *preksha* is to see the body, the speech and the mind from a spiritual point of view, to understand them and be thoroughly acquainted with them. And through the process of seeing, knowing, understanding and acquaintance, to move in the direction of bringing about a change in them through practice and direct experience.

Q. Is only theoretical knowledge about the mind, the — speech and the body imparted through *preksha* or is instruction also given for practising it?

Ans. The first objective of *preksha* is to provide right — information about the mind. But the objective does not end there. The primary purpose also includes the impartation of the technique of experiencing. Thus, it is not merely a matter of theoretical discussion. In *preksha* are incorporated both elements of our ancient system of education—theory and practice. Without the

theory there can be no entry into the subject; and without constant practice, there is no assimilation. So theory and practice go together for a complete education. The theoretical aspect of a subject can be established, but this in itself cannot be the criterion for determining its truth: Theoretical understanding of anything is merely a recognition of it, it serves to establish it in the form of a belief. But the touchstone is its practice. When the truth of something is examined by practising it, it becomes a direct experience. What is known on the experiential level in itself becomes a proof of its veracity; no other evidence is required for proving it. The procedure of *preksha* is not merely theoretical; along with the theory, application here is given an equal importance. The validity of any doctrine which ignores the practical aspect, remains open to question.

The process of *preksha* is something to be experienced. It was tested on the experiential level before its establishment. With the passage of time, its practice is bound to become still more clear. I feel that the spiritual outlook regarding the mind, the speech and the body, will also become more comprehensive with regular practice in *preksha*. In order that the ground be solid, it is necessary that efforts be made to make clear as many aspects of *preksha* as possible.

THE FOUNDATION OF PREKSHA

Q. Is this technique of preksha dhyana a creation of — your own imagination or has it a solid basis reflecting some ancient tradition?

Ans. Dhyana-sadhana cannot be mere flight of imagination because it is a practical discipline. Where there is practice, the aspect of imagination becomes secondary. The aspect of imagination is an emotional one. Poetry may grow out of it, but it does not lead to practice. Preksha dhyana is a matter of practice. It has certain principles on which the practice is based. But the theory occupies a secondary place; the chief thing is the practice itself. The exercise is more related to practice. Without regular practice, the exercise would be futile. In the course of practice, the sadhak reaches a point where he may be able to establish a theory. Every exercise is anchor in theory and new theories are also evolved.

In the Jain tradition, there are enough theories of meditation, but no practical applications thereof. In the absence of practice, the theories are not properly under-

stood. The principles of preksha dhyana are intelligible only in the perspective of practice. In the *Acharang*, *Sthanang*, and *Uttaradhyayana Sutras* is to be found an original and powerful basis for the system of preksha. Through the discovery, application and examination of these grounds, it has been established that there has been a systematic, uninterrupted tradition of meditation in the Jain religion, but without the touchstone of practice, none of the theories of meditation could establish an independent identity.

Some Jain munis and scholars have already concluded that no technique of meditation is to be found in the Jain Agamas. With a view to changing this wrong conception, it was decided to reassess the available data. Yuvacharya Mahaprajna was specially directed to implement this decision. For years he conducted certain experiments on himself. He studied other techniques of meditation, appraised them, went into their theoretical aspects and practised them. Thus was laid the foundation for the practice of meditation or direct experiencing. Afterwards, a comparative study was made of the elements of meditation found in the Agamas, *Acharang*, *Sthanang* and *Uttaradhyayana* etc., and experiments were conducted. Those experiments were very successful. Success creates faith and faith in turn strengthens conception. It is on the basis of sturdy concepts that a new technique is formulated and developed. Such is the story of the evolution of the technique of preksha dhyana. On the whole we can say neither is this technique the product of our imagination, nor have we inherited it. The technique has been perfected on the basis of the data found in the Agamas and by co-relating the Agmic concepts with direct experiencing, and it is being progressively developed.

Q. Does this technique of preksha dhyana belong to the — Terapanth Dharam Sangh? Is it accepted in the Jain

tradition alone or is it, like the *anuvrata*, a universal system?

Ans. Meditation is the ground work of experience — where differences of sect or tradition do not arise. Still, the means employed to acquire that background may be isolated. From this point of view, the method of *preksha dhyana* can be related to the Jain tradition. The paramount objective of the system of *preksha dhyana* is *veetaragta*, i.e. total freedom from attachment and aversion. The starting point of *preksha* is the abatement of attachment and aversion or their partial enfeeblement. The ultimate end is their total extinction. Attachment and aversion—these are the two elements which distort our consciousness. Unless that distortion is done away with or at least lessened, the condition of *dhyana* does not arise. The whole pilgrimage between the starting point and the ultimate end of *dhyana* is the pilgrimage of abatement or waning of attachment and aversion. There can be many hindrances therein. Because, the greater the bondage of attachment and aversion, the stronger is the play of passions. As long as passions are dominant, the mind cannot be at rest. A restless mind is neither fit for meditation nor can it progress in the direction of *veetaragta*. From this point of view, it seems logical to assert that in the Jain tradition, a system of meditation is a process of becoming a *veetarag*, i.e. of achieving freedom from affections. In my opinion that should be the objective of every system of meditation. A system of meditation with a comprehensive aim in view, is bound to be complete in itself and useful for every individual.

Q. Constant practice is required to make the conception of *dhyana-sadhana* sharp and clear. If that practice is in the direction of *veetaragta*, one can reach

the destination easily. But the greatest difficulty that one experiences is in finding out what precisely is the method of subduing or ending attachment and aversion. What is the precise way which leads to the assuagement or decay of attraction and malice?

Ans. There is a special method of treating this problem and that is the way of pure knowledge and pure intuition. Only knowing, only seeing. The maturer the practice of only knowing and only seeing, the deeper and more durable is the state of meditation. In short, it is said that the whole process of meditation is the process of only knowing and seeing. In the beginning, merely knowing and seeing is the prime thing. In the ultimate stages, there is complete absence of attachment and aversion. All that obscures knowledge and intuition stands dissolved. And then there is the consummation of dhyana—pure knowledge and pure intuition. Before this, there is a gap between the soul and the transcendental knowledge and intuition. During this interval, the condition of the soul does not remain natural; its possibilities do not wholly project themselves. The soul keeps quivering on account of pleasant and unpleasant sensations. Knowing, it does not really know; seeing, it does not really see. Because in that imperfect condition, its knowledge and intuition are incomplete, undeveloped. Although, while practising meditation, the sadhak becomes a mere spectator and he concentrates only on seeing and knowing, but his knowledge and intuition is not yet perfect; there remains some hindrance in between. This hindrance dissolves in the moment of realization of the state of *veetaragta*, i.e. the state of total freedom from passions and affections. Knowledge and intuition become manifest and unobscured. Resolute practice of pure knowledge and pure intuition in the early stages culminates in full knowledge and full intuition.

On the way to *veetragta*—the condition of total freedom from passions and affections—the stages of elementary practice are : relaxation (*kayotsarg*), breath-perception, breath-control, slowness of breathing, perception of changes occurring in the body, cleansing of the special psychic centres present in the body, and the perception of psychic colours for the purification of passions, etc. This process brings about a transformation both within and without. On the level of the body, there occurs a change in the endocrine secretions, and on the mental level, a change in character takes place. These physical and mental changes affect the soul. Even before one reaches perfection, one experiences a kind of self-fulfilment.

Q. Did you prescribe this whole method at the very — beginning, or was it stabilized only after many changes had been introduced as a result of experimentation and experience?

Ans. How can a new technique be stabilized at once? — Particularly where experimentation and experiencing predominate, no method can be confirmed on the basis of pre-conceptions. Although, a recognized method of sadhana requires stability to be able to inspire deep faith in it, this can only be accomplished as a result of experimentation and experience. The system of *preksha dhyana*, too, is the consummation of many years of practice and experimentation. The wealth of experience grows with every exercise, which strengthens the groundwork for the next exercise. In my opinion, there should not be any kind of rigidity with respect to dhyana. A stereotyped technique is liable to become a hindrance to future progress. So, keeping open the field of experimentation and experience, one should gradually move forward through the medium of one's adopted technique.

PREKSHA DHYANA AND ANUVRAT

Q. In your last talk you said that preksha dhyana is — the next stage of anuvrat. It means that a preksha meditator must of necessity be an anuvrati. Is it possible to practise preksha dhyana without first observing the rules of anuvrat?

Ans. A person who practises meditation in the — preksha dhyana shivirs, is required to take certain pledges. In order to assimilate what is offered at these camps, it is absolutely necessary for a preksha meditator to have the qualification of an anuvrati. One who wishes to practise meditation regularly after the shivir, must also observe the anuvrat code of conduct. As preksha meditation matures, the observance of the anuvrat code will become more and more natural. As long as life is not pure and clean, one takes definite pledges to observe anuvrats. After the necessary purification, however, one does not have to take a pledge, anuvrat now becomes a part of one's being. The flowers of preksha blossoming in a life purified by anuvrata are

remarkably beautiful. In keeping those flowers fresh and blooming for ever, the indispensability of anuvrat in the background of preksha cannot be denied.

Q. Just as the observance of anuvrat is necessary for the — practice of preksha meditation, is not preksha dhyana a requisite for the realisation of anuvrat in one's life?

Ans. Since anuvrat and preksha have been recognised — as being complementary to each other, how can an anuvrati make any progress towards his goal without practising preksha dhyana? This question relates, not only to the present time, but to the beginning of the anuvrat era. At that time, many intelligent people asked, "We may accept the anuvrat pledges, but how do we realize them? How to fulfil them?" The raising of such questions with regard to the taking of pledges is not unnatural either, because sadhana is required to fulfil every pledge. Such sadhana may bear fruit in a short time or one may have to wait for a long time for success. However that may be, the necessity of deep commitment and continuity of practice cannot be ignored. Constant practice matures early. From this point of view, in order to make anuvrat a natural part of one's life, the practice of preksha dhyana is very necessary. Sometime ago, Shri Ratan Lal Joshi, the former Editor of *Hindusthan*, went to America and talked about anuvrat there. Many Americans who found it interesting, said, "The anuvrat code of conduct is quite good, very useful, but how about its practice?" In this context, it becomes very clear that the practice is the chief factor in any talk of sadhana. In the absence of practice, no sadhana can really mature. We must never forget that practice is essential for the fulfilment of a pledge.

A total view of the undertaking of fasts or pledges, their observance and their consummation reveals a great

lack of understanding in the public mind as regards the whole procedure. This is because a man, the moment he undertakes a fast, wants to see its good results at once. As a matter of fact, the fast by itself brings about no transformation; it is not a magic spell which shows its effect the moment one utters it. A man who takes a pledge, but makes no effort to fulfil it, does no sadhana whatever. How will such a man ever taste its fruit? It is as if a sick man should take the medicine but not the prescribed diet! How can his treatment be effective? The medicine has the virtue of driving away the illness, but without the prescribed diet, this virtue is rendered ineffective, and with the intake of unwholesome food, it even turns destructive. With the result that the medicine, instead of restoring one's health, might further aggravate it. Likewise, in order to derive benefit from a resolution, one must practise it.

A man takes a vow that he would never utter an untruth. It is all very good, but unless he removes all the causes that make him tell lies, how will his vow be ever fulfilled? The chief factors behind the telling of an untruth are: anger, greed, fear, and fun. Unless one attains freedom from these, the possibility of uttering falsehoods cannot be obviated. A man takes a pledge never to indulge in anger. But if all those tendencies which provoke wrathful passion are present in him in strength, how will he abide by his pledge? The same is true of other vows and pledges. It is a poor intelligence which expects immediate results following the taking of a pledge, or loses all faith if no such results are forthcoming.

In my opinion, a pledge or a vow is merely the determination of a direction one wishes to take. This gives an individual a sense of what is to be done and what is to be avoided. This discrimination forms the initiative of an awakened consciousness. But this alone

is not sufficient for the fulfilment of the pledge. The mere acceptance of a pledge does not, cannot, end the fickleness of the mind. For the maturing of the vow requires the fire of practice. If someone wants to cook food, boil the milk, or make something out of gold metal, he will have to heat these materials on fire. Without the required heat, adequate results would not be forthcoming. The practice of meditation is also like a fire. It is on this fire that a man's mind matures. In a ripe mind alone does resolution mature, and it is through mature resolution that transformation takes place in life. Therefore, anuvrat and preksha meditation cannot be separated. Preksha is necessary for anuvrat and anuvrat for preksha. Both are mutually made for each other. To undo this connection is not in the interest of anyone.

Q. Anuvrat has a moral code of its own, which has — been determined on the basis of evils prevailing in all classes. Similarly, has preksha dhyana, too, an independent code? What is its basis?

Ans. If preksha needs a code of conduct, it is anuvrat — itself. Because preksha is a practical technique, it can only be acquired through practice. From this viewpoint its practice is the realisation of every doctrine. One of the pledges of anuvrat is—"I shall not consider any person untouchable." For the realization of this pledge, a preksha sadhak will banish from his mind all feeling of hatred. In order to completely end all malice, the feeling of hatred subsisting in the inmost recesses of the mind will have to be annihilated. Without such purging, the pledge will not be fulfilled. The purging is done through meditation. It is through meditation that the heterogeneous elements accumulated in the mind are rooted out, its fickleness ended, meritorious deeds evoked, concentration and abiding faith enhanced. As

long as a man does not achieve integration, cannot concentrate his mind upon one object, cannot control the mind's restlessness, he will not be able to develop pure observation.

The whole point of the foregoing discussion is that preksha in itself is the fruition of a moral code. Thus, no independent code of conduct has been prescribed for it. Of course, while practising preksha dhyana, one is required to be initiated. Initiation and its rules we shall discuss later. It is enough to say here that if preksha dhyana has a code of conduct, it is: maintaining the purity of the heart and the mind's concentration. Only those sadhaks who succeed in creating this condition, can attain the higher stages of meditation.

THE GREATNESS OF 'ARHAM'

*Let the sound of 'Arham' vibrate day
and night
In the mind—in speech, in action and
in thought!
The 'A' of Arham stands for Amrit—the
water of life;
'R' represents the fire element; the aspirate
Doth awake the vital force within; the
nasal sound
With whatever it combines, raises its power!
Mere repetition of words, however profound,
Brings no lasting joy—a meaningless ritual!
Charged with passion and mindfulness
'Arham' sets right everything!*

Q. In your book *Preksha-Sangan*, you started with the — sound of 'Arham'. A preksha dhyana sadhak also starts his practice with the recitation of 'Arham'. Do you lay stress on the practice of *japa* along with meditation? What do you think of *japa*?

Ans. There are two ways of achieving concentration — of mind—*japa* (reiteration of the deity's name) and *dhyana* (meditation). Man's mind is fickle. It does not stay at any one point for long. *Japa* is used for concentrating the mind on one object, which otherwise is confounded by many objects. *Japa* is simpler and easier than meditation. There is no special technique or practice required for doing *japa*. Any man can control the mind's wanderings by means of recitation of the deity's name. Many seed letters and incantatory terms are available for *japa*. Among these, 'Aum', 'harin', 'shrin', 'klin', etc. are seed letters (special vowels) and Arham, 'ai', 'si': 'a': 'u': 'sa:' etc. are spell words. In the Tantra-Shastra, the repetition of these has been portrayed in the form of verse-meditation.

That the seed letters and spell words are invested with great power, is not disputed. Because special kinds of sound-waves are produced by the articulation of a word. These sound vibrations have a great impact upon the mind. This impact can be good or bad. If an abusive word is hurled at an individual, he suddenly gets excited. Similarly, the use of gentle words can turn an enemy into a friend. Such incidents continually occur in a man's life. Being sensible of the power of certain words, some people use them deliberately to gain a particular end. This leads to the conclusion that the sound vibrations have a direct impact upon a man's mind and conduct. In view of this, the question of denying the importance of *japa* does not arise.

Among the incantations employed for *japa*, 'Arham' has a powerful spell. It is made up of 'A', 'r', 'h' and the nasal 'um'. 'A' occupies an important position in the alphabet—at the head; the alphabet begins with 'A'. 'Aum' is a prominent incantatory term, and the first letter

of it is 'A'. In the Vedic literature 'A' signifies Brahma, the Creator. Among creative elements, 'A' reigns supreme—its addition increases the power of the spell.

The second letter of 'Arham' is 'r', which signifies the fire element. It plays an outstanding role in awakening the power of bio-electricity. With the awakening of this power, all torpor ceases and the body throbs with a new-found vitality.

The third letter of 'Arham' is the aspirate—'h'; it awakens the life-force. The incantation containing this letter grows very potent. In the Buddhist method of meditation, the recitation of the seed letter, 'hun' is much prevalent. In order to awaken the life-force this spell word is abundantly used—'Hran', 'Hrin', 'Hru', 'Hron', 'Hram', etc. are all made of the letters 'h' and 'r'. Their recitation produces a typical kind of sound vibrations. The importance of 'arham' from the phonetic point of view is even greater than its structural importance.

The fourth letter of 'Arham' is the nasal dot. It has no independent existence, but it increases the power of the letter with which it combines. The pronunciation of 'Arha' lacks the harmonious rhythm which emanates from the enunciation of "Arham". The vibrations issuing from rhythmic harmony are more powerful; they serve to awaken many centres of consciousness and kindle the life-force. In the ancient literature dealing with incantation, there is detailed information available about various incantatory spell words and their uses.

Q. Some people practise the recitation of 'Arham' with — colours. Is this experiment meant for achieving concentration or is some other result possible?

Ans. Colours are more related to meditation than to — *japa*. In the perception of psychic colours (*leshya*)

dhyana), colour forms the fundamental basis of meditation. We shall talk about it at length when we come to discuss *leshya dhyana*. In the present context, it is worth noting that 'Arham' meditation is chiefly done with three colours—white, red and yellow. The recitation of 'Arham' with white colour ensures health and imparts tranquillity. The white colour is capable of driving away disease. A disease-free individual achieves mental health along with physical health. Mental health is the starting point of mental peace.

The red colour is helpful in increasing one's vitality. The colour of the early rising sun is red. He who regularly and properly practises meditation or *japa* at that time, is successful in arousing his dormant powers.

The yellow colour is the symbol of good fortune, intelligence and splendour. The use of this colour yields wonderful results. Ill fortune is changed into good fortune, there is development of intellectual capacity and one's aura becomes brighter. Of course, the practice of *japa*, undertaken with any colour, is beneficial. Benefits derived from one colour may also be transmitted to other colours. Still in the science of colours, particular colours, along with the method of their use, are prescribed, chiefly on the basis of a factual analysis.

Q. You just said that the recitation of incantatory — words like 'Arham' produces special kinds of sound vibrations, beneficial for the *sadhak*. Can this benefit be derived from sound vibrations alone, or is it necessary to combine with these vibrations mental concentration and deep feeling?

Ans. The sound vibrations have a virtue of their own; — so has deep feeling. Sound vibrations, without

feeling, have a beneficial effect, but the results are not adequate. To derive full benefit, *japa* should be accompanied by both feeling and concentration of mind. It is a fact that a spell word has great power, but the explosion of this energy takes place only when the practitioner's recitation of the mantra is charged with feeling. Feelingless verbal repetition may fall in the sphere of ritual, but it cannot yield lasting joy, peace or health.

Every medicine has a virtue of its own. But in order to increase its potency, it is treated and infused with various kinds of more potent medicines. This is the typical Ayurvedic technique. By using this technique, one and the same drug can be made to yield several kinds of medicines and their efficacy much improved. Just as a drug is charged with power, a man's mind, too, can be charged with *bhavana*. A perfunctory recitation of a spell may be beneficial to some extent. But in the end it turns into a mere ritual. In view of this, the contribution of *bhavana* is very important.

A muni undertakes great vows. It is necessary for him to observe five vows, which form the chief basis of his sadhana. And without the infusion of spirituality, these cannot be fulfilled. In view of this, every great vow has been assigned five principles to be practised again and again (five *bhavanas*). Without assimilating these 25 principles associated with five great vows, no sadhak can reach the highpoint of sadhana.

A slight infusion enhances the efficacy of a medicine, and through *bhavana* great vows are fulfilled. Similarly, only *japa* mixed with *bhavana*, can yield appropriate results. Expressions such as, "with the whole mind", 'heart and soul', 'charged with devotion', etc. underline the fact that the practice of *japa* and meditation is incomplete without concentration. If, while iterating a seed

letter or a spell word, a person is completely identified with it, he, at that time, becomes inseparable from the activity he is engaged in, and no different from it. The whole of this process constitutes the consummation of feeling. In this, the recitation and the reciter, the practice of *japa* and the practitioner, are not two separate things but together constitute a single activity. One may practise the recitation of 'Arham' or some other spell word, but the full measure of its power manifests itself only in combination with *bhavana* and single-mindedness.

JAPA : A PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENT

Q. What is the starting point of *japa* from the linguistic point of view? What are the halting places in this journey? And how does the power of *japa* become comprehensive form the point of view of physiology or of the science of incantation?

Ans. *Japa*, the repetition of the name of the deity, and *jalpa*, meaning sophistry, come from the root words *japa* and *jalpa*. The root word *jalpa* connotes plain, explicit speaking; whereas the root word *japa* has two connotations—explicit speech and mental talk. Thus, the semantic journey of *japa* begins from ‘loud note’ to ‘mantra-articulation’ and, ‘mental repetition’ thereof. Of course, *japa* is always done aloud, but from the point of view of articulation, it has been divided into two classes—voiced and mental. From the viewpoint of the science of incantation, *japa* is of three kinds—*japa*, *antarjalpa*, and mental *jalpa*. In the language of the science of incantation, these are known as voiced, low-voiced, and silent (i.e. mental). All these three kinds of *japa* can prove useful supports for one’s progress in meditation.

Basically, the whole process constitutes an effort to migrate from the gross to the subtle, from the visible to the invisible world. Gross sound produces gross vibrations and subtle sound produces subtle vibrations. Subtle vibrations are far more powerful than the gross ones. Nevertheless, in the initial stages of bringing about a change, gross vibrations have a role to play. But in the higher stages it is necessary to move towards subtle vibrations, because the state of meditation can be attained only through these. Loud *japa* is gross; low-toned *japa* is an advance upon the former; at the level of mental *japa*, the distance between knowledge and the word disappears. Here language and thought get very near to each other. In gross vibrations, language and thought function separately.

Subtle vibrations awaken the psychic centres situated in the human body. Although the entire system of the body is affected by these, some centres of consciousness are specially activated. For example—the Centre of Energy, the Centre of Bio-electricity, the Centre of Purity, the Centre of Intuition and the Centre of Wisdom*.

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- In the system of preksha meditation, psychic centres are associated with the endocrine glands as under :

<i>Psychic Centres</i>	<i>Endocrine Glands</i>	<i>Location</i>
1. Centre of Energy	Gonads	Bottom end of the spinal cord
2. Centre of Health	Gonads	Lower abdomen
3. Centre of Bio-electricity	Adrenal, Pancreas. Islets of Langerhans	Navel
4. Centre of Bliss	Thymus	Near the heart
5. Centre of Purity	Thyroid, Parathyroid	Adam's apple—throat
6. Centre of Celibacy	Sense organ of Taste	Tongue (Tip)
7. Centre of Vital Energy	Sense organ of Smell	Nose (Tip)
8. Centre of Vision	Sense organ of Sight	Eyes
9. Centre of Vigilance	Sense organ of Hearing	Ears
10. Centre of Intuition	Pituitary	Middle of the eyebrows
11. Centre of Enlightenment	Pineal	Centre of the forehead
12. Centre of Peace	Hypothalamus	Front part of the head
13. Centre of Wisdom	Cerebral Cortex	Top of the head

Through *japa*, a transformation takes place at all levels— physical, mental and emotional. In the ancient texts, while mentioning the results of *japa* it has been said :

By reciting spells, one can conquer decay, aversion, loss of appetite (dyspepsia), leprosy, disorders of the stomach, cough, asthma, etc. Like most distinguished persons, the doer of *japa* earns great merit, and in his next birth attains salvation which is the portion of the noblest beings.

Q. Has the assertion in the ancient texts of diseases — being cured by *japa*, been proved by experiments? If not, how do we establish its authenticity?

Ans. In the context of diseases, *japa* is one remedy. It — is not an imaginary concept, but has a scientific basis. Just as the atoms of medicine are capable of destroying the atoms of disease, in the same way the atoms of the mind attracted by *japa* pull out the disease-atoms in the body and collect healthy atoms. Thus, there is little room for doubting that the disease will be eradicated.

In ancient times, the *mantra*-therapy was used along with the Ayurved system of medicine. It was a kind of psychological treatment. The *mantra*-therapy formed an independent discipline within the Ayurvedic system. Accordingly, only he who had mastered the science of *mantras*, could be a full-fledged Ayurved Acharya. Experimentation was done in respect of various *mantras* in the laboratory of the *mantra*-specialists. Even today, the *mantra*-therapy is prevalent in some form. Though only to a slight degree, modern people are scientifically reviving the *mantra*-therapy. If this work goes ahead,

there is room for a great deal of research and new discoveries.

Sound-therapy is also a part of the *mantra*-therapy. The rhythmic vibrations of sound can create reverberations in both the inner and the outer environment. They affect not only man, but also the whole world of living beings. The impact of sound vibrations on the vegetable kingdom is even greater than upon human beings. In this connection, new experiments are being performed in America and other countries. They are also experimenting with the effects of music on vegetation. Although music has no shape or appearance of a *mantra*, it certainly is a component vital to its incantatory effect. Plants exposed to music develop early, the grass grows apace, the petals are larger and smoother, the fruit more abundant and delicious. Sound-induced sweetness imparts to the vegetation all-round a sense of being loved and cared for and a feeling of joy at being so loved. During the period of experimentation, those plants which were deprived of the atmosphere of music, in contrast with their more happy brethren, showed the effect of such deprivation on their growth, leafing, flowering and fruition. Experiments have also been conducted on the effect of music on animals. Cows exposed to music yielded more milk. In view of the fact that waves of music exercise such a powerful influence on vegetation and animals, the effect of vibrations produced by a *mantra* can no longer be disputed. The working of a *mantra* is even more subtle, so its effect is visible on a subtle level. Combined with faith, self-confidence and passion, a *mantra's* power of doing good is increased a hundred fold.

Q. You have talked about the scientific nature of spell—craft and the system of *mantra*-therapy. But it has been observed that those resorting to *japa* and *mantras* for years together, are not satisfied with the results. Some even talk of giving up *mantra-japa* altogether. Is that the right approach?

Ans. The words of a *mantra* are in themselves charged with electricity. The user of a spell also experiences its electric effect. How effective it proves, depends upon the disposition of the experimenter. "Sweetness depends upon the amount of sugar put in," is a traditional saying. Similarly, the greater the devotion, the greater the power of *japa*. *Japa* always yields some definite result, more or less. It seems to me that in order to advance in the field of *sadhana*, to remove obstructions in the path of spiritual progress, and to enter the inner world, the first thing to be done is *japa*. The doubt about the effectiveness of *japa* is now being replaced by a new faith in its power.

In the Jain tradition, the recitation of 'namaskar mahamantra' (obeisance-spell), of seed-letters, of a spell word or the name of one's personal deity, is still very much prevalent. The question arises if it produces the desired results. Some people get good results, whereas others draw a complete blank. But the talk of giving up *japa-sadhana* in the absence of any visible results, is not right. Because the reason behind the absence of results is not any lack of virtue in the *mantra*, but the practitioner's ignorance of the proper technique of recitation. The water has the power of slaking one's thirst. If because of some reason, the water is rendered unclean or it gets tepid as in the hot season and cannot slake one's thirst, it cannot be said that the water has lost its virtue. If the same water is cleaned and cooled, it becomes fit for use.

Similarly, people who undertake *japa* unsystematically, recite the *mantra* too quickly, or too lethargically, or sit down to practise it when their mind is restless and wandering—these are the defects of performance. If these defects are removed, *japa* can establish itself in the form of a powerful tool for bringing about physical, mental and spiritual change. The fundamental basis of change is the purity of the life-current. Total concentration of the mind on the *mantra* does not in any way obstruct the flow of vital energy. The flow of vital energy means the flow of strength and vigour in the body. The purer the flow, the stronger the vital energy. Unless combined with the vital energy, the *mantra* loses its virtue. In order to achieve the desired result from the practice of *mantra*-recitation, it is necessary to blend it with the flow of vital energy.

EXTRAVERSION : DISORDER

*Relinquishing extraversion for introversion
Adds something new to the Book of Life.
It's no concentration, if the mind be perturbed.
Everlasting confusion; never a moment
of peace!*

Q. Man desires peace. The motive behind each and — every activity of his is the attainment of tranquillity. The cosmic mind longs for harmony. Yet there is a great divergence between the nature of peace and the means adopted for achieving it. Actually, what is peace? And on what level can a man find it?

Ans. Man lives in two kinds of worlds—the outer — world and the inner world. The natural flow of human consciousness is outwards. This consciousness expresses itself through two mediums—the sense organs and the mind. The sense organs perceive the outer world. The eye sees the external surfaces, the ear hears the exterior noises; the nose smells the scents outside; the tongue relishes the external flavours; and the skin experiences the feel of outside things. Likewise, the mind is conditioned by outer impressions. Thus, man is much more acquainted

with the external environment. And even this knowledge of the outside world cannot be said to be complete. Man's contact with the outer world is limited, but with the inner world, he is not acquainted at all. How can a living being existing only at the level of the senses and the mind come to know of it? The first step for being acquainted with the inner world is the introversive consciousness. As long as a man continues with the old, a new beginning cannot be made. Without the opening of a new chapter, no acquaintance with the inner world is possible. And without this acquaintance, there can be no understanding of the nature of peace, nor its attainment. In order to attain peace, it is absolutely essential for consciousness to turn inwards. Only he who lives at the level of introversion can achieve tranquillity.

Q. Since the natural flow of consciousness is outwards, — what is the process of turning it inwards? No material thing can give up its intrinsic nature. How then can we expect the flow of consciousness to take a different turn?

Ans. The moment the sense organs lose contact with — the outside world, the mind, freed from the web of uncertainties, becomes concentrated. The rays of consciousness then begin to penetrate inside. Inaction outside gives birth to inward action. The awakening of consciousness inside is introversion. A question may here arise as to how consciousness turns inside from outside. Not an unnatural question. But the fact is that consciousness never so turns; it is always inside. Only in the state of introversion, its flow changes. A change in direction takes place. The rays of consciousness which, before introversion, spread outwards, now radiate within. When the rays of consciousness flowing outward earlier begin to shine within, introversion takes place. In short, to be fully established in oneself is introversion.

Although consciousness generally flows outwards, this is true only of heavily-veiled consciousness. As the veils are taken off, there is a change in the direction of the flow. At that time, extraversion is no longer natural, rather unnatural; it is then replaced by introversion. In view of this, it is very necessary for introversion to keep itself secure from the onslaught of outer environment.

In the Jain meditation-system introversion is called *pratisamleenta*, i.e. 'embracing solitude (for God-realization)'. It has been defined in the *Jain-Sidhanta Deepika* as follows :

To withdraw the senses from external objects—to turn their outgoing nature inwards, is *pratisamleenta*. It is of four kinds—restraint of the senses; restraint of the tendency to indulge in sorcery; restraint of the passions; and secluded bedstead.

Restraint means freedom from unprofitable pursuits and indulgence in profitable ones. Secluded bedstead means abiding in solitude. In the words of the great sage Patanjali, introversion has been called renunciation. To isolate the senses—the eye, the ear, etc. from their objects, form, sound, etc., is renunciation. The more removed a man is from renunciation, solitude and introversion, the greater is his unrest. The practice of the three above-mentioned conditions—renunciation, aloneness and introversion—is the royal highway to peace. An extrovert has no means of achieving mental peace, whereas there is no cause for disorder in an introvert's life. From this point of view, to turn inwards the outgoing flow of the rays of consciousness is to conquer unrest.

Q. You have suggested that for achieving mental peace, — one should advance along the royal highway of introversion. But the problem is, How to be introvertive? How to embrace solitude? How to practise renunciation? What method do you recommend?

Ans. When a man is attached to material objects, his desires and options, certainties and uncertainties, increase. If he is not bound up with matter, there is no room for uncertainties to arise. When a man is tied to someone, he invites restlessness. The man who is not tied to anything, who is unattached, has no occasion to be grieved. What shall he pine for and why? Although man knows that the thing or person he is attached with, cannot save him, still he is not able to free himself from attachment. As long as attachment subsists in any form, there can be no peace.

The man who desires peace, who wants to be alone, who wants to follow the path of renunciation, does not have to do anything except change his direction, i.e., his approach, his way of looking at things. His complete identification with matter, he transfers to his inner being. A man who wanders in search of bliss outside, is caught in delusion. If there is happiness anywhere, it is inside oneself. To understand the current of joy, power and consciousness that flows within, to awaken and experience it, is the secret of introversion. The man who learns this secret, will never be unquiet.

Entry into oneself or turning away from external objects is the process by which a sadhak becomes an inward gazer. What to speak of abiding peace, one does not get even momentary satisfaction without introversion. It is pleasant to hear the word, peace, but it is far more pleasant to attain it. But then one must know the technique of transforming unrest into tranquillity. The complete understanding of the process may not be possible at once, but the act of transferring or directing one's absorbing interest in material things into understanding one's inner being, the entity that one calls oneself, may be a way out of the problem.

HOW TO ACHIEVE MENTAL PEACE

*The poor seeking wealth, only wreck
their peace;*

*The rich, wealth-inflamed, are no less
bewildered!*

*The causes of unrest are : "Too much,"
"Too little."*

He alone knows joy who is evenly poised.

Q. Man is ever restless. Why? Is it because his needs — are not being fulfilled? Or because his desires go on increasing? How is it that the whole and invisible power of consciousness becomes subservient to a divided and unintegrated mental disposition?

Ans. The basic needs of life, the utility thereof, cannot — be denied, because those needs are natural. Religion does not aim at the elimination of natural needs; rather it aims at underlining the distinction between need and desire. Generally, a man is not conscious of it. He

substitutes desire for need and works hard for its fulfilment. But it is an established truth that need can be fulfilled, but the pit of desire can never be filled. The difference between need and desire is very clear. Yet these are so intermingled that a common man finds it difficult to draw a dividing line between them. That a man should be concerned about fulfilling the minimum requirements of life, is natural. But it is surprising that even after his needs are fulfilled, with a great deal of money piled before him, man continues to be dissatisfied. That dearth should produce unrest is logical, but that excess of material possessions should also be accompanied by disturbance, is not so intelligible. It has been observed that a man suffering from want is not so unquiet as the man who is rolling in plenty. From all this, at least one fact stands out: that the lack of material things may produce disquietude, but the possession of material goods by itself is no guarantee of complete satisfaction. If material goods could guarantee peace, then prosperous people possessed of all kinds of material comforts, should never have known disquiet. The sight of well-to-do people caught in fright, suffocation, despair and dissatisfaction supports the belief that the factor of mental peace is neither dearth nor abundance, but an equanimous mind.

In a state of scarcity, many anxieties arise and therefore the mind is disturbed. But in a state of excess, too, there may come thoughts of fear, uncertainty and madness. As compared to scarcity, excess breeds more worries. The root of unquiet is the web of uncertainties. The fewer the options, the lesser is the turmoil. That man should engage himself in activity to the limit of fulfilling his needs, is perfectly in order. But when he spends most of his time in unnecessary pursuits, he is certainly inviting disquietude.

A coolie worked every day in accordance with his need. He earned only as much as he needed and thus lived without any care. One day, he was able to earn the usual amount by midday. So he sat in quiet, without a thought. At that very moment a businessman called him for carrying a pitcher full of oil. The coolie refused since he had already earned enough for the day. The businessman wanted to reach home urgently and no other coolie was available at that time. So, he offered a temptation by saying, "Come, lift the pitcher. I'll give you a rupee." (A rupee in those days had ten times its present value). The mention of a rupee made the coolie's eyes gleam. He lifted the pitcher on his head, and followed the businessman.

As he went along, the coolie said to himself, "Today, I shall be earning one rupee extra. What am I going to do with it? Why not buy a hen? The hen would lay eggs. I'll sell the eggs and earn more money. Later I might as well buy a goat. The goat would yield milk and also calves. I would sell the whole lot and buy a cow. The cow, too, would breed many calves. By disposing them of, I should have a lot of more money. This would enable me to buy a mare. I would then start some small business. As my business prospers, I would become quite famous. Now I would lack no money. I would get a building constructed in this very city. I might as well marry and beget children." The coolie got so absorbed in his stream of thought, that every imaginary picture appeared to him to be real. Now he imagined himself sitting and working in his office situated in the outer part of his building. Inside the house there was a great hustle and bustle; the children were making merry. Then the children suddenly entered his office to call him for lunch. Even though they called twice or thrice, he did not respond, and kept busy

with his work. At last his wife herself entered his office to say, "The food is getting cold, please come at once!" He lifted his face a little and nodded his head and said, "No. Not yet." The lifting and nodding of the head made him lose his balance and the pitcher of oil fell down to the ground, and was broken into smithereens. All the oil was spilled. The businessman started scolding him, "You fool! How you walk! You have laid waste oil worth 10 rupees:" At this, the coolie weepingly said, "Sir, you have only suffered a loss of ten rupees, but my whole career is destroyed!" The businessman started in wonder, "What's that? How is your future destroyed?" And the coolie told him of his plan even as he wept bitterly.

The above story makes it abundantly clear how the network of thought creates sorrow. To the extent that a man is free from thoughts, he may experience joy and peace.

Q. You say that both want and excess make for unrest, — and that equanimity alone leads to tranquillity. What is the nature of this equanimity?

Ans. Equanimity may be defined in different ways. — However in the present context, by equanimity is meant 'control over memory and restrained imagination'. Useless memories and wild imagination can only be productive of sorrow. Since they are not related to his needs, they cause a lot of trouble to man. Memory and imagination are caused by conflict in the mind, because man is caught in conflicting desires. As long as man abides wholly in himself, he is not tormented by any memory or imagination. Profit and loss, joy and sorrow, life and death, praise and blame, flattery and insult—in the context of these opposites, the doctrine of imagination control assumes great significance. Whether

in profit or in loss, a man is assailed by imaginary concepts. But a fact, an actual occurrence, is not an idea; it is simply a fact. It is only when memory and imagination operate upon the fact that concepts arise. This truth is also confirmed by another observation : if material goods could remove man's fear, the rich people and the public leaders would never experience anguish, as also brought out in a couplet in *Preksha-Sangan* :

If power, wealth, prosperity could terror dissolve,
The chieftains and the rich would never suffer
despair!

The more wealthy a man is, the more eminent a leader, the greater is their frustration. Affluence and power cannot remove their fright. What to speak of dissolving their fear, these eminent men cannot even enjoy good sleep. What an irony of fate!

Without taking pills they cannot sleep!
These poor rich-folk with darken'd
consciousness!

Many people take pills so as to be able to sleep. Not to speak of common people, even those who take pride in being called sadhaks and boast of undertaking high austerities and penance, take recourse to intoxicating drugs to achieve mental peace. Look at the irony of common people seeking guidance from them for learning the technique of awareness, while these so-called spiritualists, instead of undertaking proper *tapasya*, befuddle their wits with intoxicants.

Liquor, hemp and other intoxicants
lust-provoking.
They take regularly, and derive from it
some comfort;

During the hangover they feel utterly let down,
Sorely afflicted; with peace, strength memory,
all gone!

Such people, in order to achieve mental peace or freedom from worry or sheer self-forgetfulness, consume various kinds of intoxicating drugs. They derive some satisfaction, but it is momentary. As the intoxication wears off, their restlessness increases a thousandfold. This results in the weakening of nerves and further excitation. To restlessness is now added an acute feeling of loss of strength and memory, and the individual feels totally disintegrated. In fact, disintegration is the inevitable accompaniment of destitution or excess. Only an equanimous mind can save one from such disintegration. For the practice of equanimity, the control of memory and thought is absolutely necessary.

IS THE MIND FICKLE?

*Is there a path to calmness absolute?
Conditioned response gives no lasting joy.
Until one knows how the mind operates,
All efforts for peace are bound to fail!*

Q. You said in your last talk that intoxicating drinks — can give no peace. Instead, these weaken the sinews, cause increased excitation of the nerves, and destroy one's memory and powers. Does that mean there is no way to attain peace of mind?

Ans. There is a remedy for every affliction. Although — there are many obstacles in the path of mental peace, yet there is a way of achieving it. All the people who have hitherto experienced peace wholly or in part, must have had some technique. A condition which is attainable with the help of a technique, which has, indeed, been attained in the past, should also be undoubtedly attainable now. In my opinion, there is certainly a method of acquiring mental peace, and any man, if he works systematically, can achieve it.

The first and foremost means is the right understanding of the mind—to comprehend it, to know it and to be acquainted with it. It is the first step on the journey to mental peace. Until our knowledge of the mind is perfect, all our attempts to attain peace and joy are condemned to failure. Because he who does not understand the mind, would seek peace in outward things. All pleasure emanating from material objects ultimately gives way to dissatisfaction. To remove that dissatisfaction, the mind turns to some other object and the cycle goes on. The irresistible longing for peace almost turns a man into an imbecile.

Man suffers the consequences of his mental approach, but knows little about his mind. And how will he who does not know his mind, ever come to know its movement, its restlessness and the extreme unrest flowing from it? And he who does not know the disturbance within, will not be able to find a remedy for it. In view of this, the man who aspires after mental peace must consider what the mind is. What is the essence of restlessness? Why does it exist? And what is disquiet and why it is there? And is it possible to eradicate it? Primarily, an enquiry into these problems is the most direct way to the attainment of mental peace.

Q. In the context of mental peace, you posed certain — questions which must be first resolved. Will you kindly explain it a little more? What, in your opinion, is meant by the mind? What is the cause of its restlessness?

Ans. The mind is a stratum of consciousness. It is the — originator of memory, imagination and thought. All these three are forms of restlessness. The mind is never stable. All its activity is fickle. Inconstancy is the essence of its being. That is why it has been said : the meditation

of the present moment constitutes the mind. Outside this moment, before or after, the mind has no existence, the moment of its origin is its whole existence. Consciousness is its conductor. *Chitta*, too, is a level of consciousness. The consciousness that is associated with the gross body is *chitta*. And an appliance of the *chitta* that works the brain, is the mind. As long as the mind is there, restlessness is bound to be there too. If the mind is stopped from coming into being, fickleness does not originate. But whenever the mind is activated, memories, imaginations and thoughts abound. And it is this abundance of memories, fictions and thoughts which produces disquiet. The only way to reduce mental agitation is to reduce restlessness. Memory, imagination and thought must be done away with—or there is no way to end the fickleness of the mind.

If, at this level of consciousness, the mind is the only controlling factor, it can lead to a great disorder. Because the entity of the mind is made up of memory, imagination and thought, and the mind cannot be expected to jeopardise its own existence by reducing these. And the mind cannot accomplish it. If anything, the mind's functioning only serves to increase the role of memory, imagination and thought. Thus, the mind cannot control them.

Another point to note in this connection is that the mind has nothing stable about it. It is a kind of flow. Procreation and dissolution is its destiny. The consciousness of *chitta* controls it. The *chitta* is a durable element. To comprehend its consciousness is to understand the movement of the mind. Within man mature results of past actions and tradition, and these serve to confuse the world of the mind. These are also the elements that create the complications of memory, imagination and thought. Thus, the secret of the mind's fickleness is laid bare. Apart from this fickleness, there is no separate entity of the mind. Nor can the mind be rendered stable.

Q. What you have said about the mind, is an analysis — of its philosophical basis. Generally, the mind is compared to an indisciplined horse, as also in *Preksha-Sangan* :

How to rein in the mind, is the question.

This wayward horse that would not stop!

The horse of the mind moves for ever in an adverse direction. How is then one to take hold of the reins and to turn it in the right direction?

Ans. The concept about the mind that the more you — try to hold it, the more it wanders, is absolutely true. Those practising meditation often come up against this problem—that the attempt to stabilize the mind makes it all the more restless. Just as a wayward child, if scolded, becomes even more obstinate, similarly, the mind, if suppressed rigorously, becomes demoralised and divided. A restless and divided mind is not a disciplined mind, nor can it reach that point of self-observation, where memory, imagination and thought cease to be. To get hold of the rein of the mind means that one has learnt to utilize the consciousness of the *chitta* as a controlling device. To treat the mind and the *chitta* as synonyms, is a mistake. It is useless to try to do away with the fickleness of the mind. For unless the mind ceases to be, the fickleness is bound to be there. How does one go about remonstrating with the mind? For this, one must be acquainted with the method of bringing about a change in the maturing action. Through this method, it is possible to transform consciousness, too. The transformed consciousness can restrain the undesirable consequences of the mind's fickleness. Not that the mind is wholly bad. If it is disciplined, it can yield very good results. In this context one must have full knowl-

edge of the varying states of the mind. How diverse the mind is, can be understood through a symbol :

The mind is a poisonous creeper; also a ball of honey!

Naturally modest; at times most unruly!

On the one hand, the mind is destructive like a poisonous creeper, on the other hand, it also acts like nectar. At one moment, it is humility incarnate, while at other times, it is so impetuous as to create quite a problem. Victory over this mind means its surcease. When the mind ceases to be, fickleness vanishes of itself. Thus, it is futile to try to remove the mind's fickleness, because it is not that the mind is fickle, but fickleness itself is the mind.

MENTAL TENSION AND ITS RESOLUTION

Q. The greatest problem of the modern age is all-per-
— vading tension. Let the intellect develop ever so
little or much, an individual is overwhelmed by tension
on all sides. The mind, the brain, the muscles—are all
filled with strain. Man is tortured by stress. How does
tension originate?

Ans. There are many sources of mental tension in the human body. Anger, pride, hatred, envy, greed, etc. are all causes of tension from which no individual is free. All these complexes are found to exist in man's mind. They are stimulated by outer factors, of which the whole environment is full. These causes are stimulated whenever an occasion offers itself. This puts pressure on the nervous system and the head grows muddled. The muscles, too, get strained, and the whole system of the body is disorganised. In view of this, the fact that tension is the most complex problem of the age, cannot be denied.

It is not that only a few people are victims of tension. In fact, rarely does one come across an individual who has no tension at all. Most people are suffering from some kind of anxiety or the other. They see its ill-effects, yet they are unable to get rid of it. Those who succeed in freeing themselves from tension, experience a unique change in themselves and others.

A young woman was prone to anger. She would fly in a temper much too often. Because of frenzy, her intelligence was warped, resulting in constant family bickerings. Later, she practised *dhyana*. Her character underwent a change. Anger was controlled and the family environment grew wholesome. Earlier, her frenzy used to drive her husband mad. Later, her tranquil conduct and affectionate behaviour brought about a transformation in her husband, too.

This young woman told us that her husband liked to have ever-new vegetable dishes for dinner. Earlier, even if she prepared rare dishes for him he was not satisfied; he would find some fault or the other with her cooking. Later, however, the same dishes earned from

him endless praise. This incident illustrates a scientific truth : the atoms of anger sour the sweetest dish, whereas amity imparts to everything a feeling of uncommon sweetness. "The food cooked by the mother is sweeter" —the truth of this popular saying also demonstrates that atoms of love exercise upon man an altogether different, beneficent influence.

When one's anger so deeply affects the things one makes, its impact upon one's own life is bound to be even greater. A person dominated by anger develops a criminal outlook. He becomes querulous and is even ready to commit suicide.

The problem of tension is nothing new. Even people of ancient times were not free from its undesirable effects. But today this problem has become specially acute. With growing intellectualism, there has been an increase in man's reasoning power, resulting in greater capacity for thinking and feeling. Consequently, one identifies oneself with one's situation, whatever it be, much more consciously. And where there is any kind of identification, tension is the natural outcome. Constant pre-occupation from morning till evening is also productive of tension. A still greater cause is the absence of any natural contact with religion. In the absence of a religious or spiritual environment, man's approach towards life also changes for the worse. In conclusion, one may say that in today's world, an individual is surrounded by so many factors of tension that he cannot possibly avoid it.

Q. The problem of growing tension in the modern — world is quite apparent. The symposiums and surveys conducted in this connection also point to the conclusion that modern man is far more tension-ridden than his predecessors. Is there no solution to this problem?

Ans. There is no problem without a solution. Whenever we are faced with a burning problem, the need for a solution becomes urgent. In accordance with the acuteness of the problem, the search for a solution is equally intense. On the ground of spirituality, tension can be resolved by disciplining the mind and by purifying the soul. The talk of disciplining the mind seems so simple, and pleasant too. But the mind cannot be disciplined without sadhana. From the point of view of achieving freedom from mental tension, it is much more valuable to practice the technique of relaxation rather than merely talk about its necessity. Because one cannot go on to the roof without first finding the staircase. The moment one practises the technique, there is a perceptible easing of tension. It seems therefore necessary to pass through a certain process to resolve the problem of tension for ever.

What is that process? The answer lies in the technique of *preksha dhyana*. The process of *preksha dhyana* is complete in itself. Through it, it is possible to be free from both the internal and external factors of tension. Here is a two-pronged way to salvation. Although it is beyond any one individual to remove the external factors, it is quite possible to reduce the injurious effect of the internal ones. The outer influences work only if they are supported from within. In the event of the inner causes being allayed, the outer influences are rendered ineffectual. Those who wish to be free from mental tension should, therefore, concentrate more on the internal causes. To quench the virulence of inner passions, there is no other way, but meditation.

The inner causes manifest themselves through the mind, through speech, through the body and through breath. The mind in itself has no flaw, but flaws are

experienced through the mind. When the mind, the speech, the body and the breath are disciplined, the internal passions start languishing. These can operate only in extroversion consciousness. The moment the pilgrimage of introversion starts, they become inactive.

Meditation means the consciousness of introversion. In order to make consciousness introversion, the discipline of the mind, speech, body and breath is essential. These four factors can be conducive to the practice of *dhyana*, they could also be obstructive. In the state of introversion they are beneficial, but in the state of extraversion, they become impediments. In a state of tension, the mind is troublesome, speech is acrid, the body is full of suffering and even breath is difficult. The moment tension is removed, all these become enjoyable. To transform pain into joy, systematic practice is necessary. For any pursuit in any field of life, there is no success without practice. It is during the periods of practice that one must have deep faith in one's adopted system of *sadhana*. In the absence of faith or devotion, everything goes topsy-turvy. The problem of tension can certainly be resolved by faith, combined with constant, systematic practice of relaxation.

IS THERE A TRADITION OF MEDITATION IN JAINISM?

*"That monk is great who mortifies himself!"
And has subtle meditation no place in it all?
"The essence of Jainism is penance hard!"
A delusion this, which needs to be cleared.
Physical pain in sadhana is incidental:
To bear it with equanimity is the real
Jain teaching.
Mahavir's practice of austere meditation,
Sanctioned by Ayaro, is for all to emulate.*

Q. The effect and importance of meditation is unique.
— Through meditation, an individual progresses from the common to an uncommon ground. Meditation is practised in various religions. Even those who have no faith in conventional religion, practise meditation. In Jainism no tradition relating to meditation seems to have been laid down. Is there any place for meditation in this religion, or does its excellence lie only in exalting self-mortification?

Ans. The question relating to the practice of meditation in Jainism does not concern any one particular individual. In fact, the delusion in this context is widespread, giving rise to an unimaginable concept, without any foundation whatever. The learned are as much mistaken about it as the general public. In 1958, I happened to visit Nalanda during my trip to Calcutta. Some professors came and said at the very outset, "Jain *sadhana* is very austere. There is in it an open exhortation as follows: Become a monk, observe fasts, do penance, torment the body with utmost severity, squeeze it dry suppress all desires, pay no need to the body—ignore the demands of the body and the mind. Only by disciplining them will you achieve salvation. Stand in the sun and expose the body to the sweltering heat. Never do a thing with a view to physical comfort or convenience. Is all this true?"

I listened to them with attention, They had commented on the Jain religion in accordance with their pre-conceived notions and now they wanted to know my opinion. I said, "Not only you, but many other scholars have a similar conception of Jainism. And they have presented it as such. But I should like to know where in your reading you have come across such an exposition. Where did you hear it? What is the basis of your conception? Have you discussed this matter with any authorised Jain muni or acharya? Have you deeply studied the Jain Agamas? If not, on what basis do you say that Jainism is a stern religion, and that, excepting the emphasis on the mortification of the body, there is nothing like a tradition of meditation in it?"

A scholar may uphold any opinion on the basis of prejudice, pre-conception or illusion, but the fact is that a more non-assertive and pliable system of meditation

as is found in Jainism is not to be found elsewhere. Mild moderate, intense—an appropriate system of meditation on each of these three levels has been prescribed in Jainism. All these techniques primarily refer to *karma* not to the body. The system of Jain meditation is a process of demolishing the *karma* and dissolving the past impressions.

It seems to me that some scholars having read a chapter on the austere living of a Jain *muni* formed an idea that the mortification of the body or the endurance of endless pain constituted the Jain religion. In reality the penance is there not to torture the body but to develop equanimity in the face of prevailing hardships.

Q. You just said that to mortify one's flesh is no religion, — but the capacity to endure pain is. But is it not necessary to mortify the flesh so as to develop the capacity for enduring pain?

Ans. There are many forms of religion. Forbearance, — straightforwardness, gentleness, and freedom from greed are forms where the accent is on the disciplining of the mind, and not on enduring pain. Therefore, the question of deliberately punishing the body for the sake of religion does not arise. There remains the question of favourable and unfavourable circumstances. Both kinds of situations arise in life. To develop the capacity to face both favourable and unfavourable circumstances with equanimity is religion. An illustration should make this point clear.

A patient goes to the doctor for the treatment of his ailment. The doctor advises him to undergo surgery. Surgery causes pain to the body. It is not the doctor's intention to cause pain and the patient's objective, too, is to find freedom from pain, not to court it. Still there is pain and the patient endures it. Just as an operation is not intended

to cause pain to the body, similarly the practice of control or meditation is not intended to cause any pain. The operation is actually the treatment of the disease. Similarly, *sadhana* is the treatment of passions. If to cause pain to the body be the objective of *sadhana*, salvation in that case loses all meaning. Salvation means freedom from all kinds of pain—that is the sole objective of religious practices. In view of this, it is altogether illogical and inauthentic to say that the mortification of the flesh constitutes religion in the Jain tradition.

Q. If causing physical pain is not the objective of — Jainism, is there any tradition of meditation there? Lord Mahavir was the last Tirthankar in the Jain tradition. Is there any mention of meditation in his life, or is any technique of meditation available?

Ans. The entire *sadhana* of Lord Mahavir is connected — with the practice of meditation and relaxation (*kayotsarg*). As soon as he was initiated he took up the practice of *kayotsarg* and meditation. Although he undertook many long fasts during his *sadhana* and was consequently known as a devout practitioner of austerities, but his practice of austerity is not devoid of meditation. Here a great illusion has arisen. The illusion is that the devout asceticism of Lord Mahavir's life has been seized upon whereas his practice of meditation has been completely ignored. Unlike many other sadhaks who concentrated on meditation alone or on fasting alone, Lord Mahavir chose a different path. He did not accept a one-sided view in any field—from this point of view, his doctrine of non-absolutism, i.e. many-sided perception is invaluable.

Lord Mahavir felt that meditation was very important although fasting was no less. For meditation it was essential for the body to be in a perfect condition. Such perfection was possible only through fasting or controlled

eating. Fasting prepares the necessary background for meditation. The sadhak who cannot keep a fast or observe control over his diet, is not fit for the practice of meditation. To be able to practice meditation it is necessary for a sadhak to purify his mental and physical background.

The discussion of twelve kinds of purification in the Jain tradition is very important in the context of meditation. Fasting, control over diet, undertaking of various pledges, and complete abstention from rich heavy foods—all these four elements are extremely important from the point of view of body-purification. If a sadhak is not alive to their importance, he cannot make much progress in his meditation. Then, the body is trained through the practice of asanas. Until the asanas are perfected, one cannot practise long sittings. After the asanas have been perfected, it is necessary to control the licentiousness of the mind and the senses. After achieving control over the senses and the passions, a method of purification of the mental flaws has been laid down. At this level, it is necessary to effect the dissolution of the 'I' and total surrender. Until the sense of the 'I' is dissolved, a sadhak cannot give himself completely even to his *sadhana*. In order to develop his knowledge-consciousness, the dedicated sadhak takes to studies. Then only is the groundwork laid for the practice of meditation. The sadhak who takes to meditation without first passing through the requisite stages, cannot continue for long. The consummation of meditation is renunciation, complete detachment. Thus, the sadhak adopting a systematic method of meditation naturally advances towards his goal.

The answer to the rest of the question relating to the technique of meditation is *Ayaro*. So many seeds of dhyana sadhana lie scattered in *Ayaro* by organising and elaborating which a complete system of meditation can be perfected. This would require a serious and extensive study of *Acharang Sutra*.

THE TRADITION OF DHYANA AFTER LORD MAHAVIR

*The technique of Mahaprana in which
Bhadrabahu engaged;
Sri Pushya's ecstatic meditation night and day;
Other Shraman Acharyas rapt in
self-meditation,
Discoverers of an ancient mode of
self-realization!*

Q. The practice of meditation, along with long fasts — had a special importance in Lord Mahavir's life. The incidents of his life are a witness to this fact. But how did the tradition of meditation fare after him? Did the succeeding acharyas also give an important place to meditation in their sadhana?

Ans. Hundreds of ascetic-followers of Lord Mahavir — were clairvoyants, telepathists or omniscients. They achieved their special powers through the practice of meditation. We repeatedly come across in the Agamas

the phrase, 'entered the meditation cell'. The epithet here is indicative of the importance of the tradition of meditation. Meditation is an indispensable element in the achievement of omniscience. And without practising *shukla dhyana* no sadhak can achieve omniscience, cannot become a *veetarag* i.e. gain freedom from passions and affections. Supernatural knowledge and ultra-psychological knowledge are also culminations of *dhyana sadhana*. In order to attain knowledge of the 14 *purvas** (previous scriptures), one has to pass through a specific background of meditation. The sadhak who completes the discipline of *Mahaprana* meditation, acquires in the final stages the ability to revive fourteen past lives. In this context, the name of Acharya Bhadrabahu is noteworthy.

Acharya Bhadrabahu was the eighth successor of Lord Mahavir. He equally nurtured the traditions of meditation and the received scriptures. In the tradition of Jain preceptors, he was the fifth. Bhadrabahu was born in the first century of Vir Nirvana. In the second century, he became the Acharya after Acharya Sanbhutvijay. After he became the Acharya, he visited Nepal. There in the tranquil solitude of the hills, he started his practice of *Mahaprana* meditation.

At that time, the region frequented by Jain munis was afflicted with famine. Alms-giving during this time of scarcity became scarce. As a result, many munis who could have preserved the oral tradition of the scriptures, died. Except Acharya Bhadrabahu no *chaturdashpoorvi* muni (one who had mastered 14 *purvas*) survived. For maintaining the continuity of the received tradition, some munis immediately left for Nepal. On reaching there, they made this request to Bhadrabahu, "The Shraman

-
- Teachings of the predecessors of Lord Mahavir included in scriptures.
-

Sangh has most respectfully invited you for lecturing on *Drishtivad*. Kindly do us the favour of living with us so as to benefit us with your knowledge and wisdom." Acharya Bhadrabahu heard the Sangh's invitation but was loath to accept it. He had accepted dhyana-sadhana as the sole objective of his life. Looking into the mirror of his intuitive knowledge, he had seen reflected there the image of the shortness of his life and bidding good-bye to all activity, had resolved to devote himself exclusively to self-realization. He gave himself up completely to the practice of *Mahaprana* meditation. The Shraman-sangh felt unhappy at this. Because of their insistence, he agreed with certain conditions, to talk about the 14 *purvas* without interrupting his practice of dhyana.

Among the later dhyana-sadhaks succeeding Lord Mahavir, the second important name is that of Durbalika Pushyamitra. Durbalika Pushyamitra was born in the sixth century of Vir Nirvan and died in the seventh. He was the disciple of Yugapradhan Acharya Aryarakshit. Study and meditation was the chief aim of his life. He had mastered nine *purvas* out of fourteen. Since he was continually engaged in study and meditation his body had grown emaciated. Once some Buddhist mendicants expressed reservations about Pushyamitra's dhyana-sadhana. For their assurance, Aryarakshit permitted Pushyamitra to roam for sometime in the region frequented by the Buddhist mendicants. On observing Pushyamitra's systematic dhyana-sadhana, the Buddhist monks and other admirers found their reservations all resolved. Up to the last moments of his life, Durbalika Pushyamitra continued to perform special exercises in meditation.

I have talked briefly about Bhadrabahu and Durbalika Pushyamitra. Authentic research in literature could probably yield information about many more dedi-

cated acharyas and munis who, giving priority to dhyana in their practice, kept alive an isolated and vanishing system of Jain meditation.

Q. What are the fundamental elements of the dhyana— tradition developed by Lord Mahavir or his successor-acharyas? Is it possible to classify them?

Ans. The tradition of dhyana-sadhana accepted two — different techniques. The first was the technique of dharmya-dhyana. Acharya Bhadrabahu was the pioneer of this tradition. The technique of dharmya-dhyana is a scientific one. It is the technique of analysing the underlying principle. The analysis of the essential factor is connected with the search for truth. The deeper a sadhak delves into the essence of a thing, the more profound in his immersion into meditation. Imagine how much labour and deep devotion does a scientist put in to make a new discovery. Without hard work and deep devotion no individual can hope to become a scientist. Similarly, only that aspirant may be a successful seeker of truth, who through the medium of dharmya-dhyana delves deep into the fundamental reality.

The second method of meditation was known as shukla-dhyana. Those who practised meditation according to this method, were successful in controlling their mental state, but their knowledge of phenomena could not be developed. Of the four kinds of meditation, shukla-dhyana is the last. It requires a special kind of background to practise this form of meditation. Of the four kinds of meditation referred to above, the two— 'arta-dhyana' (distress-meditation) and 'raudra-dhyana' (wrathful meditation)—are not very useful from the viewpoint of sadhana, because, instead of development, sadhana in these two undergoes diminution. The one

objective of including these under the category of dhyana has been to underline the fact that affliction and fury, too, furnish occasion for concentration of the mind. Like joy, sorrow too makes an individual concentrate on one point. Actually, these two forms have nothing to do with dhyana-sadhana proper.

There were only two proper methods of dhyana-sadhana—dharma-dhyana and shukla-dhyana. The first was devoted to the search of truth, the other to sadhana alone. According to a sadhaka's interest and capacity, both these methods were employed. On the basis of these two fundamental sources, new methods were evolved, and sadhaks, too, were placed under different categories. Some of these sources dried up later, and some others became scarce. On the whole, it may be asserted that the tradition of meditation used and demonstrated by Lord Mahavir continues uninterrupted to this day. During the middle ages, it was clogged with impediments here and there. Despite obstructions, however, the tradition did not die out altogether. There was, however, need to develop that tradition anew.

HOW DID THE TRADITION OF MEDITATION VANISH?

*Why in the Middle Ages did obstacles arise
That made the crop of meditation untimely
wither?*

*How it blossomed anew in congenial
atmosphere*

*When irrigated with devotion's water pure!
Dhyana-Yoga reassessed right and proper;
A technique evolved with labour; now the
path's clear.*

Q. In Jain philosophy an important tradition of meditation was in vogue. Lord Mahavir was the living symbol of that tradition. In his time hundreds of munis were its eminent practitioners. The successor-acharyas and munis further developed this tradition. How then, did this pure tradition get discontinued? What obstructed it?

Ans. The even flow of the tradition of meditation was ——— certainly obstructed. But before going into the causes of obstruction, we must take note that even many Jains today do not know that meditation had once an important place in their tradition. Until that is clear, the question of going into the causes of obstruction does not arise. Because if a tradition never existed before, how could it be impeded? We must first of all clearly establish that a technique of dhyana did flourish in the Jain tradition. Then we could go on to discuss the obstructions met with.

For a proper appreciation of these obstacles, we shall have to take a journey into the past. Because, without understanding the context, no historical tradition—its rise or decay—could be justly evaluated.

The roots of the Jain tradition of meditation are found in the Agamas. In the traditional system, dharmya-dhyana and shukla-dhyana have been considered to be very beneficial from the religious point of view. For centuries, the importance of these fundamental modes was highly estimated. *Dhyana Shatak*, composed during 7–8th century is a representative document of this ancient tradition. Later, Patanjali expounded the *Ash-tanga-Yoga*, which combined the elements of pranayama, asanas, dharana and samadhi, etc. with dhyana. Also during this period, spells and incantations spread extensively. All this could not but affect the tradition of dhyana prevalent at that time. A study of the books written by Acharyas Haribhadra, Somdev, Shubhchandra, Hemchandra, etc. and all other volumes influenced by Yoga-Darshan and Hatha-Yoga, reveals that the Jain acharyas tried to adopt the preponderant tradition of Hatha-Yoga. In the course of these efforts, the ancient

tradition of meditation, which was the tradition of dharmaya-dhyana and shukla-dhyana, was subordinated and its practice abandoned. Their place was taken by pranayama, etc. Because of this, people came to believe that the Jains had no independent meditation-system of their own.

At that time, the tradition of pure dhyana, though mixed with other elements, was not altogether discontinued. Later, some community problems arose. The very existence of the Dharma-Sangh was at stake. Public entertainment and the point of view of the public assemblies dominated the scene. Spells and incantations and miraculous tantrik experiments held sway over the minds of the people. Under these circumstances, enchantments and magical practices were avidly sought and the Jain tradition of moral conduct languished. This created obstructions in the way of meditation.

Q. Do we then hold that the tradition of meditation — was altogether lost? Or have there been some acharyas and munis who, having brought about a revolution in the field of conduct, re-appraised the practice of meditation?

Ans. Moral revolutions have been taking place in Jain — culture from time to time. These laid sufficient stress on moral conduct, but the practice of meditation still remained secondary. At that time, the tradition of *japa* had become widespread, and the practice of dhyana was restricted only to a few. The important names in the development of the tradition of meditation are : Acharya Anandaghan, Acharya Chidanand, Acharya Bhikshu and Jayacharya. Although in their time, too, the practice of meditation was not very comprehensive, but it did exist, and the tradition of dhyana continued uninterrupted.

During the last century, the practice of meditation was somewhat neglected, but the last two or three decades witnessed a revival. During this period, new techniques were evolved and various exercises performed. Jain sadhus and sadhvis and shravaks, convinced that no recognised system of meditation was available to them, began to look around and were attracted by contemporary exercises. Also a new practice of studying ancient scriptures gained ground. The study of the old books revealed that although dhyana-sadhana was a perennial topic of discussion therein, but no practical work was being done. It was however clear that a definite tradition of meditation did exist among the Jains.

Time, place, situation and mood were all favourable. Conditions were ripe, and time in league with them, and the idea was born of reuniting the threads of tradition that had been cut off. The work of Agama-research was on. In this connection, *Uttaradhyayan Agama* was in the process of being edited. We had before us many volumes relating to the Swetambar and Digambar traditions. A study of these revealed that diverse elements of dhyana lay scattered in the Jain Agamas. This aroused our interest and a direction was given to Muni Nathmalji (now Yuvacharya Mahaprajna) that the ancient tradition of meditation in Jainism should be re-discovered and the disjointed elements organised into a cohesive whole, and a technique evolved for the use of the present generation.

During the Udaipur *chaturmas* in 2019 (Vikram Era) work in this direction was started. In the first place, the fundamental elements of dhyana were sought in the Agamas. Later, a programme of practice and experimentation ensued. During the course of these experiments, new curiosities were aroused and resolved and through constant effort, the steadfast resolve matured. After

15 years' uninterrupted labour, we established a forgotten technique, which revived for us the ancient tradition. We did not have to start from scratch. Our task was to appraise and assess. In the absence of right estimation, even a most useful element lies buried into the folds of time, but after its proper evaluation, it becomes the centre of people's attention. Out of assessment, a new vision evolved, leading to greater understanding. Thereupon our resolve to uncover and bring to light the system of meditation once prevalent in the Jain tradition was all the more strengthened and at last our efforts were crowned with success.

THE FRUIT OF APPRAISAL

*The Jain method of meditation, new-named
'Preksha';*

A vibrant whole, independently working!

One who enquires with unflagging zeal,

Spontaneously finds Preksha's honey-juice.

Q. The idea of rediscovering ancient elements of — Jainism suggested itself during the course of the editing of the Agamas. Many valuable elements of dhyān-sādhana scattered in the Jain Agamas were collected. These elements were evaluated and an elaborate tradition of meditation was re-established. Was this tradition of meditation known as 'preksha' even in ancient times or it was you who gave it a new name?

Ans. We soon came across certain maxims of the Jain — method of meditation on which research was going on and for which intense efforts were being made. The experiments in meditation conducted on the basis of these maxims proved successful. Thereupon a conviction grew that this method can be useful for everyone.

As regards nomenclature, one fact is quite clear that the ancient Jain method of sadhana incorporates both 'sanwar' (i.e. mind-control or the subjugation of passions), and 'nirjara' (decay of, or freedom from past sanskars). Dhyana is concerned with both. It is at once mind-control and dissolution of past impressions par excellence. There is the mention of an Agmic experiment by the name of sanwar-dhyana-yoga. This name could be acceptable even today. However, new experimentation seemed to recommend newness in nomenclature, too. The determination of the title 'preksha' was done after a great deal of thought. The thinking behind it was as follows :

The method of sadhana is meant to make manifest the nature of the soul—constant alertness, irresistible power and spontaneous joy (*veetaraḡta*: total freedom from passions). The soul becomes manifest through meditation on the nature of the soul. "Observe the soul through the soul!" In this maxim, the importance of meditation on the soul is emphasized. The observation of the soul is nothing but knowing and understanding it. The first characteristic of the soul is awareness. Awareness is a condition of knowing and seeing. Knowledge and observation mean knowing and seeing. A meditation apart from knowledge and vision, may relate to any other subject, but not to the soul. On this basis, the new method could be given two names—'vipassana' and 'preksha'. Both these names are used in *Acharang Sutra*.

The name, 'vipsassana', is very much prevalent among the Buddhists. In recent years, vipassana shivirs have been held from time to time. In a way, the word, vipassana, has come to denote the Buddhist method of meditation. So it was thought proper to name the Jain method of meditation as 'preksha'. Today this method is well-known by the title of 'preksha dhyana'. Its fundamental source is *Acharang Sutra*. Other sources are the

remaining Agamas, books written after the Agamas, and a collection of experiences and results of experiments in meditation performed during the long period of 2,500 years since Lord Mahavir. It was after a comprehensive appraisal of these sources, that the present technique of sadhana, its title and nature, have been evolved.

Q. The technique of sadhana that you have evolved is — based upon old elements scattered in the Agamas. During this long period of 2,500 years, old beliefs have changed a good deal. Many new scientific approaches are available to us today. In view of this, will it not be sheer conservatism to follow an ancient tradition? Is it not possible to harmonize it with new elements?

Ans. In order to make preksha dhyana system complete in itself, use has been made of modern scientific insights. Unless a method is in consonance with the scientific temper, it cannot prove very useful at present. Because modern man has developed a scientific outlook, it is becoming more and more difficult to recognize any element that is unscientific in its nature. Under these circumstances, if adequate use is not made in the development of a meditation technique of the latest discoveries in the field of physiology and psychology, that technique is likely to be dismissed as outdated and unscientific. Although there is nothing wrong in a technique being old, yet why should an ancient technique be deprived of contact with the new? Along with ancient elements, we have also made use of new facts and experiences. Thus, this technique, though old, is also new. Both the ancient and modern viewpoints have been harmonized in it.

Some people think that the advent of science has rendered sadhana or spirituality obsolete. However, our view is entirely different. We believe that sadhana, in

union with science, can illumine many mysteries. Ancient books were consulted with a view to determine the form of preksha. There is a mention of special psychic centres in the old texts. Their number is variously given as five, seven or nine. But according to modern books on physiology, psychic centers number about 700. How are these centres related to one another? How helpful can they be in the direction of character-transformation? Facts like these can be known very precisely and made use of. Similarly, science can furnish authentic information about the endocrine system, bio-electricity, chemical changes taking place in the body, etc. Two years of experimentation have also established the fact that the method of preksha is beneficial from all the three viewpoints—physical, mental and spiritual. There is nothing dogmatic about this technique. The new elements have been assimilated in it with as much ease as the old. Viewed thus, it is our own creation. Yet there is nothing imaginary about it and, therefore, it is an expression of our ancient tradition, and is now being presented in a new way in a new environment. We firmly believe that newer experiments in the future would lend to it a unique distinction.

JAIN VISHVA BHARATI

Regular disciplines, teaching, application!
Vishva Bharati—a paradise of natural, happy
Circumstance!

Q. Where is the provision for training and practice in
 — the method of preksha dhyana established by you?

Ans. For this there exist three provisions. Wherever
 — we may be, we are accompanied by sadhus and
 sadhvis who practise preksha themselves and also impart
 training in preksha to people who may be interested in
 it. Systematic training in preksha dhyana is also imparted
 at shivirs organised from time to time. Second provision
 also exists at the the Adhyatam Sadhana Kendra situated
 at Mehrauli in Delhi. There, the sadhaks receive training
 temporarily or on a regular basis. Thirdly, there is the
 Jain Vishva Bharati, which is the principal training centre
 for preksha dhyana.

‘Jain Vishva Bharati’ is an institute of ancient disci-
 plines. A special programme of education and research
 is in progress there. There are, of course, many centers
 of education in the country. In various universities,

research and education are going on side by side. Education and research policies also change and are being refined. There has been a tremendous progress in the field of education. However, it seems to me that all our institutions of education and research are not able to impart a new vision capable of resolving the present-day problems. A third essential component is missing. That is sadhana, the practice of meditation. Without sadhana, our education remains incomplete. However much one may study, the restlessness of the mind is not reduced thereby. Until a student's mind is clean, peaceful, he will not be able to acquire the capacity for resolving the problems encountered by him. That is why it was thought that education, research and sadhana should be pursued together. Education and research occupy a second position in this conception; sadhana holds the first place. Had sadhana not been accorded the primary importance here, the new idea would not have been much valuable, because education and research without sadhana have been going on for a long time.

For implementing the idea of coordinating education, research and sadhana, our community established the institution called Jain Vishva Bharati. This institute is situated in Ladnun town of Nagore District in Rajasthan (India). Still another programme—that of service—has been added to the disciplines of education, research and sadhana. Thus, Jain Vishva Bharati has become a centre of foursome activity. The foremost among these is sadhana—training, experimentation and practice thereof.

Dhyana is an indispensable part of education. If education is separated from dhyana, it degenerates into mere statistics. An education without dhyana, loses contact with life, and is incapable of bringing about a change in everyday living or any improvement in character. That

is why a plan formulated by the Sadhana Centre of Jain Vishva Bharati (Tulsi Adhyatama Needam) has been under active consideration. That plan relates to Jeevan Vigyana (The Science of Living). As long as a student is not acquainted with his life and its depths and leads a mechanical existence, intellect and argumentativeness dominate his life, without any direct experiencing. The chief reason behind the growing problems in today's educational institutions is education devoid of the science of living.

I am told that in the educational institutions of Japan, the practice of dhyana is taken up along with academic disciplines. That is why the Japanese display greater devotion to duty; and their sense of responsibility and the desire to fulfil their obligations is much more active. The Japanese workers, labourers, etc. fight for their rights. If their rights are trampled upon, they register their protest, too. But they never stop work. They never destroy public property. They register their protest by tying black ribbons to their arms. By wearing a black ribbon on his sleeve, a worker expresses his dissatisfaction. But these workers never resort to bestial practices like sabotage.

On the other hand, here in our country, the first thing the workers do is to stop working whether there is any strong reason for protest or not. It is difficult to see any rationale behind the acts of destruction and sabotage. And many other unusual practices are resorted to. Undesirable actions will stop only when the mind of the individual is disciplined. Mind-control is very useful, not only on the spiritual level, but on the social level, too. When this is neither taught nor learnt, all social behaviour becomes licentious.

Dhyana exercises control over the mind's licentiousness. He who practises dhyana, will never indulge in anti-social behaviour. That is why dhyana has been

recognised as an essential element of education at the Jain Vishva Bharati. Because of this rare distinction, the Jain Vishva Bharati occupies an important place among the educational institutions all over the country. Its importance does not lie in big buildings, for many institutions have these. The greatness of the Jain Vishva Bharati lies in its distinct conception. In accordance with that conception, all the programmes conducted here in the fields of education, research and social service give primacy to *preksha* meditation. Here is to be found constant application of *preksha*. Thousands of people are benefited by the practice of *preksha* meditation and they are able to resolve their problems.

Q. What is the outline of the system of education — adopted under the newly-evolved Science of Living?

Ans. The basis of the concept of the Science of Living — is an all-round development of life. There are many halting places on this journey from normal behaviour to heightened consciousness. One achieves the final goal after passing through all those stages, and only then does an individual become acquainted with the secrets of the Science of Living. Here attention is not exclusively centred on intellectual development; rather it extends to the development of consciousness beyond all intellectual discipline. The fundamental element here is acquaintance with the physical organism. Later, specific psychic centres situated in the body are awakened. One can become acquainted with the bodily system through a study of physiology; but its technique is different. Physiology limits itself to the physical processes. One who studies the body from the physiological point of view, remains unaware of its spiritual significance. Unless a spiritual outlook is evolved, one cannot become

acquainted with the process of purification of the psychic centres situated in the body. The concept of the Science of Living provides for training on this aspect.

No light can manifest itself unless the screen that obstructs it from view is pulled off. In the manifestation of consciousness, too, the purification of the nervous system or the awakening of the psychic centres is an important factor. Without this, without creating an electro-magnetic field, the inner energy cannot be transmitted to the outer sphere. The purification or sensitization in itself constitutes the magnetic field. Thus, consciousness is further extended. The technique of the Science of Living is the process of dhyana-sadhana, and this forms an essential part of the teaching of meditation. Without meditation one cannot come to know the definition of individuality, nor can one come upon the principles of personality-formation.

IN QUEST OF BEING

*Curiosity about life, is the starting point,
 Each sadhak must ask himself, "Who am I?"
 And ask it forever, with no answer satisfied,
 Till discontent itself leads him on to the way.
 The path being found, rules and restraint
 useful prove,
 Like the ground being levelled before
 the seed is sown!*

Q. For integrated development, it is necessary for an individual to be introvertive. For introversion, emphasis is laid on the practice of meditation. The experiences of various sadhaks are different. Some achieve a good state of mind very soon; others get lost in confusion. How should a sadhak start his sadhana?

Ans. Even when impelled by an inner urge to undertake sadhana, many people cannot determine how to go about it. When? And where? Until the starting point is clear, there cannot be any systematic progress in this field. From the viewpoint of organisation, it is necessary to acquire deep knowledge of the subject. In order

to move in the direction of dhyana, one must be thoroughly acquainted with its nature. Dhyana means concentration. But concentration alone is not the object of meditation. "What kind of concentration?", is an important question.

There is the marksman's concentration. When a hunter aims at his prey, how intent he is! In the absence of concentration, no arrow can pierce its object. The heron is notorious for its hypocrisy. With a view to deceiving its prey, it pretends to be absorbed in meditation; it lifts one foot and stands like an ascetic. Impressed by the heron's concentration, the great idealist, Sri Rama, addressed Laxman thus :

Laxman! Look at that heron living in this lake.
How religious it is! How carefully it steps, for fear of killing a living creature!

Laxman kept silent. But a fish living in the same lake smarted to hear what Sri Rama said. Gathering courage, it spoke :

Rama! How dare you talk about the religiousness of that heron! Can a creature that has destroyed the whole of my family, be religious? O Rama, you are not acquainted with its duplicity. Because only a person living in close contact can come to know his companion's real character.

In this context, it may be said that we are concerned here not with concentration alone, but with the object of concentration. That concentration alone which creates curiosity about one's existence, is valuable from the point of view of sadhana, and this, in itself, constitutes the starting point of sadhana. Until a man's curiosity is aroused about the nature of his being, he does not display any eagerness to know himself. As long as he feels no urge to confront the question, "Who am I?", the funda-

mental groundwork of meditation is not laid. When a deep curiosity to know himself is aroused in a man, the path of sadhana becomes clear of itself. Because there is not much distance between irresistible curiosity and the path. Curiosity creates restlessness in the mind. When that restlessness reaches its summit, the path of sadhana stands clearly marked out.

A young seeker approached a monk and said, "Gurudev! I aspire after spirituality. Kindly show me the path of sadhana." The monk said, "Pupil! This is good. You have completed your studies. Now you wish to enter the field of sadhana. It is a pointer to your prosperous future. I'll certainly tell you the secret of sadhana, but not today. Come to me after a week." The youngman returned after a week, and said, "Sir! one week is past, now kindly show me the path." However, the monk asked him to wait for another two weeks. The pupil was very modest. He accepted the guru's direction and waited for another two weeks. After two weeks, he returned to the monk, but the monk again turned him back and asked him to come after three weeks. Thus, many months passed. One day, the disciple got very impatient and said, "What's the matter, Gurudev? Why are you putting me off for ever? Do you think I'm not fit for sadhana?" The monk said, "All right, let's go! I'll show you the path of sadhana today."

The monk took the youngman across the city to the bank of the river. They rested there for a little while and then the monk said, "Son! The flowing water is cool and clear. Wash your face and hands." As the disciple descended into the stream, the monk caught him by the head and pushed him further down into the river. The pupil rose up immediately, but the monk's grip was strong and he did not let the disciple emerge out of the water. The latter tossed and tumbled about in pain. If he took a breath, his mouth and nose were filled with water, if he held his breath, he felt suffocated. He could not keep in water for

a second more. When the monk saw him utterly restless and writhing in pain, he pulled him out of the water and said, "Why are you so impatient, pupil? Couldn't you keep in water for a little while more?" "The youngman, manifesting his inner turmoil, said, "Gurudev! what do you mean? I would have died. I couldn't endure a moment's delay. Did you really want to stifle me to death?"

The monk smiled and said, "No, son! I didn't want to take your life; I only wanted to show you the path of sadhana."

"How's that?", cried the pupil.

Quenching his curiosity, the monk said, "When you were about to drown, you were so terribly restless for air, as not to endure being in water even for a second more. When you display the same keenness for sadhana, you'll find the path all right."

For sadhana, one must have a deep urge. The irresistible urge leads one to the path naturally and easily. After one sees clearly what path to follow, one must lead a life of self-restraint in accordance with the prescribed rules. Rather, if one may put it differently, after one has attained the starting point of sadhana, life itself becomes disciplined and regular. From the viewpoint of sadhana, the undertaking of certain pledges has a special significance. Without these, the obstacles to further progress cannot be removed. Just as the rough and rugged ground is first levelled before sowing the seed, similarly in order to sow the seed of dhyana, the uneven ground of conduct is smoothened through the observation of *mahavrats* and *anuvrats*. After this ground is made even, the sowing of the seed of dhyana becomes very easy. On the basis of the above facts, three things become abundantly clear—firstly, there must be curiosity about one's being; secondly, there must be the irresistible urge for sadhana, and thirdly one must take certain pledges and vows. In the progress of sadhana, this trinity plays an important role.

RIGHT BACKGROUND FOR MEDITATION

*Truth and non-violence; conduct generous
and pure,
Non-acquisitiveness, artless behaviour;
The ideal of Anuvrat; freedom from addiction;
Good and natural living, sensitivity,
magnanimity;
And when pride and the sense of 'I' are
dissolved,
The groundwork of meditation is complete.*

Q. Curiosity about one's being is the starting point of — meditation. Is the resolution of this curiosity enough in itself or is some other sadhana necessary for going into various aspects of dhyana?

Ans. The most important element for meditation is — the purity of the heart. Without the observation of certain vows it is not possible to achieve mental purity. Vows are of two kinds—great and small (mahavrats and anuvrats). Of course, a vow is always great—it is beyond

considerations of great and small. However, on the basis of the capacity of the individual undertaking a vow, it may be differentiated. There are five main vows—non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya* and non-acquisitiveness. The practice of non-violence means freedom from attachment and aversion; its fruition is the feeling of goodwill towards the whole world. Freedom from attachment and aversion leads to *veetaragta* (freedom from affections and passions), and the feeling of goodwill leads to identification with the soul of the world. In so far as the realisation of *veetaragta* and the feeling of goodwill increase the purity of the mind, the state of meditation is equally strengthened.

Truth is the symbol of straightforwardness. A sadhak who is simple and straightforward, does not accumulate filth. Telling an untruth stains the mind. A liar is always assailed by fear. To avoid a possible evil, he indulges in falsehood and when his falsehood is exposed, he becomes restless. Restlessness is productive of malice and the man loses his reputation. Fear, anger and duplicity cannot be separated from untruth. And wherever these tendencies grow, it is impossible for the mind to be pure. And in the absence of purity, the seed of dhyana does not sprout.

The third vow is non-stealing. Stealing is the culmination of the lack of discipline. A man who steals, violates other people's rights. It is a ruthless act and the man indulging in it can never achieve self-realisation. All his attention is turned to material things. A materialistic mind has no conception of purity, whatever. A man who takes the vow of non-stealing, rises above the world of matter, and progresses in the direction of mental purity.

The fourth vow is celibacy (*brahmcharya*). *Brahmcharya* is the worship of self-knowledge. It is an inexhaustible source of power. It is a kind of special discipline. One who practises *brahmcharya*, is able to

preserve both his physical and mental energy and becomes luminous. He does not allow his urges to grow licentious. Contrary to this, the lack of *brahmcharya* makes for uninhibited lust and creates difficulties in the path of inner observation. From the point of view of self-realization and preservation of energy, the practice of *brahmcharya* makes an important contribution towards the creation of the right background for dhyana. The fifth vow is non-acquisitiveness. The fruit of non-possessiveness is alert awareness. Unconsciousness is a bondage. An attached mind cannot be introvertive. It remains identified with both body and matter. The thicker the layers of attachment, the more densely is purity clouded. In order to dissolve the layers of attachment, it is necessary to strengthen through constant practice the spirit of non-possessiveness.

Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmcharya* and non-possessiveness are the means of keeping the purity of the mind intact, and are therefore, called the fundamental virtues. It is on the basis of their strength that meditation can progress. A person whose conduct is not absolutely guileless, does not deserve to be a dhyanee. Without the practice of a mahavrat or anuvrata, one's conduct cannot be straightforward. Violence, untruth, stealing, lust, possessiveness—all promote cunning and deceit. The ground of meditation cannot be cleared in the face of dodging and duplicity. Therefore, the observance of the vows has its own importance in a sadhak's life.

Q. Even while living in a spiritual environment, why — is a man's mind assailed by evil tendencies like violence, untruth, etc.? Some sadhaks cannot rid themselves of these tendencies, despite their desire to be free. Why?

Ans. Sanskar, the past action, is the greatest cause of — the continuance of evil tendencies. Long indulgence, combined with sanskar, further strengthens an evil tendency. Because of this powerful combine of sanskar and indulgence, a man's mind is disposed towards violence. When the sanskars get ripened, they manifest themselves. Here, instrumental causes are very active. Violence does not manifest itself through one's action alone; because of the conditioning factors, one's mentality becomes violent. Wherever in space and time, the stimuli become strong, violence erupts. In case of fewer stimulants, the consequences of action are proportionately fewer. In the Yogic Age, the incitements to violence, untruth, etc. were few. In consequence, man's inclinations too, were not so wicked. In the present circumstances, there prevails from morning till evening, an atmosphere of violence. The newspapers provide an abundant fare of thefts, dacoities, bloody encounters and rapes. People read about or witness around them similar incidents. These are the outer causes. The inner causes such as the food for the body, the chemical fluids, etc. are also affected by the rampant evil. It is only when a sadhak makes an effort to free himself from evil influences flowing from within and without that he can succeed in sublimating his innate tendencies.

Q. Is the groundwork for meditation well laid by observing a mahavrat or anuvrat, or is something else required in addition to it?

Ans. Mahavrat (taking a great vow) is an excellent — thing. A sadhak who has taken a great vow, faces no external obstacle to his progress in the field of meditation. As regards an anuvrati sadhak, the first requirement is freedom from addiction. Nowadays, some people accept the use of intoxicants in the context of meditation,

too. Intoxicants like hemp and hemp-preparations were used in earlier ages, and they are used even today. In the beginning they might prove to be good stimulants to dhyana, but later it becomes very difficult to deal with problems resulting from their use. In order to create and maintain a clean and wholesome atmosphere for meditation, freedom from all kinds of addiction is an urgent necessary. This also forms one of the main objectives of Anuvrat.

Even in an addiction-free life, two great obstacles to dhyana are pride and attachment to oneself. As long as the complexes of pride and attachment are not dissolved, it is difficult to achieve success in meditation, no matter how much effort is put in. The development of steadfast, unwavering concentration is essential for meditation. Man creates uncertainty through pride and attachment. Pride envelops a man's consciousness and attachment conditions it. All man's action is born of these. The development of passions also takes place because of pride and attachment. These are also the factors behind the deterioration and perversion of human nature. It is therefore, essential to conquer pride and attachment for creating the right background for meditation. When these two elements are under control, the groundwork for dhyana can be said to be well laid.

Some people are of the opinion that it is not necessary to spend time in creating an appropriate background for the practice of dhyana. According to them, one may start practising dhyana at once, and the necessary conditions will come into existence of themselves. There is no need to disagree with the above opinion. Still it must be admitted that this is no ordered way of undertaking sadhana. In the case of farming, one resorts to a planned programme; in order to make the soil fertile the earth is manured, watered, cleaned and levelled and properly

managed. This process then yields a good crop. Similarly, if the practice of meditation is done in a planned manner, it brings quicker results. A brief outline of dhyana sadhana may be as follows :

Dhyana means concentration of mind. For concentration, all uncertainty in the form of varying options must come to an end. In order to end uncertainty, it is necessary to evolve a pure, integrated consciousness. In order to cast off the many layers of dirt encompassing consciousness, the observance of a mahavrat and anuvrat is necessary. The fruit of such observance is : goodwill, simplicity and straightforwardness, disaffection with material objects, self-realization and awareness. By exposing the mind to these virtues, the complexes of pride and attachment get dissolved. With the dissolution of these complexes, the consequences of past sanskars surcease. Thus, a solid background is formed for the practice of meditation. With this background a sadhak, passing through the various stages of meditation, successfully reaches his goal.

PRACTICE OF MEDITATION AND THE TEACHER'S ROLE

*The Difficult path of sadhana grows easy
and accessible
To a sadhak blessed with the guru's
guidance sweet;
Mahavrati Acharya himself rapt in meditation,
Tolerant, free, gentle, straight, occupying
the teacher's seat,
And well-conversant with preksha yoga,
steadfast,
Renowned as an experienced teacher,
efficient and wise.*

Q. To prepare the ground for meditation and to seek — the path of sadhana, should a sadhak work on his own, or should he work under the supervision of some capable teacher?

Ans. There are two kinds of sadhaks—self-awakened — or awakened by instruction. Those belonging to the first category are rare. These make their way themselves and tread it without any fear of obstruction. In

whatever direction they move, a new path is created. Such people do not need any guidance from a guru. But for those sadhaks whose wisdom is not yet awakened, and who are unacquainted with any system of sadhana and dare not traverse an unknown path, the guidance of a capable guru is essential.

The importance of the guru is recognized in all spheres. Even to learn some little craft, one needs an instructor. And the great craft of meditation cannot be learnt without the supervision of a teacher. Meditation is wholly an internal process. The secrets thereof are available, not through books, but through direct experience. Book-knowledge can give us information about the whole world, but the knowledge of oneself cannot be gained through books. To know oneself, one has to seek the guidance of a guru. The guru is experienced. He himself practises meditation and acquires experience which he distributes among the inquiring sadhaks, thereby adding to his own knowledge. With the help of the guru, the difficult path of sadhana becomes easily accessible. A Rajasthani poet has given expression to this very fact in a couplet :

I walked and walked for ages, yet knew not where
I was;
Then met a guru, and lo! my goal seemed not far
off!

As far as knowledge of material things is concerned, some people may behave indifferently towards their teacher. They may feel that what they are seeking could be got from other sources as well. But inner knowledge, which only a guru can impart, cannot be gained through any other means. To obtain inner knowledge, a sadhak looks up to his guru for support, and he, therefore, obeys the guru implicitly with perfect humility and dedication.

He who works under the supervision of a guru, gradually moves forward. Wherever he comes across a hurdle in his path, that hurdle is removed and the sadhak is never left in the lurch. In the absence of right guidance, there is always the possibility of going astray. Those who, after reading a few books or hearing about meditation from some friend, start their sadhana on their own, get bored within 5-10 days, and discontinue their practice, or they go astray. Being confused, their mind loses its balance. An unbalanced mind and sadhana do not go together. In such a situation, a man loses faith in himself as well as in the method of sadhana he has adopted. His lack of faith disperses the vibrations of his faithlessness all around. These may adversely affect some immature sadhak. From this point of view, for making progress in the field of sadhana, it is very necessary for a man to seek the guidance of a really capable guru.

Q. You say, the guidance of an able guru is essential — for sadhana. Such guidance will certainly bring about good results. But what is the criterion for determining a guru's worthiness? What touchstone have we to test our guide?

Ans. There can be no precise definition of a guru. Still — on the practical level, a man would want a definition. Unless unlimited space is confined within the bounds of a house, a man cannot live in it. A guru's grandeur beggars description. No words can adequately express it; it can only be defined on the ground of behaviour. On behavioral ground, a guru is one who is a *mahavrati*. The man whose soul is not impregnated with the spirit of the great vows cannot be an adept in the practice of meditation. Besides being a *mahavrati*, he must also have a deep interest in the practice of meditation. Because in the absence of such interest, he can neither

do any experimentation in the field of meditation nor can he inspire others to do it.

For training in meditation it is also very necessary to achieve control over the passions. Victory over the passions results in forgiveness, freedom, straightforwardness and gentleness. He who conquers anger, becomes tranquil; he who conquers greed is free—without any desire for self-profit; he who conquers illusion, is straight, and he who defeats pride, grows tender and mild. For salvation one must conquer the passions. In the *Sthanang Sutra* are mentioned four doors to religion: tolerance, freedom, simplicity, and compassion. These four religious doors are also the doors to salvation. Without entering these, there can be no sadhana. Because the chief objective of one's dhyana-sadhana is the achievement of freedom from passions and affections. A sadhak who has not achieved this freedom cannot initiate others into meditation, because the whole practice of meditation is the practice of *veetaragta*. Only a person who has accomplished this sadhana can adorn the exalted seat of the guru.

Some masters adept in breath-control and breath-regulation also become gurus of dhyana. They do acquire certain elements of meditation. But their progress is confined to the achievements of this world and thaumaturgy. Spiritual meditation cannot succeed without the practice of tolerance, freedom, simplicity and compassion. Without such practice there can be no entrance to spiritual progress.

Thaumaturgy is also an accomplishment. A man exhibiting marvels can fill innumerable people with admiration. But this is not the process of transmutation of personality. Through such exhibition, a man does not become introversive. For introversion or transformation

of personality, one must set aside all marvel-making and give oneself up wholly to sadhana for *veetaragta*, i.e., freedom from passions.

A possible definition of a guru could be : “Expert in *preksha-yoga*”. He who has practised *preksha dhyana*, has become skilled in it, and achieved perfect equanimity, can shoulder the responsibility of a guru. To be able to discharge his obligations, it is absolutely necessary for a guru to be enlightened—to possess subtle knowledge. Subtle knowledge is of two kinds : affirmative and nugatory. A guru is a master of both kinds. His knowledge is most comprehensive. Only that individual is enlightened who has the capacity to know, to change, and to surrender. Only he whose consciousness is awakened, can become a guru.

Given a worthy guru, an enquiring pupil and adequate facilities for *shadana*, progress on the path of meditation is assured.

TRAINING FOR MEDITATION

Near the Guru, day and night, let him be!

*Only then does the seeker's sadhana
blossom forth;*

*Walking, standing, sitting, sleeping,
eating or speaking,*

*Ever guided by the Guru's doubt-resolving
gaze!*

Q. For training in meditation, the need of an effective — guide cannot be denied. That guide directs the seeker in the form of a guru. Is it necessary for the pupil to be near the guru all the time or is it possible for him to visit the guru every now and then for guidance, and make progress on his own?

Ans. In ancient literature, the adoration of the guru — has been held in great esteem. The Hindi word, *upasana*, meaning adoration, means sitting near the guru. He who stays near the guru, who loves and reveres him, often finds something which he who stays away can never find. One who stays near the guru, not only has the occasion for hearing and knowing him, but also he

is benefited by the radiation emanating from the guru's aura. The moment a disciple enters the field of the guru's aura, he experiences extraordinary peace. Through the boundless love of the guru, he comes to see a new direction in life and possibilities of transformation grow stronger. Many new experiments are being undertaken in the western world in the direction of character-transformation. One such experiment has been conducted in Germany. In order to free the young from addiction to smoking, they are being given training in yoga. Again in order to wean them from addiction to intoxicants, people in France are encouraged to undertake long sea-journeys. In one such experiment, 20 persons were sent on a long sea-voyage. It has been reported that 13 of them were reformed. The police chief of Cleveland (America) has discovered a new way of reforming the policemen under his charge. These policemen are free to take their wives along with them on their supervisory rounds. It has been found that these people dare not take intoxicating drugs in the presence of their wives.

The experiments mentioned above are no figments of imagination. Both on theoretical and practical grounds, these have been found to be sound. According to the Jain philosophy, remarkable changes take place in both conscious and unconscious objects due to transposition of matter, space, time and feeling. A conscious object when transposed to another area or epoch may become unconscious. There could not be a greater transformation than this. In the above examples, the experiment in Germany may be taken as an instance of change of material circumstance, that in France of transference to a newer area, that in America, of transmutation of feeling.

Even more effective than these is the experiment of living in the vicinity of the guru. The transformation of personality wrought by the effect of the guru's aura on

a disciple living in close proximity, is no less remarkable. In this experiment irrespective of whether a guru transfers his energy to the disciple or not, some kind of transference naturally takes place. The technique of dhyana can be learnt through books but that is a process of indirect training. The training imparted by the guru, on the other hand, is direct. The difference between the direct and indirect training is evident in their results. From this point of view, the reverence of the guru has a special value.

Q. The effect of being directly in the vicinity of the — guru is indescribable indeed. In this there can be no contradiction. But is it necessary for a sadhak who merely seeks training in meditation, to be near the guru day and night? Is it not possible to achieve the desired result through occasional instruction?

Ans. Meditation is of two kinds—casual and timeless. — casual meditation is bound to the limits of time. It can be practised once, twice, or four to five times a day. As regards time, 2-4 hours may be allotted to it. But timeless meditation is not bound by time. Because the man possessed by a keen yearning for self-realization is not bound by time; rather it is time that moves with him. That a sadhak practising dhyana should be self-aware for one or two hours and keep unaware, or fickle, for the rest of the time, is not at all desirable. That is the condition in which religion finds itself today. When a man visits a religious place, he appears to be thoroughly religious, but this kind of religion has no effect whatsoever on his conduct. This duplex mentality can neither redound to the glory of religion nor give recognition to a truly religious person. As long as any contradiction exists in one's behaviour during the hour of worship and the rest of the day, religious worship will not yield the

desired results. The mind of the sadhak should be suffused with meditation. The whole day, nay, one's whole life, should be permeated with dhyana. Meditation is the totality of life, it cannot be divided into segments of time and space. Its impact should be felt on every activity from the time of waking up in the morning till going to bed at night. Walking, sitting, standing, sleeping, speaking, eating, drinking, etc.—only when all these activities are seasoned with meditation, the perfection of sadhana manifests itself in conduct. It is because of this consideration that various forms of sadhana have been determined—walking-yoga, standing-yoga, sitting-yoga, asana-yoga, sleeping yoga, speaking-yoga, eating-yoga, etc. Yoga in these words is symbolic of the fact that any action when complemented with full awareness, becomes yoga.

The greatest problem that a spiritual sadhak faces is how to keep non-violent in this chaotic world of living beings? Non-violence may be his ideal, but how can he evade the inevitability of violence? Oppressed by the possibility of violence, the pupil propounds a question :

O Lord! How do I walk? How stand? How sit?
How sleep? How eat and speak? So that I'm not
involved in sin.

The Lord gauged the condition of the pupil's mind, appreciated his confusion and offering him a way out, said :

O pupil, walk in mindfulness, in mindfulness stay; sit in mindfulness, in mindfulness sleep; eat in mindfulness, in mindfulness speak. Thus exercising self-restraint in everything you do, you can keep yourself free from sin.

After one has accepted self-discipline as a way of life, every moment should be a moment of awareness. If every movement is temperate, one's whole life is permeated with self-discipline. Otherwise one never acquires proper self-control. Similarly, if, one does dhyāna sadhana for an hour or two, and spends the rest of the time fidgeting about, one can never truly accomplish meditation. If the mind is not wholly given to meditation, energy thereof cannot be transmitted to everyday conduct. When the entire routine of life becomes yoga, only then does awareness suffuse one's conduct. Thus, it may be concluded that close proximity to the guru for a short period brings proportionate results, but the impact of long-term proximity is stupendous. For one aspiring to enter the higher stages of dhyana, to overlook the importance of constant proximity to the guru cannot be beneficial.

THE GURUKUL OF DHYANA

*Constant self-appraisal: Going ahead or
 falling off?
 Rightly inspired, one never despairs!
 Ancient gurukuls: centres of education
 and sadhana,
 What a cultured tradition did in India thrive!
 The revered Master offering constant
 guidance to all,
 And the pupil receiving each instruction
 with joy,
 Mindful of life's every disposition!
 Disciplined, sober, alert and—bound
 to be great!*

Q. The sadhak receives instruction in meditation and
 — practises accordingly. After this instruction and
 practice, is there any provision for testing what he has
 learnt ? In the absence of a test, no sadhak can come to
 know of his progress or otherwise. How shall then we
 remove any obstruction met with in the path of sadhana?

Ans. An appraisal is necessary for determining the success or failure of any programme. Particularly so, in the field of religion. If an individual practises religious meditation and it is not properly evaluated, he would not know whether his effort has been successful. The right understanding of sadhana is achieved only through its evaluation. A sadhak practising meditation under the supervision of his instructor generally makes progress but sometimes there is retrogression, too. The order of progress is sometimes disturbed and there is decay. There are many ups and downs in the path of sadhana, too. In order to meet these vicissitudes with equanimity, it is necessary to properly evaluate all goings-on. Otherwise, some sudden developments could demoralize the sadhak. However, a sadhak who is in close proximity to his guru, is able to resolve his problem whereas one left to his own devices, gets confused. This confusion is not without a cause. When through the practice of dhyana dormant powers are aroused, the centre of lust too becomes activated. This creates many kinds of problems. When the old *sanskars* rise up and the consequences of past deeds grow ripe for manifestation, one receives a kind of shock. That shock is so sudden that unless there is someone to support him, the sadhak stumbles or falls down. That is why the ancient acharyas ordained that sadhana should be practised in the proximity of a guru. *Uttaradhayan Sutra*, while offering special guidance to the sadhak lays down :

The sadhak-monk desirous of attaining samadhi should be extremely careful in the choice of his food, helper, and place. Temperance in food should be his ideal. Even the little that he takes should be wholesome. His helper or guide must be accomplished in philosophy, because if the helper's intellect is not sharp enough to seize the essence of the matter, he will not be able to

resolve the difficulties of the sadhak practising meditation under his supervision. Thirdly, the place of sadhana should be secluded. Because uninterrupted practice of sadhana is not possible in the midst of crowds and noise.

For one who wishes to enter the higher stages of meditation, it is necessary to have a sadhak-supervisor. Acharya Pushyamitra while preparing to go into *mahaprana* meditation, appointed a disciple as his sadhak supervisor. Although that disciple did not fully possess the virtues of an acharya, yet he was very capable, and was therefore appointed as sadhak-supervisor. The Acharya, while rapt in meditation, wanted no interference. Other pupils did not know of this. They enquired of the muni-supervisor about the Acharya. They wanted to see him. But the supervisor forbade them entry into the meditation cell where the Acharya was engaged in sadhana. The pupils mistook the muni's prohibition: they feared that the Acharya had been murdered. So they repaired to the king who was a devotee of the Acharya. The monks expressed their fear before the king. The king immediately reached the place where Acharya Pushyamitra was engaged in mahaprana-dhyana sadhana. The king expressed his desire to see the Acharya. The sadhak-supervisor said, "The Master is in meditation." On hearing this, the King's mind was also filled with misgiving. He pressed upon the muni-supervisor his demand. Gauging the seriousness of the situation, the muni-supervisor went into the meditation cell and pressed the thumb of the Acharya's foot. Consciousness returned to the Acharya. He got up and said, "Why did you prick me up before time?" The muni related the whole sequence of events. The King as well as other munis were relieved to find the Acharya alive. The Acharya's sadhana was nevertheless disturbed. There are

many other incidents which emphasize the indispensability of a supervisor during the period of dhyana sadhana.

Even an experienced sadhak feels the necessity of a supervisor for making progress in his meditation. For one who is just preparing to enter the field of sadhana, the constant supervision of a helper or guide cannot be denied. Such guidance or supervision was available in the gurukuls. While living in constant proximity to the guru, any obstruction in sadhana could be easily removed.

Q. In olden times, there used to be gurukuls in our country. Now the tradition of gurukuls is extinct. Under these circumstances, the sadhak today can have no idea of what kind of system of education or sadhana prevailed in the gurukuls. What benefits did the sadhak derive from living there, and what achievements were possible? What have you to say about it, Sir?

Ans. Proper facilities for education and sadhana existed in gurukuls in ancient times. All the students and sadhaks living there were fully dedicated to the guru. Their daily routine was duly prescribed. Their living was temperate and food good and wholesome. Their devotion and dedication to the guru naturally provided the pupils with an opportunity for awakening their powers. In the absence of faith and dedication, no adequate progress is possible either in education or in sadhana. What is most important is that the resident of a gurukul could seek the guidance of the guru in every difficulty. And he was never disappointed. With the guru's help, he could face the most difficult predicament undaunted. Thus, his education and sadhana could proceed without any interruption.

The responsibility for an all-round development of the pupil lay on the guru. The guru, therefore, was very mindful of his pupil's every disposition and activity. Where there is no responsibility, such attention is totally missing. After all, the relationship between the guru and his disciple entails the acceptance of responsibility and perfect dedication. The dedication of the pupil in itself makes the guru accept responsibility for him. The pupil who surrenders his life to the guru, forsakes care, since the guru stands by him in all exigencies. Under the guru's supervision, the pupil grows self-restrained and disciplined.

The ancient tradition of the gurukul has today become a rarity. Neither capable gurus nor gifted pupils are available to continue it. And how will talented pupils be attracted if the proficiency of the guru becomes questionable? The envoy of Chakravarti Bharat goes to Bahubali and says, "Bahlish! Bharat is your elder brother. Elder brothers are like gurus. You should present yourself and win your elder brother's favour through humble and polite behaviour." Bahubali heard the emissary out, kept silent for a moment, then said :

It is shameful to prostrate oneself before a guru who has lost his gravity, and does not possess the qualities of a guru.

It is necessary for a guru to possess gravity and magnanimity. And it is as much or even more necessary for a pupil to be devoted and dedicated. Where there is no gravity and no dedication, there can be no good system of education or sadhana. From this viewpoint, the gurukul system has its own importance. If this system, in a refined form, is re-established, it would mark a turning point and add luster to education and the technique of sadhana.

SHIVIR-SADHANA

*Conditions change! No more sane living in a
Gurukul!*

*Shivirs now partly serve to make good
what is gone.*

*The system grows; all kinds of shivirs,
With different aims are held, on different
grounds.*

*Jain Vishva Bharati, the harbinger of
awakening,*

*Promotes sadhana-shivirs, when and
wherever possible;*

*Ten-day shivirs, or 7-day; peaceful
meditation!*

Campus repose, free from all commotion!

Q. The gurukul tradition is now extinct. But need is felt
— even today for the kind of personality that was
evolved there. Do we have any substitute to make up for
the lost tradition?

Ans. The system of gurukul is gone. It is not acceptable
— to modern sensibilities. Freedom today has found

a new definition. All ancient standards of discipline stand altered. The prestige enjoyed by the guru and discipline in olden times is fast dwindling. The idea of practising sadhana in a gurukul for years together now seems impossible. Because, a gurukul has its own traditions which the residents must observe wholeheartedly. If the tradition is not so observed, it becomes a burden. In the atmosphere prevailing today, the utility of the gurukul institution has become questionable. But an alternative to the gurukul tradition exists—which is shivir-sadhana. Indeed, shivir-system is the new method of this age. It may be said to partly make up for the gurukul-system. Nowadays, a great many shivirs are organised where experiments are being conducted in various fields, such as, education, sadhana, therapy and recreation. Of course, a shivir in any particular field is conducted on its own ground. Every shivir has a different objective. Naturally, the results are also different. Nevertheless, the practice of holding shivirs has met with a fair measure of success.

The Jain Vishva Bharati is a unique institution. Experiments are being held there in three different disciplines—Education, Sadhana, and Service. In order to systematize this experimentation, the Jain Vishva Bharati organizes shivirs from time to time. The Sadhana Centre of Jain Vishva Bharati (Tulsi Adhyatam Needam) is fully alive to this task. The workers of the Needam are responsible for making all arrangements. They want that everyone should drink deep of the fountain of spirituality established here. That an individual should go thirsty in the absence of water sounds natural. But that a man should groan with thirst while living in the vicinity of a vast reservoir of water, is not so intelligible. In this context, Kabir says:

The fish living in the water athirst!
It tickles me to laughter!!

The poet who cannot help laughing at the prospect of a fish tormented by thirst in the midst of water, later writes. "All this happens for want of self-knowledge." All man's confusion, all his contrariety is possible only in a state of self-aversion. The individual whose gaze is turned inwards, changes his character through the practice of *preksha dhyana*, and is able to transform his personality. Incidents of change of character or personality-transformation often occur in the lives of *sadhaks* participating in a *shivir*. Many people achieve freedom from addiction by practising meditation there. Sometimes, a man accepts evils like drinking and smoking, so as not be out of fashion. Later, he gets so caught in the habit, that he cannot get out of it, even if he desires to do so. The participants of *preksha dhyana shivirs*, through inner inspiration and the impact of environment, make possible what appears to be impossible. They are able to dissolve their tensions and acquire the technique of living peacefully.. Until the state of introversion is strengthened through meditation, a change of character cannot take place. There is thus constant need for training and practice in the meditation-camps.

Q. What is the fundamental objective of *preksha* — *dhyana*? In what direction and to what extent can a *sadhak* practising *preksha dhyana* progress?

Ans. The chief objective of *preksha dhyana*, is to make — religion a way of life. Religion today appears to be impotent, the reason being the complete absence of its practice in the lives of religious people. Without practice, religion cannot influence life. In order to introduce religion in life, the practice of meditation is a must. It has been said in *Isibhasium Sutra*, that religion without meditation is like a body without the head. Meditation is the practical form of religion. It is in the practice of meditation that religion is activated in life. Until one enters meditation in

depth, the secrets of religion are not revealed. Religion in itself is a mystery, which remains incomprehensible to a superficial observer.

Once the disciples of Guru Gobind Singh assembled before him in a group. While acquainting him with their problem, they said, "Everyday we sing in praise of the Lord, but it has brought us no enlightenment. We have practised sadhana for years together, but to no purpose." Guru Gobind Singhji said, "I understand your problem. We shall look into it."

A few days later, he called all the disciples and said, "Fetch me a pitcher full of wine and gargle your mouths with it, without letting go a single drop down the throat. Do it till the pitcher is emptied." The disciples fetched a big pitcher of wine. They took mouthfuls of wine and instantly spat it out. Within no time, the pitcher got emptied. Guruji said, "Did you finish the whole lot?" And when they replied in the affirmative, he said, "It was a lot of wine. Didn't you get intoxicated?" The pupils looked at their guru in surprise. They humbly said, "Gurudev! We never let a drop go down our throats. So how could we get intoxicated?"

Guruji, taking up their words, said, "O pupils, here is the answer to your problem. You have sung in praise of the Lord, but only superficially. The name of the Lord never got deep down your throat! How could you be benefited? Until your whole mind is identified with the name of the deity, until you repeat it with all your heart, until you become rapt iterating it, no benefit would accrue to you." In the context of this story, it becomes apparent that unless one descends into the depths of religion, all religious worship proves futile. Sadhana is a fruitful method of exploring the depths of religion. After undergoing this process of exploration, all doubts stand resolved of themselves. The question about the utility of religion for the present age does not then arise at all.

THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

*Some there are whose life is quite transformed
When they perceive by themselves the errors
they make.*

*Pure natural faith, resolution ever strong;
Long practice, smooth and unhindered;
A disciplined, restrained, unattached mind,
Most excellent base for shivir-sadhana!*

Q. A systematic programme of shivir-sadhana is being — carried out for the practice of preksha dhyana. In the shivirs, a sadhak finds the right kind of atmosphere, proper guidance and all material requirements conducive to sadhana. With all these facilities, is a sadhak able to bring about a change in his life?

Ans. Change is the fundamental principle of life. No — individual remains the same for long. Nor should he? A child grows into an adolescent, a young-man, attains maturity and enters old age. Every individual has to pass through this process of change. That is the inevitable sequence. Change does not relate only to a situation; it can be inner as well as outer. Outwardly,

the skin of the body changes; within, all the elements of the body undergo a change. With the chemical changes occurring inside the body, a corresponding change occurs in one's thoughts, in one's habits and in one's character, too. These changes mould an individual's personality.

The individual seeks intellectual development. He wants to develop courtesy in conformity with the age. He is also eager to reform his habits. How to change one's habits has become a great problem. In order to establish harmony between the family and society, it is very necessary to understand and use some psychological technique of bringing about a change in character; otherwise, so much malice accumulates between the members of the same family that life becomes impossible. Mutual suspicion is created, misunderstandings grow. The non-removal of these factors results in increasing acrimony which gives rise to mental conflicts. To maintain a balanced outlook under these circumstances, it is necessary to change one's habits.

Some people are addicted to being intoxicated. The use of intoxicants strengthens this habit. Once this habit is confirmed, there is excessive use of intoxicating drugs. Too much of a dose and too frequent, makes a man so dependent on the drug that it is no longer in his power to abandon it. Addiction to intoxicants creates all kinds of problems—physical, mental and financial. The disintegration of the bodily system has a direct influence on the mind. Similarly, financial imbalance adversely affects the mind. Mental disequilibrium gives rise to strife in the family. Irrascibility and excitement increase it. Thus, one problem appears after another. All these problems can be resolved through meditation.

Q. That meditation is an infallible method of bringing — about an inner change, is true. But how can an

individual surrounded by problems prepare his mind for undertaking meditation? Even if the right mentality is created, how can inveterate habits, nourished for years, be changed?

Ans. Tension is at the root of some habits. The individual continually afflicted with one problem or the other becomes a victim of tension. In order to mitigate that tension; he takes to intoxicating drugs. This affords some superficial relief, but the inner tension becomes more pronounced. That inner turmoil no intoxicants or drugs can remove. Scientific experiments conducted at various places have proved that hypertension which medicines failed to alleviate, was quite resolved through meditation. Our experiences during the shivir-period have also established that the individual undergoes a great change while practising meditation. Many people given to excessive use of intoxicants, and others suffering from causeless excitability have been found to change greatly after attending a dhyana-shivir.

It is an indisputable fact that the more tense a man is, the more stubborn he becomes. In a state of obstinacy, he cannot realize his error. The psychology of dhyana can create a state of non-insistence. Meditation, in itself, is an exercise of humility, of non-prejudice. During meditation, the ego dissolves, pertinacity disappears, gentleness grows and pliability develops. The reason is clear—the practitioner of meditation makes progress in the direction of direct experiencing of truth. When truth is realized, there can be no obstinacy of any kind. Only one who knows truth by hearsay may be importunate, but the man who perceives truth directly, surrenders himself completely to it, and in such a situation there is no room for any kind of obduracy to develop. It does not require any effort to bring about a change in a non-assertive

individual; the change there occurs spontaneously. Through meditation, the whole structure of tension is shattered. One's vision grows clear. Wilfulness ends, and a pliable mind can spontaneously give up any wrong habit.

The doctrine of Non-absolutism, *Anekantvad* or *Syadvad* (the Jain doctrine of multisided perception) propounded by Lord Mahavir was the fruit of his meditation. How can a sadhak who does not practise meditation, apply the doctrine of *Anekant* in his life? Also it is only in moments of dhyana that a non-assertive doctrine like *Anekant* can manifest itself.

Now the question is: how can an individual bewildered by his problems, go into meditation? It does present some difficulty. But no difficulty can survive the clarity of vision and high will-power. When a man is so abundantly clear that he can change every habit through meditation, he becomes determined to practise it. With will-power, a man can mould his mind to proceed in any direction whatsoever.

Q. Can an individual achieve self-transformation by
— sheer will-power?

Ans. Transformation through meditation is possible
—— only when one has deep faith in the practice of meditation. Without such faith, one would not be able to go into meditation. Some people's faith is spontaneous; in others it has to be created. If faith is seasoned with will-power and continuity of practice is maintained, the way to progress is opened wide. Practice is an element which keeps the chain of sadhana intact. If this chain is broken, success becomes doubtful. The combination of faith, determination and practice leads to the develop-

ment of self-discipline in a sadhak. This discipline is not imposed, it evolves naturally. It inevitably leads to the development of self-control. By self-control we mean complete identification and absorption. This total identification is mindfulness in action. Self-control does not mature through mere renunciation or repudiation. Renunciation is also a kind of sadhana, but it is not perfect. For perfection in sadhana it is absolutely necessary to combine control with emotional identification.

Perfect control is possible when the mind is detached from material objects. Or we may put it differently by saying that attachment to self-control leads to disillusionment with matter. The change from attachment to disillusionment is a psychological fact. In order to take away something held by a child in his grasp, his attention is diverted to a more attractive toy or article. Otherwise he would not relinquish it. Disaffection with material objects also occurs when contact is established with the soul or the spirit of awareness. Patanjali has described this state as dharana (full concentration). The non-stop current of dharana is dhyana, and total engrossment in dhyana (trance) is samadhi. Dharana, dhyana and samadhi—all three are necessary for the perfection of self-control. By the process of shivir-sadhana, dhyana-sadhana is consummated.

Q. Is a sadhak generally admitted to a meditation—shivir unconditionally, or does he have to take certain pledges?

Ans. For good sadhana, it is necessary for a sadhak ——— to be properly equipped, and properly initiated. Without being initiated, the sadhak will not be able to carry out the instructions of his guide. Every technique of meditation has its own precepts. Preksha dhyana has three—the right way, right understanding and self-control. The sadhak accepts these precepts in the following words :

I accept the right path;
I accept the right faith;
I accept the right action.

The first precept is related to the search for one's aim. Without discovering his aim, no individual can make any headway. One's aim regulates one's activity. If the sadhak has no idea of what his aim is, where will he go? A man went to the railway booking office to buy his ticket. The booking clerk asked him, "Where are you going? For what station shall I issue the ticket?" The man said, "I'm going to my in-laws." "But what's the name of the village where your in-laws live?" asked the booking clerk. The man said, "I've forgotten the name of the village. You just give me a ticket." Now, unless the destination is clearly stated, no ticket can be issued. Similarly, without first determining the objective, the purpose is not served. The word 'mārg' in Hindi (meaning "the way", "the path"), means, to explore, to enquire, to investigate. The way connotes a kind of search for one's aim; it is the means to reach one's destination. After one's aim is determined, it is necessary to find the way to achieve it.

There are many paths. They take us to different goals. Every path ends in a destination. Now the question is which path is the right one. In my opinion, no path

can be said to be absolutely right or absolutely wrong. The determination of right or wrong depends upon the relation of cause and effect. If a man bound for Calcutta catches a train bound for Bombay, he has chosen a wrong path. But for a man going to Bombay, it is the right path. A man suffering from indigestion takes a medicine for high fever; that is wrong. Although the drugs meant to cure indigestion and fever are right, each in its own sphere, but they become wrong, if used wrongly. In the outward conduct of life, a just understanding of right and wrong is very necessary. Likewise, the importance of finding out the right way to one's destination in one's inner life cannot be ignored.

In the context of *preksha dhyana*, the aim of the *sadhak* is to achieve the purification of the mind. The *preksha sadhak* does not practise meditation to achieve concentration; because concentration can be found even in a hunter, a lustful person or a thief. In the absence of concentration, no work succeeds. Indeed, success in any work is inevitably bound up with concentration. But a spiritual aspirant cannot reach his goal through concentration alone. Only that concentration which accompanies purity or contentment can take him to his destination. The *sadhak's* wholesome attitude towards his goal is the right approach. Right approach is the second point of initiation into *dhyana*.

The third point of initiation is control or self-restraint. A *sadhak* can enter the field of spirituality only if the beginning of his pilgrimage is marked by temperance—temperance of mind, speech, senses, and the body. Where these are under control, the individual becomes supremely alert. The greater the inner awareness, the maturer is one's faith. Right faith is like the lamp on the doorsill. It disperses its light on both sides—within and without. Through it one gains the right path, also self-

control. Thus, it has an important place in preksha initiation. The first among the three steps of initiation symbolises movement in the direction of spirituality, the second is an inspiration to explore the inner world, and the third is indicative of roaming within with mindfulness. This initiation in the form of three auto-suggestions serves as stimulating food for the preksha sadhak, from which he constantly derives nourishment for life.

Q. After determining one's goal one must find out the — right way to achieve it. Does that right path become available only after the achievement of right faith or is it possible to discover it earlier?

Ans. The path is of two kinds—goal-oriented, and — non-committed. The non-committed way, however good in itself, cannot take one to the goal. One man's objective is to acquire money. In order to fulfil this objective, he sits in meditation. This way is not goal-oriented. Meditation is very good. It is also necessary for making life harmonious. But the objective of money-making is not fulfilled thereby. Similarly, the man whose objective is self-realisation or the purification of the mind, cannot afford to be involved too much in outer phenomena. If a sadhak whose aim is to realize himself, is occupied all the time in money-making, if he is involved in immoral activities like violence, or engrossed in sexual gratification, and yet thinks he is progressing towards his goal, it is sheer illusion on his part. Only right approach can regulate the factual. Until the vision is just and clear, it becomes difficult even to determine one's goal and many complications arise. In a state of confusion, each individual tries to find fault with the other. That is why it is necessary that the search for the right path must be accompanied by right faith. A mind endowed with right faith alone can end all complications.

Anekant (multi-sided perception) should be the basis for resolving complications. A student studies at school; he also attends to business in his shop. These are two diverse occupations, and yet the student is not caught in confusion. Confusion would arise if an effort were made to merge these two occupations into one. But the two activities are all right in their respective places. To proceed in the direction of the committed objective, it is most important to develop right faith. A man endowed with right vision, irrespective of what he does in life, good or bad, comprehends his action in its proper perspective. What is taken to be true is true no more, when the perspective changes.

In preksha dhyana initiation, the right path, the right faith and the right (temperate) action—all three have an equally important place. Of course, any point requiring special attention at a particular moment, is duly emphasized, but even in the course of emphasizing it, other points should not be lost sight of. The use of the Anekant doctrine is specially useful on such occasions. He who does not comprehend Anekant, often gets confused. "If the path is all-important in the field of sadhana," he asks, "What is the necessity of right faith or action? Or if right faith or moderation in action are significant, why be concerned about the right path?" As long as one is caught in this confusion, the direction of sadhana does not become clear. What is required is a comprehensive and simultaneous appraisal of all the useful elements of sadhana in relation to one another.

THE RULES OF INITIATION

*Temperance in food; in speech; universal
goodwill;*

*Freedom from reaction—action natural
and free;*

And mindfulness for ever and in everything;

Five golden rules of sadhana are these.

Q. Does success in the practice of meditation come — immediately after accepting initiation into preksha dhyana, or something yet remains to be done? What are the points about which a sadhak should exercise great care during the sadhana-period?

Ans. The mere act of initiation can never be a guarantee of success in any field. Mastery in sculpture or any other art does not come easily. How could it be otherwise in the field of meditation? In meditation, there takes place a transformation of the inner disposition. This transformation does not occur in a moment. For this one has to pass through a definite period of time and a definite procedure. The sadhak of preksha dhyana after being initiated into it, acts in accordance with the

rules of sadhana. The initiation into preksha dhyana is accompanied by the acceptance of five rules—temperance in food; temperance in speech; friendship for all; freedom from reaction; and mindfulness.

The first rule is temperance in food—food is related to the body, and the body to the mind. To discipline the mind, it is very necessary to discipline the body. Control over food is even more important than the necessity of food for the body. Often fasting or hunger does not hurt a man so much as over-eating. Over-eating is the greatest hindrance to meditation. A sadhak, if he exercises restraint in food, can go into deep meditation at any time. On the contrary, after excessive eating, one's state of mind is not at all conducive to meditation. Over-eating, invariably, induces sloth and sleep. Meditation symbolises a higher level of consciousness. From this point of view, the simpler, the more wholesome and the more frugal a man's diet, the greater facility he enjoys in meditation.

The second rule of initiation is temperance in speech. Speech is a necessity of group life, because it is the means of expressing one's feelings. A man who keeps alone, has little opportunity for speaking; he naturally falls silent. A newborn child, if kept in total isolation, would never learn how to speak. Speech has value only when there is with you someone who listens to you. But even in community living, silence is more important than speech. In order to delve into the depths of sadhana, not only outer silence, but inner silence is necessary. It is a great weakness in man that he speaks too much. To use ten words or sentences where one would do, is a waste of time and energy.

It is desirable for the sadhak of preksha meditation to observe complete silence, even outside of meditation

hours. Specially after taking a vow to observe silence, to keep on communicating with others through gestures is not at all useful. Speaking through gestures involves a greater expenditure of energy than speaking with the tongue. Therefore, a sadhak, if he cannot observe complete silence, must at least practise temperance in speech. The criterion of frugal speech is that a man should consider for a moment or two before speaking, as to how much speech is required. And after he has spoken, he should try to find out if it would have made much difference, if he had not spoken at all. Similarly, to speak with deliberation, to consider what kind of language to use, or whether to speak aloud or low, are other aspects of temperance in speech. By his sense of discrimination, a sadhak can avoid unnecessary speech.

The third rule of initiation is friendship. The plant of goodwill can only flower on the ground of equanimity; it is capable of identifying itself with the soul of the world. The more a sadhak is swayed by like and dislike, the more feeble his meditation is likely to be. Both attachment and aversion hinder friendship. For an individual attached to a particular person or thing, it is natural to be malevolent to another person or thing. Even if the vibrations of malice are not clearly perceptible, we have no reason to deny their existence. Similarly, parallel to disenchantment with things and persons, run the vibrations of attachment. In these circumstances, compassion is a state of mind which, transcending both attachment and aversion, takes an individual to *veetaragta* (total freedom from passions). He who practises *preksha* meditation, must be suffused with compassion, otherwise his meditation cannot be self-revelatory.

The fourth rule of initiation is freedom from reaction. It has become man's second nature to react all the

time. From morning till evening, a considerable part of his activity is reactionary. He who lives in reaction, loses spontaneity. He cannot even remember why he is doing a particular work. One man abuses another. Whether that abuse has any meaning or not, the victim finds it difficult not to react. Somebody benefits or harms another, both these activities evoke immediate reaction—goodwill for the benefactor and aversion for the enemy. It is a great weakness to succumb to reaction. A man finds it difficult to act independently. The occasion for independent thinking and action outside the conditioning of circumstances does not arise. In such a situation, to strive to lead a life of non-reaction is a great discipline. However hard that discipline may be, until it is successfully practised, one cannot expect desired results from *preksha dhyana*. Everyday, the *sadhak* should try to act and live in such a way as to be totally free from reaction. If one constantly examines oneself from the very beginning, one gradually comes to know whither one's *sadhana* is tending. Also, it is necessary that this examination be conducted by the *sadhak* himself. One who learns not to act in reaction, is a deserving *sadhak* in the true sense of the word.

The fifth rule of initiation is mindfulness. Mindfulness is related to every activity of life. No action, however big or small, should be performed without the *sadhak* knowing it fully. Mindfulness means to give oneself totally to the thing one is doing, without the least separation between the doer and the doing. Phrases like 'with full consciousness', 'total engrossment', 'adequate response', etc., symbolise mindfulness. It happens many a time that a person is engaged in some work but his mind is elsewhere. Such a situation arises for want of training in mindfulness, i.e. the mind, speech and action

are not fully harmonised. Mindless action is a sign of unawareness.

Once a fly settled on the forehead of Mahatama Buddha. The mahatama's hand lifted automatically and the insect flew away. After a couple of moments, the Buddha lifted his hand deliberately and turned it as if to remove the fly. The pupils sitting near the Buddha were surprised, and one of them said, "O Lord, what is it you are doing? Right now there is no fly or mosquito here. What makes you move your hand like that?"

The Buddha smiled and said, "O pupils! I'm correcting a mistake. A moment ago, a fly came and settled upon me. I did remove it, but not consciously. I was not fully alert at the time. My mind was elsewhere, and my hand lifted mechanically to drive away the fly. After becoming conscious of my lapse, I am now rehearsing the act with full consciousness, so that the tendency to act unconsciously does not grow in future."

The pupils listened to the Buddha and understood the secret of mindfulness. Mindfulness is the element which makes an individual aware of his bad habits and evil tendencies. Thus, if an individual gets angry, he must know that he is in a state of anger. Conscious anger is never so fatal as unconscious anger. It is by being fully aware of all that happens to us, good or bad, that our instincts can be sublimated. For the upward movement of consciousness or the sublimation of instincts, the practice of mindfulness is very useful.

Q. All these five rules of initiation are very practical — and their utility is beyond doubt. But the problem is, how is one to inculcate them in one's everyday living?

Ans. Generally, all these five maxims accepted at the ——— time of initiation, imply a movement against the current. To swim with the current is easy. A little piece of straw, when dropped in the flowing stream, would be carried along the current for thousands of miles. But, if it tried to flow against the current, its movement is stopped. Man, too, by nature, swims with the current. To swim against the current requires extra strength and courage. When the sadhak of preksha dhyana accepts initiation into meditation, he thereby takes the pledge to move against the current. As his determination matures, the practice of the five rules mentioned above also becomes natural. With the weakening of one's resolution, the practice of the rules appears to be very difficult and complex. In order to assimilate these five rules of initiation, the sadhak will have to commit himself to his objective. In the face of full commitment to his aim, no situation can become a hindrance in the sadhak's path.

PRELUDES TO MEDITATION

*Now on to preksha, its order and process,
A detailed, authoritative, objective*

presentation:

*Dawn, the last part of night, finds the
seekers awake!*

*After routine ablutions, all gathered together!
The endless conflict of thought, day and night!*

*How to be free from that is the first
consideration.*

Q. You have already expounded the theoretical aspect
— of preksha meditation. Is there a practical aspect,
too?

Ans. Theory and practice—each method of sadhana is
—— a current flowing between these two banks. A
technique which has no theoretical basis, cannot continue
for long, and a theory which is not actualised in practice,
cannot be of much use. No one can say how many
techniques of sadhana originated and then disappeared

because their theoretical or practical aspects were not well-founded. The elements of *preksha dhyana* lie scattered in the Jain Agamas. The Jain Acharyas have been making use of them from time to time. But somehow, they never gave it all a stable practical form. That is why the current of *dhyana* developed only by fits and starts. In order to remove the recurring stagnation, it was necessary that the practical aspect be made manifest in a systematic way. The whole sequence of *preksha* meditation has therefore been laid down. So that all can practise it easily. For a critical evaluation of the procedure of *preksha dhyana*, three things are necessary: a tranquil, objective mind, authentic statement and extensive portrayal of the essential elements.

In the normal routine of practice, the first thing is getting up in the morning. After having slept through the night, it is proper to wake up at dawn. The normal hour of awakening is the last part of the night. Those *sadhaks* who get up at about 4 O' clock, are able to conduct their *sadhana* well. The daily routine of those who keep irregular hours for sleep and waking up, or those who go to bed late and rise late, is totally disorganised. Such people can never become true *sadhaks*.

Q. Somebody asked Tana Faqir, "What is your — *sadhana*?" The Faqir said, "When I feel sleepy, I sleep. When I feel hungry, I eat. After having slept, I wake up. If I feel like speaking, I speak, otherwise I keep silent." What do you think of this doctrine of Tana Faqir as regards sleeping and waking? If a person has not had enough sleep by 4 O' clock and is obliged to get up, all his actions are marked by languor, and if he sits in meditation, he begins to doze. In these circumstances, will it not be proper for him to get up only when he has had enough sleep?

Ans. One who does sadhana on one's own, and has ——— passed the initial stages, becomes uncommitted in many ways. At an advanced stage, living in a natural way can become a part of sadhana. But novices in this field who want to learn something, will do well to follow a regular and prescribed routine. The talk of dozing and laziness if forced to get up at the appointed hour before one has had one's full quota of sleep, has not much weight in it, because it is possible through practice to create a healthy habit, which would make an individual wake up from sleep at the right time, and fully rested. Otherwise one can go on sleeping all the day long out of sheer laziness. It has been said :

Sloth, sex, sleep, hunger and wrath are five evil dispositions which increase all the more with gratification.

Sleep is one of these. Experiments have been conducted in this regard. An individual may sleep for 8 hours without any interruption. However, while practising dhyana regularly, a person who normally sleeps for 8 hours, reaches a stage where 2-3 hours of sleep provides him the fullest possible rest. The conclusion is that if you give sleep a free reign, it tends to occupy more and more of your time, but with will-power and control, sleep can be reduced to the minimum. A preksha sadhak is not required to reduce sleep to the minimum, but at least he must arrange his life so that he can get up at about 4 O' clock. A man with irregular living-habits, may experience some difficulty to begin with, but with practice he will soon form a new—and whole-some—habit.

The 4 O' clock hour is most appropriate for the sadhak, because at that time the atmosphere is full of

atoms which stimulate freshness, joy and consciousness. This hour of waking up is good both for health and meditation.

Q. Should one sit for meditation immediately on waking up, or do something else?

Ans. One may sit for meditation immediately on waking up, but during the period of meditation there should be no bodily obstruction of any kind. That is why evacuation and daily ablutions must be preferably attended to first. After these, an individual feels fresh and alert and all lethargy vanishes of itself, and the mind is ready for meditation. If one sits for meditation on the bed immediately after waking up, the possibility of being assailed by the atoms of sleep is very real. It is, therefore, desirable to perform one's ablutions first, and then prepare to sit for meditation. Those who practise sadhana on their own, sit alone for meditation, but the participants of a shivir practise group-meditation.

Q. Which is better, individual or group-meditation?

Ans. In ancient times, emphasis was laid on individual meditation. The Agamas also support this practice.

That an individual cannot practise meditation on his own is nowhere laid down. Where will those who conduct special experiments in meditation or practise meditation in their homes, offices, etc., find large enough groups? Yet, 'group-meditation' is very much prevalent these days. The new learners in preksha shivirs are made to practise 'group-meditation' at least four times a day. One reason for it is that group-meditation favorably

affects the whole atmosphere of the place (the vibrations, etc.). A person practising dhyana alone, feels uncertain and weak, and if he cannot get the right environment, he is not able to concentrate. When many people sit together, the vibrations of the life-force become stronger. One man's power is then available to another. From this point of view, group-meditation has a special importance.

One requirement preparatory to meditation is a free, unoccupied mind. Even when a man is by himself, from the ideological point of view, he is not alone—the conflict of thought goes on in his brain undiminished. The brain affects the mind. The mind is full of contradictions. A mind caught in contradictions is not fit for dhyana. Therefore, one must determinedly work to keep the mind free.

THE POSTURE OF MEDITATION

*Empty the mind, adopt a posture firm
Which naturally comes, heralding success!
Assume a posture, easy, comfortable, calm,
Standing or sitting, with total concentration!
The backbone straight, the body relaxed,
Half-closed eyes, hands rested on the lap!*

Q. Is there any need to practise asanas or pranayama — for meditation, or the mere emptying of the mind and brain of all thought creates the right atmosphere for dhyana?

Ans. No method of sadhana can be partial or one-sided. It is designed to discipline the body, the mind and the soul, because all the three are closely-knit, and each one influences and is influenced by others. In the practice of preksha meditation, three disciplines of steadiness occupy an important place. The first relates to the steadiness of the body—to make it still, to train it properly, to acquire the capability of controlling it. With-

out disciplining the body, it is not possible to control speech or the mind. Because the body is the grossest of the three. That which is gross can be more easily grasped. In the process of meditation and in *kayotsarga* also, the first consideration is control over the body. The practice of asanas, too, is a kind of body-training.

What posture should one assume while sitting for meditation? There is nothing obligatory about it. Any sadhak can assume any posture at any time, which he finds convenient and comfortable. However, it should be kept in mind that facility in assuming various postures acquired through regular and systematic practice of asanas, can prove extremely convenient to a sadhak during meditation. From this point of view, a few asanas are recommended, such as Ardha-Padmasana, Padmasana, Vajrasana, cross-legged pose, etc. All these are comfortable enough and good for meditation.

Q. Is an asana used for meditation only, or has it other — uses, too? Even people not practising meditation, do yoga asanas regularly. Indeed, some people look upon the doing of asanas as yoga itself. Generally, in the yoga classes, only asanas are taught. Does the word, yoga, signify a whole tradition or merely the exercise of asanas?

Ans. Asanas are essential for meditation. But apart — from that, these are also performed for physical and mental health. The chief cause of bodily and mental illness is the wrong working of the parts of the physical organism. Sloth and over-exertion are the two conditions which upset the bodily system. To prevent such a disorder, the sadhak is given training in asanas. Many asanas are taught which are helpful in controlling the senses and mental perversions. In the method of *preksha dhyana*, asanas have a distinct place. Besides the asanas

mentioned above, there are many others, whose regular practice is designed to maintain the equilibrium of energy, to impart a feeling of lightness to the body, increase its agility and lustre, reduce fat and strengthen the nerves.

The asanas form a part of yoga. Of Hatha-yoga, they form the chief part. But they do not embody the whole of yoga. Acharya Haribhadra gives the name of yoga to all those actions which deliver a man from bondage and lead him to salvation. According to the masters of yoga, controlling the functioning of the mind is yoga. Although the word 'yoga' today has become synonymous with asanas, but the asanas do not constitute the whole of yoga. Asana-dhyana, devout austerities and various religious performances constitute an organised system through which the yoga-sadhaks have to pass.

In the Jain Agamas, 'position' is the word used for yoga-asana. Three kinds of positions are mentioned there—standing position, sitting position and sleeping position. The root meaning of 'asana' is to be motionless. Thus, the use of the word 'position', is very appropriate. It is indicative of situation. To practice *kayotsarg* while standing is an instance of the first position; any asana in the sitting pose, an instance of the second; while doing an asana lying down is an instance of the lying-down position. The sadhak of *preksha dhyana* tries to achieve mastery in all these postures.

Q. The talk of mastering various asanas for disciplining the body is quite intelligible, but how does it affect the mind?

Ans. The asanas principally affect the body. But with prolonged practice, they begin to influence the

endocrine glands also. For instance, *sarvangasana* influences the thyroid gland. *Sashankasana* and *paschimotanasana* influence the adrenal. Similarly, some other asanas activate the pituitary and the pineal glands. Their secretions change, and the mind is willy-nilly affected by them. As a matter of fact, any change in any part of the body leaves its impact on the entire physical organism in a gross or subtle form. The mind and the body are linked together. Bodily sickness affects the mind. Likewise, bodily health is a factor of mental health. It is said that a healthy mind can live only in a healthy body. Even if this be a partial truth, it is an established fact that, with the regular practice of asanas, changes occur both in the body and the mind.

Q. Do asanas relate only to a standing or a sitting position, or does their practice involve the body as a whole?

Ans. A partial, one-sided view, can never be holistic. Many important questions are naturally involved in the practice of asanas. For example, what should be the position of the backbone? Should the body be perfectly straight and taut or bent? Should the eyes be kept open or shut? Where should the hands be? The spinal cord is a part of our central nervous system. It is intimately connected with physical changes and mental processes. This also constitutes the path of upward movement of vital energy. It is again through the spinal cord that, before entering the state of meditation, the vital current is made to flow between the centre of wisdom and the centre of energy. In brief, it may be said that the well-being of the spinal cord connotes the well-being of the whole body. And it is possible to develop the practice of meditation on this basis. During the meditation-period, the backbone should be perfectly straight. That is

the first condition. The body may be bent a little forward, never backward. Therefore, one should deliberately keep the backbone straight, with the upper part slightly bent forward.

For the eyes, three possible conditions are : closed, open, and half-closed. If the eyes are kept open, there is greater probability of interference from outside; if shut, there is the possibility of being assailed by wrong notions or sleep. Both these possibilities can be avoided by keeping the eyes half-closed. Therefore, half-closed eyes is considered to be the best option. It is also the prescribed condition in the meditation-posture of an *arhant*.

Last of all, the position of the hands. This may be considered from two angles. While meditating in a standing position, pendulous arms are the norm. For a sitting position, hands are folded in the lap, sticking close to the part between the navel and the pubic region. The right hand is placed above the left. This is one kind of meditation-posture. After one's practice has matured, one could sit for meditation in any other posture. The best condition for meditation, though, is the standing position. Because in that posture, a complete cycle of energy is formed. In a sitting position, there may be some obstruction in the flow of energy. Still, the sitting posture is usually adopted for the practice of dhyana in the shivirs. It stands midway between the standing and the lying-down postures, and is considered to be the most suitable for practising sadhaks.

THE INTERNAL TRIP

*Where there is journeying within, the restless
mind grown calm;*

*Introversion always frees a man from
doubt and error;*

*With consciousness roving inside, innate
nature manifests itself;*

*If it continues for long, all conditioning
stands dissolved!*

Q. The sadhak wants to undertake sadhana. One important part of sadhana is meditation. To sit in an appropriate posture for meditation and to make the body go lax through *kayotsarg* is not so difficult, as to stop the mind from wandering all over the universe. What method do you recommend to bring the mind back from its wanderings?

Ans. Dhyana means, to turn the mind inwards. Spirituality means—to be introversive. In view of this, not to do anything to make the mind integrated, is to be led astray in the path of sadhana. Because, without a

pure and integrated mind, no progress in sadhana is possible.

Man's functions are of two kinds—outer and inner. It may be put differently by saying that on the basis of their instincts, men may be divided into two kinds—extroversive and introversive. Extraversion comes naturally, but introversion has to be cultivated through practice. To be an extravert, one does not have to do a thing, whereas to be an introvert, one is required to put in a good deal of effort. It is necessary for every spiritually-minded person to be introversive, but it is also very difficult. A man's sense-faculties and his mind are for ever turned outwards. These are so much taken up with the outer phenomena, as to have little leisure to turn back and look within. The more one tries to turn them inwards, the more fickle they grow. As long as fickleness subsists, there can be no introversion. And without introversion, a man can never know what is inherent in him. In the absence of such knowledge, he does not even realize that because of extraversion, his inner powers remain unawakened.

Q. It is important that a man should experience peace — and joy in his life. But this philosophy of introversion and extraversion is so very complex that a man finds himself bewildered and loses his peace of mind. How does it harm a man if his consciousness is turned outwards?

Ans. Extraversion, looking outwards, is the mother of — all illusions. To a man caught in illusion, truth appears to be untruth, and falsehood appears to be truth. He experiences pleasure in the material world and for him only this world has any significance. He accepts sensual gratification as his goal. He is wholly engrossed

by outer phenomena. And this condition lasts till his illusions are shattered. There is only one way to shatter his illusions, and that is the undertaking of an internal trip. Through it the mind turns inwards, becomes quiet and is freed from conflict. Just as a tired man relaxes himself on reaching home, similarly a mind caught in confusion and error, having become integrated, gains clarity. As long as it is involved in misunderstandings, even the feeling of pleasure and peace which it experiences at times, is illusory. Only the light emanating from an inner journey can remove the thick gloom of the valley of illusion.

Q. What precisely do you mean by an internal trip?

Ans. The inner journey is related to our spinal cord.

The spinal cord is a part of our central nervous system. On each side of it are the two nerves known as *ida* (parasympathetic nervous system) and *pingla* (sympathetic nervous system). *Ida* is on the left, *Pingla* on the right. The central nervous system is known as *sushumna*. When the vital current passes out of *sushumna*, the central nervous system, and flows through *ida* and *pingla*, extra version takes place, because our consciousness is then diffused. If the vital current flows along the *sushumna*, a path becomes available for consciousness to turn inwards. When consciousness turns inwards, and the sadhak is able to experience it, that moment becomes the moment of self-realization. What one feels at that moment is something to be experienced; it cannot be described. With a view to integrating one's consciousness before going into meditation, the process of inner voyage is unique and infallible.

Q. If a sadhak knows nothing about *ida*, *pingla* and *sushumna*, how can he go on this inner voyage?

What exactly is the process of inner journeying? What is involved in it?

Ans. It is necessary for a dhyana-sadhak to have full ——— knowledge about the bodily system, because it is through the body that one can reach the soul. The outer form of the body is apparent enough, but inside there are innumerable parts of which even the doctors have no complete knowledge. Meditation is the means of discovering not only the soul, but also the unknown secrets of the body. But it is possible only in the higher stages of meditation. To begin with, one can gather information about the principal inner parts of the body with the help of special charts and body-specialists. This knowledge will be found helpful in undertaking the journey within.

For the internal trip, one must withdraw one's attention from all external objects and concentrate it on *Shakti-Kendra* (the Centre of Energy) situated at the base of the backbone. Consciousness then moves from the base, through the *sushumna* (the spinal cord), to *Jnan-Kendra* (the Centre of Knowledge) situated near the crown. The object of this pilgrimage is to initiate the upward movement of vital power. Then the mind is made to move from *Jnan-Kendra* (the Centre of Knowledge) to *Shakti-Kendra* (the Centre of Energy, and again from *Shakti-Kendra* (the Centre of Energy) to *Jnan-Kendra* (the Centre of Knowledge), for accomplishing the ascent of the vital current. *Shakti-Kendra* is the source of inexhaustible energy. The vital energy required for the brain, ascends to it by way of *sushumna*. This process can be better understood through an example.

There is water in the well. A man needs water. He cannot directly get to the water down below. So he makes use of bucket with a rope. The bucket is lowered down,

and is drawn up after being filled with water. The bucket is emptied and again it goes into the well to fetch water. The trips of the bucket up and down produce sufficient water for man. Similarly, consciousness serves like a bucket for carrying vital energy to the brain.

It may be asked, how does consciousness move up and down and down and up? Now, how does the instrument for measuring blood pressure work? The column of mercury moves up from down below and it also moves down from above. This process continues as long as the mercury remains in place. Like the mercury, our vital energy, too, moves upward through *sushumna*, i.e., the central nervous system, to the brain. But until it is withdrawn from the external world, consciousness is not centred in the spinal cord and cannot become the carrier of energy.

The internal trip is a unique movement for awakening supernatural energy. It is a movement for the internalization of consciousness. Prolonged practice directs a sadhak to his inward nature, turns him away from outer phenomena. As long as fascination with the external does not come to an end, the direction of life cannot be changed. It is very necessary to be free from concern with the external. The moment this attachment is gone, the flow of energy becomes continuous, without any obstruction anywhere. The cessation of interruption means progress towards spirituality, joy and spontaneity. That is what the human mind thirsts for. A simple way of fulfilling this desire is the internal trip.

DOES MEDITATION DISSOLVE OR STRENGTHEN THE 'I'-CONSCIOUSNESS?

*The practice of deep breathing sustained
for long*

*Makes a man conscious from moment
to moment;*

*An alert spectator; the breath itself is mild;
Watch it come and go through the filter
of preksha!*

*While sitting or walking or lying down, in the
midst of great activity.*

*Perception of breath goes on from
hour to hour.*

*A mind integrated, a body free from ills,
The ego quiescent, wrath and greed no more!*

Q. In spite of the desire for meditation, favourable
— environment and all external facilities, the sadhak
is unable to control his mind. Even while seated in the
posture of meditation, the mind continues to be restless

because of the wandering thoughts. Where is the mind to find a point of equilibrium?

Ans. The mind is capable of two actions—to think and ——— to perceive. Thinking creates resolves and counter-resolves; perception inhibits thought. If, instead of thinking, the mind starts observing, its wandering ceases of itself. The question arises as to what it is that the mind should observe. The first thing to perceive is one's breathing. For dhyana-sadhana, it is most important to regulate one's breath. Without regulating our breathing, there can be no progress because most of the time an individual takes short breaths. From the point of view of sadhana, it is necessary to practise deep breathing. Both inhalation and exhalation must be silent, slow, continuous and easy. Of course, it is not merely pranayama. Pranayama by itself is not necessary for meditation. The practice of deep breathing, the experiencing of each incoming and outgoing breath from moment to moment with full awareness, is the simplest and infallible method of learning mental concentration.

Q. What is the difference between deep breathing and ——— pranayama?

Ans. Deep breathing in itself and pranayama are not ——— two different things. The exhalation, the inhalation and the kumbhak (holding the breath) have the same role in both. But, to concentrate the mind on each breath and be conscious of it, is meditation, and not part of pranayama. To observe the movement of the breath, its coming and going, is meditation. Pranayama alone may have some utility from the point of view of bodily health, but from the psychological point of view it is of little use, whereas meditation greatly increases the possibilities of mental development.

The practice of deep breathing or being aware of the coming and going of each breath produces three results—alertness, the feeling of being a mere spectator, and slow breath. In the beginning of sadhana, the direct experiencing of these results serves to awaken the sadhak's self-confidence. To awaken confidence in oneself means to come to know one's powers and one's capacity to use them. This is the fruit of deep breath-perception, after experiencing which the direction of one's life stands changed. One becomes established in oneself and develops a distinct identity.

As the practice of breath-perception matures, a state of alertness naturally comes into being. This state becomes perpetual and results in the growth of mindfulness. Then, whether sitting, standing, walking, relaxing or working, in the midst of every activity, one remains conscious of one's breathing. For this one does not have to do a thing. Only one must awaken in oneself the condition of being a mere spectator. Alert and objective observation provides a vision of true self-understanding and weakens the mentality of attachment and aversion.

Q. What is the use of deep breath-perception, wakefulness or objective observation?

Ans. Constant, regular and dedicated perception of breathing over a long period, endows the sadhak with some special benefits. It improves the power of mind to concentrate. It is also useful in removing physical diseases. With the help of deep breathing and wakefulness, the defilements of the mind are, to a great extent, eliminated. From the spiritual point of view, the most important gain is the weakening of the 'I'-consciousness, a feeling of self-assertion. Self-pride increases on account of various factors. If this is allowed to grow beyond a

certain limit, one's personality becomes utterly hollow and one has a sense of inner disintegration. The individual then begins to feel that egoism is destroying him, yet he cannot get rid of it. In a situation like that the sadhak who practises perception of deep breathing with full consciousness, succeeds in dissolving his ego. With the disintegration of the ego, wrath and greed also end. Anger and avarice are the two emotions which destroy the equilibrium of the individual and the community. When these start dissolving, the individual naturally grows tranquil.

Q. That the perception of breathing is conducive to — mental concentration, is intelligible, but to say that this also dissolves the ego-consciousness, anger and avarice, etc. is not so clear. Will you kindly elaborate on this?

Ans. The inner feelings are intimately connected with — breathing. Breath indeed is a reflector of one's inner condition. With the deepening of the breath, pride, anger and greed, grow quiescent. The man in whom the feelings of egoism, anger and avarice are strong, cannot breathe deep and slow. If a man's breath be short, it can be said on this basis that the feelings of egoism, anger, etc., are very active in him. Breath is the element which truly represents the whole of our inner individuality. It is not only the means of taking the vital air within and taking out the carbon-dioxide; it is also the means of awakening or extinguishing many of our powers. Used properly, it can resolve many problems connected with meditation.

Q. You just said that through breath-perception, the — feelings of egoism, anger, etc. are changed, or ended. But it has been observed that meditation and

excitement go together. Sometimes, we find a non-dhyanee keeping cool and collected in a trying situation, whereas an individual practising meditation for a number of years loses his temper. Why does it happen like that?

Ans. This is quite natural. The practice of meditation ————— results in the accumulation of vital energy. With an increase in vital energy, anger also grows. The greater the heat in the body, the higher the mental temperature. And corresponding with anger, man's other dispositions also get defiled. If the energy derived from meditation and austerities is not properly channelized, it can certainly lead to greater anger.

Q. What is a sadhak required to do in a situation like ————— that?

Ans. He should utilize his energy in study, service, ————— and other activities. The intake of food increases energy; by practising asanas, this energy is kept in equilibrium. If a sadhak does not know how to utilize his energy along constructive channels, he is bound to be assailed by anger, lust, etc. It is, therefore, necessary for a practitioner of meditation to undertake hard work. His additional energy is then well spent. Thus, the energy of a man who keeps busy in a regular way, is never misutilized. Only a lazy and easy-going person is troubled on this account. Self-study and anupreksha (contemplation) are the means of utilizing extra energy. Therefore, the man practising preksha meditation, should also do contemplation.

Lord Mahavira was a unique practitioner of meditation, withal a unique ascetic. Going on a journey was an obstacle in the path of his sadhana, yet he undertook

long voyages. Why? He knew that meditation and his ascetic practice greatly increased his energy. To utilize that energy, to direct it along the right channel, he chose the way of pilgrimage. Basically, he spent his energy in awakening transcendental consciousness, in self-realisation, by rising above like and dislike. Whatever energy was still left unused, he utilized it in pilgrimages.

Q. If meditation results in the increase of passions, why do meditation at all?

Ans. It is very necessary to practise meditation for cleansing the mind. Suppressed passion may lead a man astray at any time. It is necessary to rouse the mind, but then one must at the same time master the art of controlling it. The awakening of energy and its right utilization strengthen self-discipline. The lack of discipline only results in disequilibrium. Keeping it in view while practising meditation, an alert sadhak is able to bypass this danger and march ahead.

Deep-breath-preksha also provides rest to the body. A man exhausted by the day's work, is greatly refreshed by practising meditation for 10-15 minutes. Both the mind and the body are relieved and renewed. Besides physical and mental benefits, the spiritual value of deep breath-preksha is also very great. It is a useful staircase for spiritual evolution. The moment one steps on this staircase, new dimensions of consciousness begin to open up by themselves. The whole objective of a sadhak's endeavor is to come to know the hidden secrets of consciousness. The revelation of these secrets can begin in the very first stage of preksha dhyana, provided the sadhak practises it with deep faith and a firm determination.

29

THE PRACTICE OF DEEP BREATHING

*Sixteen breaths per minute is the normal
rate of breathing;*

*It declines with perception and a little
practice.*

*To begin with five or seven inhalation-
exhalations,*

*The practice of deep breathing is capable
of great extension,*

*Till one whole breath per minute becomes
the norm,*

*Filling the mind with satisfaction and
confidence great.*

*The process of breathing in and out, the
pause and pranayama,*

The indisputable beauty of breath-control!

*When breath grows musical, rhythmic
and deep,*

*Inward consciousness grows with complete
self-integration.*

Q. Breathing is natural to every living being, with each — being inhaling and exhaling in a particular way. If mere perception of breath constitutes meditation, then anybody can become a practitioner. On the other hand, the process of meditation has been described as being very complex. Is there not an incongruity here?

Ans. There are many aspects of dhyana—some are — simple, others complex. The process of deep breathing is very simple. Still many people fail to achieve it in the beginning of their sadhana, because they are used to taking short breaths. They have no practice of deep breathing. Even if it is suggested to them that they should breathe deeply, they cannot do it in an orderly way. It is because their method of breathing is faulty. Normally, when a man breathes in, his abdomen expands and when he breathes out, his abdomen contracts. But those who feel their abdomen contracting while breathing in, should deliberately change their order of breathing. The sadhaks, whose breath-movement is right, make good progress. Because of its complexity in advanced stages, dhyana may be said to be a complex phenomenon. So, dhyana is both simple as well as complex, depending on the aspect under consideration. Looked at from the point of view of relativity, no incongruity is involved here.

Q. What is the nature of breath-perception and what — are its results?

Ans. The number of breaths taken provides a standard — for measuring our inner affections. There are three possible states—natural breath, slow breath and short breath. All men breathe naturally. Whether one is conscious of it or not, one is always breathing. Breath is

life. If breathing is stopped even for a little while, one feels suffocated. Breathing is more important for living than bread or water. Normally, a man takes 16 or 17 breaths per minute. If one starts perceiving one's breath, its movement becomes slower. The number of breaths taken decreases from 16-17 to 12-13. With greater concentration on breathing, this number declines further to 10 breaths per minute. Still deeper concentration reduces the number of breaths taken per minute to five or six. The greater the concentration, the fewer and longer the breaths taken, till one takes just one breath every minute. The rate of one breath per minute is indicative of the success of breath-perception. At this stage, the sadhak's whole individuality seems to mingle with his breath, till he feels completely at one with it. Not a single breath comes in or goes out without the sadhak's being aware of it. To inhale as well as exhale breath with full consciousness, to concentrate one's attention wholly on the centre of breathing so as to be fully integrated with one's breath, culminating in the breath becoming spontaneously and progressively longer and deeper—this, in fact, is breath perception.

The first result of breath-perception is mental integration. The second, peace of mind. Breath-perception also results in the increasing and activation of the vital life-force. The most important consequence is the awakening of self-confidence. For confidence is required an abundance of vital power and its activation, which depends upon slow and steady breathing. The slower the movement of breath, the deeper it is. Deep breath creates a cycle which is essential for progress in the field of meditation.

Short breath is indicative of mental disequilibrium. The shorter the breath, the faster its movement. The number of such breaths rises to 50-60 per minute. It

happens so in sickness, in negotiating an ascent, and when the mind is charged with great emotion. In a state of excitement, one breathes in and out at the rate of 40 breaths per minute. Overwhelmed by lust, the breath moves at the rate of 60-70.

Q. Is longevity in any way connected with breath?

Ans. There is no direct connection as such. But breath — is a factor in experiencing the atoms of longevity. Thus, breath may be said to be indirectly connected with long life. Short breath consumes more atoms of longevity, whereas slow breath consumes fewer. The number of atoms is fixed in respect of each man. But the rate at which these atoms are consumed determines the length of time; it determines whether a man has a long or a shorter life. For example, suppose a man collects provisions to last for a month. But if guests arrive unexpectedly and food has to be prepared for them, the provisions are exhausted before the month is over. The same is the condition about the atoms of longevity. More atoms of long life are consumed in a comparatively shorter time, with an increase in the rate of consumption.

Q. The masters of yoga give as much importance to — pranayama as to meditation. What place, if any, has pranayama in the practice of preksha meditation?

Ans. One of the steps in breath perception is breath — control. Control of breath is a kind of pranayama. Pranayama has three elements—inhilation, exhalation and kumbhak, i.e., the holding of breath. Kumbhak is the cessation of breathing, and during the practice of breath-control, the breath is slowed down gradually to the point of extinction. Breath-control is an important method to ensure peace of mind and to break

the unending cycle of thoughts. But it is hazardous as well. Therefore, in the initial stages, breath should not be held up for more than five to seven seconds. A sadhak experiencing difficulty in holding his breath even for this brief period, may not attempt breath-cessation at all. There should not be any forcible stoppage of breath. If somebody wants to experiment with breath-cessation, he must seek the guidance of a specialist.

Breathing is a small step, but it is so important as to be indispensable for anyone practising preksha meditation. Without it, there could be no total concentration or direct experiencing. To establish contact with inner consciousness, for concentration and development of mental peace, there is a secret path worth-knowing and that is rhythmic breath.

Q. What is meant by rhythmic breath?

Ans. Just as there is rhythm in music, similarly there is a rhythm of breathing. The breath which takes four units of time in its inhalation, and is held up for an equal amount of time and again takes the same amount of time in exhalation, is called rhythmic breath. If a man practises it every minute for 20 minutes together, he spontaneously gets into a state of meditation, and no great effort is required to continue in that state afterwards. This is a small beginning—nevertheless an infallible beginning for the maturing of dhyana.

THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION THROUGH PERCEPTION OF BODY

*Starting with the gross, one enters more
subtle regions;
Through constant body-perception, all
suffering is removed!
He who keeps outward and inner equanimity,
Him no extremes of heat and cold torment.
If through extraversion could man
become perfect,
It would be like getting butter without
any churning!*

Q. In the preliminary stages of meditation, the practice — of breath-perception is very easy and beneficial. Even novices experience little difficulty in practising breath perception. What is the object of perception in the next stage?

Ans. We have before us two kinds of worlds—a gross — world and a subtle world. Most people spend their life in the gross world. They find little opportunity for entering the subtle world. Dhyana is a process of moving from the gross to the subtle. Through constant awareness of the gross, the mind becomes fully concentrated, and this concentration opens the door to the subtle world. Perception of body is an instance thereof. The practice of body-perception after breath-perception, is very useful from this point of view.

Body-perception means the observation of the body within and without—from the outside to the inward core of being. When we start observing the body, we first perceive the grosser elements. As the practice of body-perception matures, we begin to grasp the subtler elements, too. Our body is full of vibrations. There is in it bio-electricity, which sets moving all the bodily activities and is responsible for bio-chemical changes. There is the central nervous system at work in the body, also the endocrine system. The vibrations of knowledge and action are also active within, as are all the constituent elements of the body. One becomes acquainted with all this manifold activity through body-perception. The consummation of practice is the vision of one's aura. It is thus possible to perceive the subtler and the subtlest movements of the body. This way of body-perception is the path leading from the gross to the subtle.

Q. By practising body-perception, one comes to know — the inner secrets of the body. One becomes acquainted with all the activity going on within, and one perceives one's aura, too. The question is where all this tends to. Those who know these things, live, and those who are ignorant of all this, also live. The famous philosopher Russel, when talking to some scholar, felt that

it was impossible to be happy in this world. But when he talked with his own gardener, the simple-minded Thomas, his perception of the world underwent a change. Does this not prove that the extension of knowledge is the cause of unrest?

Ans. That knowledge should be the cause of unrest, — does not sound logical. Half-knowledge or non-factual knowledge is certainly the cause of unrest. But then knowledge itself is not to blame for this; what is at fault is the incompleteness or the impropriety of it. There is a moral saying :

Knowledge ends vanity born of arrogance. If someone accumulates a great deal of learning and becomes insane, who is going to treat him? People for whom even medicine serves as a poison, are beyond cure.

In my opinion, an acquaintance with the working of the physical organism increases awareness. With knowledge and awareness together, habits can be changed. In our brain there is an element—the memory-chemical. The physicians got hold of it. They extracted the memory chemical out of one organism and injected it into another. The experiment was conducted on a rat. For days, the rat was given training which led him from darkness to light. After the training was over, that rat spontaneously left darkness for light. The memory-chemical of this rat was extracted and injected into another rat. The second rat, too, like the first, deserted darkness for ever. The same experiment could be conducted on man. But how can the experiment be performed in the absence of full knowledge?

Among the vibrations of thought and feeling present in a man's brain, are also the vibrations of anger and

pride. In order to replace them by worthier feelings, it is essential to know the waves and vibrations operating within. It may be difficult to acquire this knowledge through machines, but a meditator has no such difficulty. Through the practice of meditation he knows how concentration on one particular centre drives away anger; and on another centre ends egoism, and on still another centre serves to resolve problems. Body-perception is a process of bringing about a change in one's habits, it is the science of life-transformation and the path for ending all suffering.

Q. How can body perception bring about an end to suffering?

Ans. Mental suffering has two causes—attachment and aversion. Attachment and aversion arise because of our wrong notions about the body. Attachment and aversion produce suffering. It is difficult to achieve freedom from these by listening to discourses alone. Through the practice of body-perception, the inner truth about the body becomes apparent. As this truth unfolds, the net of illusions begins to dissolve.

Lord Buddha experienced the transitoriness of all life through body-perception. When he saw that the body is nothing but mere vibrations, the mental disposition of accepting matter as something solid and durable disappeared of itself.

Lord Mahavir reflected upon the transience of life for six months before initiation. Again, body-perception was the factor behind this contemplation.

Chakravarti Bharat attained omniscience in the Palace of Mirrors. How did it come about? Again, body-per-

ception was a factor thereof. Constant perception of the body gave him an insight into its fleeting nature and he was illuminated.

The Buddha, Mahavir, and Bharat all practised body-perception. They realized the true nature of the body, directly experienced its transitoriness, and all their suffering came to an end. Suffering ensues only when the inner and the outer are not harmonised. The sadhak who succeeds in harmonising his inner experience with the external phenomena, who is fully integrated, becomes immune from the effect of changing circumstances. In deep body-perception, it is immaterial whether the wind blowing outside is hot or cold. With the experiencing of the movement of consciousness through each and every particle of the body, all physical and mental, i.e., the inner and outer suffering stands dissolved.

Q. If, through body perception, the extravertive consciousness turns into an introvertive consciousness, one becomes immune to the influence of the outer environment. But the state of introversion is not easy to attain. Only a few have the capacity to go through the process of sadhana which turns a man introversive. Is there a technique to end suffering before one reaches the stage of introversion?

Ans. If suffering could end and all one's problems be resolved without any effort on the part of the individual, then there would be no need for man to indulge in contemplation or reflection. If one could straightaway find butter, why bother about the whole exercise of milking the cow and the churning of the curd. However accomplished a man might be, if he really wants butter, he must churn it out of the curd. It has been said :

To milk the cow, to heat the milk, to cool it and set it to yield the curd, to put the curd into the churning pot and stir it constantly with the churning-stick till it is all frothy! Why undertake all this labour? Simply to get butter!

To transcend bodily pleasure and pain, to be free from the suffering inherent in all sensation, is the essence of sadhana. The infallible method of achieving it is to practise body-perception. It does away with negligence and increases mindfulness. The feelings of attachment and aversion come to an end, resulting in the development of equanimity.

BODY-PERCEPTION—THE ART OF AWAKENING ENERGY WITHIN

*The awakening of energy is the goal, the body
the means thereof.*

*Can a boatman cross to the other shore
without the boat?*

*'Observe the body fully!', is the simple
exhortation.*

*Turn the mind inwards, let it not turn
outwards again!*

*With attention duly centred on every part
with deliberation,*

*There is constant experiencing of sensation
without any obstruction.*

*Without inner cleanliness, the goal is
never reached;*

*Extraversive consciousness can never
fruitful be!*

*Of that which has a goodly exterior,
observe the inward nature!*

*Transcend like and dislike, to see
yourselves as you are!*

Q. A sadhak's goal is to come to know himself, to — achieve inner bliss. In order to find one's soul, one has to discipline oneself. How far can body-perception be helpful in the fulfilment of this objective? Is it possible to experience spiritual power through the body?

Ans. In the practice of sadhana, the body's role is great. — Just as it is impossible to reach the upper storey without ascending the staircase, similarly without first disciplining the body, self-realisation is not possible. It may be argued that if one can get a lift, why bother about the staircase? One may straightway jump into self-realisation. But then to how many people is the lift available? Even if the lift is available, electricity may fail and one may find oneself tucked up in a void. Similarly, the straight and instant path to self-realisation is rarely available. And even then, if some impediment offers itself, who is going to rescue one? Bahubali wanted self-realisation right away. His sadhana was also remarkable. Yet such a hurdle came his way that, though near the goal, he could not attain it. The sadhavis Brahmi and Sundri offered him an insight. Thereupon, Bahubali understood the cause of impediment. He corrected himself and the obstacle was removed. Every particle of his being was aglow with enlightenment. But then all cannot be Bahubali nor is the help of Brahmi and Sundri available to all, nor can all jump straight into self-realisation. Therefore, a sadhak should move forward along the prescribed route, supported by the prescribed technique.

One comes across many strange notions about the body. According to these, the body is unholy, a factor of defilement: it is devoid of any essential element and is, therefore, renounceable. But this is an exclusive prejudice. The fact is that the body is only a medium. It can be used both rightly and wrongly. Lord Mahavir compares the body to a boat:

*The body is like a boat. The soul is the boatman.
Life is like an ocean. The great objective is liberation.
Those desiring liberation can cross the ocean
with the help of the boat.*

Just as a boat made of logs proves useful in crossing over the ocean, similarly, the aid of the body-boat is necessary for crossing over the ocean of life. The basis of all kinds of sadhana is the body. The question is, how to utilize it? He who knows the art of utilizing the body can make it yield its special energy which he can then use for liberation.

Q. What do you mean by the art of utilization? If a man — has energy, he can utilize it. But if energy is lacking, then however accomplished a man may be, he has nothing to work on. Will you kindly elaborate on it a little?

Ans. This is best illustrated by a story. A merchant — used to visit many countries in connection with his business. Once he found himself in a country where there were no milch animals like cows or buffaloes. So the next time he visited that country, he took with him a cow. In order to win the king's favour, he usually sent him gifts. Besides valuable objects, among his gifts were milk, curd, butter, milk-preparations like *rabri* and *khoya*, and other delicacies. The king found these eatables to be very delicious. The businessman was a clever guy. Through his gifts, he secured for himself many concessions and his business flourished. After a few months, he set about returning to his own country. The king did not like the idea of his leaving for home. Where would he get those delicious milk products after the man's departure? The king even indirectly hinted at it on the occasion of the merchant's last visit. In the hope of future gain, the merchant presented the cow to the king and told him that

all the delicacies he had brought him earlier, came from that animal.

The merchant departed. The king asked some of his men to look after the cow and he directed them to bring to him immediately whatever that animal might yield. As per the king's command, the king's servants, carrying gold and silver vessels, stood beside the cow. After some time, the cow urinated. One servant advanced with the silver vessel in his hand and collected the urine, and went straight to the king. The king looked at the yellow liquid in the vessel and observed, "The merchant always brought white things. May be this is something special." Saying so, he filled a small bowl and raised it to his lips. He had hardly drunk two draughts of that foul-smelling saltish liquor, when he began to fret and fume. Before he could say anything, another page brought him cowdung on a golden platter. The king said to himself, "May be this fresh substance is O.K. and he put a spoonful of it in his mouth. He felt so nauseated as to immediately spit it out. Even a lot of gargling with fresh water failed to remove altogether the astringence of the tongue.

The king was beside himself with anger. He commanded his men to arrest the merchant and present him in the court immediately. How dare he make fun of the king! What a fraudulent person! The king's men sent in search of the merchant caught him while he was still in the king's territory, and brought him to the court. For once the merchant was nonplussed. But when he came to know the real situation, he could not help being mentally amused at the ignorance of the king and his workers. The severe glance and bitter words of the king did not disturb his equanimity. With great humility, he said, "O king! I couldn't deceive you even in a dream! Still my fault has been that I did not acquaint you with the technique of milking." By this time, the king's anger was all spent. His curiosity was aroused. The merchant explained at length everything from providing the cow with feed and water

to the technique of milking and preparing various milk products. Thereafter the servants of the king looked after the cow well.

This is only a tale. We need not go into how true it is. But the moral is clear. It is not given to every man to have an understanding of the available energy and to utilize it. The river of energy flows on, and a man does not know how to exploit it. Body-perception is the means of realising the power of the soul. He who succeeds in tapping and exploiting this inexhaustible source, makes great progress in the field of sadhana. Let the sadhak of preksha meditation collect energy and utilize it to achieve his goal. For this it is necessary for him to understand very well the process of energy-collection. One who does not know how to tap this energy, cannot come by it.

Q. Kindly tell us in simple and clear words what the process of body-perception is.

Ans. The first and foremost thing is the withdrawal of the mind—to withdraw it from the external phenomena and turn it inwards, and to ensure through regular practice that during the meditation-session, it does not once again turn outwards. After this preliminary starts body-perception proper. From the toe to the top of the head, or from the top of the head to the toe, attention should be focussed on every part of the body, and all the sensations, vibrations, all the changes and movement going on in the body should be observed. The inner sensations should be observed more closely. Observation here means experiencing, feeling out. The eyes should remain closed. Just as an injection is given and the medicine diffused deep inside the body, similarly, in feeling out the sensations within, in observing them dispassionately without attachment or aversion, the mind becomes introverted, and inner purification ensues.

Q. Does detaching the mind, truning it inwards, gradually lead to greater concentration in meditation or does the sadhak also have some unique experience?

Ans. The direct experiencing that takes place in moments of introversion, is not possible in a state of extraversion. Generally, a man cannot even imagine the great world of joy, the innumerable felicities within, because our acquaintance is limited merely to the outer world and its pleasant sensations. We do not know the inner world at all. The cause of this non-acquaintance with the inner world is the waves of attachment and aversion inundating our life. Until these settle down, there can be no inner experiencing. Acharya Pujyapad says :

A sadhak whose mind is not ruffled by the waves of attachment and aversion, can perceive the soul which is invisible to others.

Our consciousness is like a tranquil pond. If a small stone is thrown into a pond, it becomes rippled. Similarly our mind, affected by the waves of attachment and aversion, becomes wavering and unsteady. To maintain its tranquillity, the mind must turn inwards.

If we look at it from the physiological point of view, our body is a big factory. The outermost part of the body is the skin. While practising body-perception, one first gets hold of the vibrations on the surface. The vital current of meditation flows along the skin. The stirrings or electrical vibrations of the life-force felt all along the skin are because of it. After one has grasped those stirrings and vibrations, it becomes natural to experience at a deeper level the vibrations and sensations beneath the skin. To perceive these at a deeper and still deeper level—this constant experiencing is body-perception; it is also introspection.

TRANSMUTATION OF FEELING

*The practice of body-perception is a natural,
simple way;*

*For the awakening of psychic centres, a
matchless device!*

*The aim of meditation is the practice of
equanimity;*

Order, regularity, a new light every minute!

*All the psychic centres exist in the body
undefiled.*

*The scientist's glands and the doors of
chakra yoga!*

*So long these remain inert, wisdom cannot
be awakened;*

*In the mortal frame lie dormant these
immortal treasures!*

*The whole campaign is aimed at awakening
these!*

*Let the sadhak exert for consciousness to
move upwards!*

Q. Our body contains within itself the good as well as — the bad, the essential and the inessential. What elements which meditator gets hold of, depends upon the meditator's own capacity and sadhana. Through body-perception, we are able to grasp the vibrations and sensations of the body. How far can we go as our practice matures?

Ans. One of the exercises of *preksha dhyana* is the — perception of psychic centres. It is a developed form of *preksha* meditation itself. In short-term body-perception, attention is focussed on each and every part of the body for a short time; sustained perception of psychic centres is not then possible. But if attention is focussed upon each and every part of the body for a long time, as in long-term prolonged body-perception, it is possible for the meditator to probe the psychic centres. Although, the perception of psychic centres forms a part of body-perception as a matter of course, still for special development, a knowledge of these centres and concentration of attention upon these for a long time is very necessary. The psychic centres are important parts of our body, where our consciousness subsists in a most concentrated form. Normally, consciousness is spread along the whole body. According to Jain philosophy, the soul dwells in the body. But to awaken each and every particle of the body is not possible for every individual. Therefore, some special centres, wherefrom the waves of consciousness can issue with greater ease, are formally located for sustained observation. The greater the degree of awakening of these centres, the greater the transcendental knowledge one acquires. The more mature the practice of *dhyana* becomes, the quicker is the awakening of these dormant centres.

Q. By inventing a practical and experiential method of — meditation, you have conferred a great boon on

those people who wish to progress in this direction. Those who have no such urge, may also be inspired to take up the practice of dhyana. In this context, a question arises as to what is the basic aim of preksha dhyana?

Ans. The chief objective of preksha dhyana is the ——— development of equanimity. This requires deep introspection. If the urge to know and see is activated, an objective and impartial vision developed, and the consciousness of attachment and aversion dissolved, equanimity comes into being of itself. With the development of equanimity, all incongruities disappear, disorder ends and one is blessed with a new light. In the state of equanimity, the sensation of like or dislike is no more, the reality of things comes home to one and attachment dissolves.

Man greatly longs for absolute and unending joy. This he cannot get, unless his wisdom is anchored in equanimity. It is here that meditation on psychic centres plays a great role. Because the psychic centres, if allowed to continue in a state of defilement, can only be productive of incongruities and contradictions, but if they get purified, they produce equanimity. Currents of perverted feeling are responsible for the defilement of the psychic centres, but purified consciousness frees them from emotional dirt. Purified consciousness naturally activates the psychic centres. If such a condition does not arise spontaneously, meditation on the psychic centres, concentrated attention on these, results in their activation. Time and labour required for the awakening of the centres will always be commensurate with the capacity of the meditator, but this much is certain that no labour spent in this field can ever be futile. In some way or the other, it serves as a factor in the development of equanimity.

Q. The capacity for meditation and general proficiency — may be different in different persons. There are also various techniques of meditation. Because of the difference in techniques, the results could also be different. But the body which is the medium of sadhana, is very much alike in the case of every individual. Hitherto, the practitioners of meditation have repeatedly observed the body from within and without. Mahavir too practised body-perception. Yet no one has talked about the psychic centres. What, according to you, are the psychic centres? Were these identified in the past ages or not?

Ans. The psychic centres are no new discovery. Who — ever have delved into the depths of meditation, have found their psychic centres awakened. Of course, it is very difficult to determine the precise number of these centres. There are innumerable centres of consciousness. Only a few of these centres can be known and activated. Activated psychic-centres connote certain parts of the body rendered absolutely clean and spotless like crystal. The Hindi word for it is 'karan', which means charging the body with special energy and rendering it super-functional. To render the body 'super-functional' means, to utilize the special energy thus developed. Our sense organs are 'functional', because it is through them that we apprehend objects. We see through the eye, hear through the ear, smell through the nose. These parts perform their functions and are, therefore, 'functional'. In that sense, the body, too, is functional. What is primarily meant by this is that we can make the whole body super-functional; after it becomes 'super-functional', any part of the body may be used to see, to hear, to taste. We can then see, speak or hear with the eyes. This is very much like multiple comprehension or extensional awareness mentioned in the Agamas. If the whole body

can be *karan*, 'super-functional', it becomes possible to speak with every part of it. This may be understood through the metaphor of the lamp.

If a lamp is covered with a thick lid, not a ray of light will emanate from it to the world outside. But if a meshy cover is put on it, light would filter out through the meshes. And if the lid is taken off altogether, the lamp would spread around its full light. Similarly, if one's consciousness is thickly hooded, it becomes an obstruction to the diffusion of light because of the dense cover. The rays of light filter through a meshy cover. The psychic centres are like meshy-covers from which rays of knowledge come straining through the holes. To put off the covers means to make the whole body transparent like a crystal. In such a state, the screen is altogether dispensed with. The rays of knowledge emanating from the whole body freely spread all-round. But this requires long practice and intense devotion. Until the whole body becomes 'super-functional', one cannot attain to transcendental or supreme knowledge.

It is not that the psychic centres were unknown in ancient times. Various glands and knots recognised by the physiologists are nothing but these psychic centres. So are the *chakras* mentioned in the tantra-texts and hatha-yoga. In modern terminology, the electro-magnetic fields in various parts of the body may be treated as synonyms for the psychic centres, and their presentation as such will prove helpful in making the process of meditation more easily comprehensible in today's environment.

Generally, the psychic centres may be found in two conditions—inactive or dormant, and active or awakened. Some particular centre in a man may be spontane-

ously activated but all the centres of all men do not remain active at once. Through practice, one or more centres may be awakened or activated. The centres of consciousness located in mortal human frame are like secret treasures. The process of preksha meditation is intended to activate these centres. Breath-perception, body-perception, internal trip, *kayotsarg*—all form parts of that process. Without regulating the psychic centres, there can be no control of emotions. Unless the psychic centres are transformed, there is little possibility of a change of heart. And without changing a man's feelings, general nature or habit, there can be no transformation of personality, no spiritual development, whatsoever, not even any upward movement of consciousness. In view of this the activation of the psychic centres is very important. The sadhak who practises perception of psychic centres with deep devotion is bound to succeed.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE PSYCHIC CENTRES

*The Centre of Knowledge in the brain
containing a thousand names,*

*Whose mark is knowledge-oriented
consciousness;*

*The Centre of Peace, the source of joy
in the frontal lobe,*

*Let man explore! It is a fitting occupation!
Or concentrate on the Centre of
Enlightenment for spiritual exaltation!*

*The Centre of Intuition also known as the
Centre of Command*

*In the middle of the eyebrows, happily
observed with a mind simple and straight!*

Q. While talking about body-perception you made a — mention of the psychic centres and told us what these are. Will you now kindly name these centres? And where are these to be found? And what influence they exercise on man? When do these lie dormant and when are they awakened?

Ans. There are numerous psychic centres in the human body. All of them have not been discovered, nor is it possible to know them all. As already mentioned earlier, when the whole body becomes *karan*, i.e. 'super-functional', every bit of it becomes a centre of consciousness. Still certain centres have been individually identified. In the practice of *preksha dhyana* today, *sadhaks* are told to meditate on thirteen centres. Their names, positions and effects are by now clearly known. These are dealt with below.

There are two important systems in the human body—the nervous system and the endocrine system. The most important part of the nervous system is the brain, which controls all our knowledge and action. The whole empire of the body runs on signals from the brain. The middle part of the head, the crown is extraordinarily important from the point of view of *sadhana*. The centre of transcendental consciousness is located there. This is our *Jnan Kendra*, the Centre of Knowledge. In the terminology of *Hatha-Yoga* it is called the *Sahasra Chakra* (the thousand-petalled lotus, the upper cerebral centre.) Both the right and the left parts of the brain are connected with consciousness. The physiologists say that the left part of the brain is used for language, mathematics, logic, etc. and the right part is the receptacle of wisdom. The Centre of Knowledge is more allied with the right part.

The development of *Jnan Kendra*, the Centre of Knowledge, leads to the awakening of insight. The awakening of insight is also associated with the forehead. The pituitary gland is its principal centre. Yet it seems that the subsequent development of insight is possible only through *Jnan Kendra*, the Centre of Knowledge. From this viewpoint, meditation on *Jnan Kendra* is very important. The total development of mental knowledge is

accomplished by activating this centre. If Jnan Kendra, the Centre of Knowledge, remains dormant or inactive, a man, despite vigorous effort, cannot develop his insight, whereas if this centre is roused, every step taken by an individual takes him nearer his destination. In the comprehensive activity of this centre, the possibility of omniscience cannot be denied.

Q. In spite of the development of knowledge-oriented — consciousness, one can have no peace unless one is delivered from internal passions. Should a man concentrate on the psychic centres to achieve victory over passions?

Ans. In the front part of the head, in the sliding line — of Jnan Kendra, the Centre of Knowledge, there is located a special psychic centre which has been identified as the Centre of Tranquillity, Peace. This centre accounts for man's strong emotions. It regulates human passions and body-temperature. With the purification of the Centre of Tranquillity, all passions and strong emotions are extinguished of themselves. This centre is therefore also called the Centre of Passions and Their Extinction. As long as it remains unrefined, it is known as the Centre of Passions. But on being purified, it becomes the Centre of Tranquillity.

Man's consciousness, his dispositions, habits and illusory actions have all their respective centres for manifestation present in the body. However, it has not yet been discovered as to where precisely a particular centre for the manifestation of a particular disposition is located. The physiologists and the psychologists did some research on this subject and found out the centre which regulates passions. The ancient masters of spirituality,

too, had undertaken research on this topic but their discoveries were forgotten during the middle ages. Through a comparative study of the conclusions arrived at by the modern and ancient researchers and through our own research we have tried to locate various centres. To some extent our effort has been successful and we have been able to identify them. This discovery has increased the utility of meditation on the psychic centres.

According to the psychologists, emotion is man's fundamental disposition. There are two kinds of emotion—internal (urge or impulse) and external. The control of external emotion is not good from health point of view. But if the urges and impulses are not controlled, the situation becomes positively harmful. Those who have meditated long on the Centre of Tranquillity, have been found to succeed in controlling their urges.

Q. According to a belief there is a third eye in our — body. Is it really so? If yes, does one of the psychic centres constitute this eye or does it have an independent existence? Where is it located?

Ans. Just below the Centre of Tranquillity is another — important centre called Jyoti Kendra, the Centre of Enlightenment. Here is located the pineal gland. The physiologists have not been able to gather much information about it. Recently, some discoveries have been made about it on the basis of which its importance is being assessed. As a matter of fact this Jyoti Kendra, the Centre of Enlightenment, is called the third eye.

Some people recognise, Darshan-Kendra (The Centre of Intuition) or Agya-Chakra (The Centre of Command) to be the third eye. From another point of view,

Darshan Kendra (The Centre of Intuition) and Jyoti Kendra (The Centre of Enlightenment), may both be called the third eye, but the latter, because of its usefulness has a greater importance. Jyoti Kendra (The Centre of Enlightenment) is the centre which annihilates anger. By meditating on this centre, wrath dissolves very soon. From the point of view of *brahmcharya*, too, this centre has great utility. It has been recognized as the controlling or master-gland. It controls the secretions of all the lower glands. The purification of this centre resolves many of our physical and psychological problems.

Q. For the third eye you have suggested the names of — both Jyoti Kendra (The Centre of Enlightenment), and Darshan Kendra (The Centre of Intuition). You also gave some information about Jyoti Kendra. But where is Darshan Kendra? And what is its function?

Ans. The location of Darshan Kendra (The Centre of — Intuition) is the pituitary gland. It is positioned between the two eyebrows. Concentration on this centre turns *preksha* into inner *preksha*, and it turns wisdom into intuition. At this stage, a man's personality becomes wholly introvertive. With the evolution of introversion, outside factors cease to be obstructions. From the point of view of *sadhana*, this point on the forehead, may be said to be a great boon. If we make use of it with full consciousness, concentration and will-power, it can transform our lives beyond imagination.

Q. What is the basis of the nomenclature of these — centres?

Ans. The centres have been named on the basis of — their functions and the results achieved through

them. In the ancient texts are to be found names of the body-*chakras*. In the Tantra-Shastra and Hatha-Yoga, for example are mentioned certain names. But our finding is that there are not only six or seven *chakras* in the body; rather there are to be found there hundreds of centres of power and consciousness. Out of these some important centres were selected and experiments of meditation performed on them. The experience thereof naturally formed the basis of the present nomenclature. No texts were consulted, nor any deliberations held for finding suitable names for the psychic centres. In the very process of their exposition, certain names happened to suggest themselves and these appeared to be appropriate. What results does meditation on a particular centre produce in the body, in the mind and in life? With such a basis formulation, we had also in mind the objective of making the names of the psychic centres significant and intelligible.

AWAKENING OF THE PSYCHIC CENTRES : PURIFICATION OF EMOTIONS

*Chakshus Kendra, pupil-centred, doubtless
the bridge of peace,
For natural concentration, filling the body
and mind with joy!
The sixth centre in the ear, for alert
recognition;
Increase in wakefulness is its
great contribution!
And whoever concentrates on the tip of the
nose, the Centre of Vitality,
Is filled with energy, his whole being
wreathed in smiles!
Brahma Kendra on the tip of the tongue,
for continuous meditation;
Lust subsides of itself, the inward voyage
goes on without a pause!*

Q. What is the function of *Chakshus Kendra*, the
— Centre of Vision? Does it clarify our vision or
affect the waves of passion within? While meditating on
this centre, should the eyes be kept open or closed?

Ans. The eye sees everything but we never centre our
— attention on the eye. To see and recognise it we
need an inner eye which can be opened through medita-
tion. The eye is intimately connected with the brain. It is
an important medium for the diffusion of vital electricity.
When we close the eye and meditate upon it, we save a
considerable amount of electricity which could be utilized
for developing our will-power or concentration.

Chakshus Kendra, the Centre of Vision, may also be
called the window of the brain. Its function is to refine
the emotions and develop mental peace. As long as the
psychic centre itself remains defiled, it cannot influence
the current of emotion. From this point of view, meditation
on *Chakshus Kendra* (the Centre of Vision) is bound to
purify one's vision. If one's vision is pure, one's approach
would also be clear. The man endowed with a clear ap-
proach is neither suspicious of another, nor does he con-
duct himself in a way as to invite suspicion upon himself.
With the maturing of meditation on *Chakshus Kendra*, the
cerebral cortex also becomes activated, because this centre
is also connected with the Centre of Knowledge.

Whether the eyes are kept open or closed or half open
or unwinking would depend upon the temperament of
the meditator. The position in which there is the least
intrusion of thought during meditation and which is con-
ducive to the increase of concentration, will prove useful.
However, half open eyes are generally deemed best for
meditation. When one wishes to close the eyes, one should
do so very softly.

Q. Is there a psychic centre meditation on which — increases wakefulness and strengthens self-control? In the beginning, the moment one sits for meditation, one begins to doze. What psychic centre must be awakened to be free from sleep?

Ans. The Centre of Alertness increases wakefulness — and delivers one from the onslaught of sleep. This centre is located in the ears. The sensations of consciousness are pretty clear here. A little concentration on these helps to remove sloth. Sleep evaporates and inner awareness grows.

In our country women often get their ears pierced. Why? To wear ornaments? Superficial thinking may derive such a conclusion. But if we go into it deeply we shall find that our ancestors started this tradition of ear-piercing after a great deal of thought. Whether this secret is known today or not, the physiologists have established on the basis of experiments that the upper and lower parts of the ear are very important from many points of view.

The monks of the Nath sect get their ears pierced. They get very big holes made in their ears, and that is why they are called *kanfat* which means 'having perforated ears'. Nowadays, people might go in for getting their ears perforated in blind imitation of a tradition, but originally this special exercise was performed to increase one's capacity for self-control.

According to the physiologists, the human ear and the sinews around are very important. A Russian scientist and a lady-doctor of Hong Kong have freed many people from addiction to drinking and smoking by administering electric shocks on their ears. All this goes to establish that the ear is the centre of wakefulness and that is why it is called the Centre of Alertness.

During the practice of preksha dhyana, several people have achieved freedom from addiction to intoxicants and they have been able to give a new direction to their life. There are many unknown secrets about our body. The ancient masters sought them, and today's science is also engaged in their discovery. There is no room for doubt or non-belief here. If we come to know those secrets and make right use of them, we can derive great benefits.

When a boy is naughty, he is pulled by the ear. Repeated verbal instructions may fail to bring home to him something which he immediately grasps the moment his ear is pulled. This practical example also makes it clear that the ear and the area adjacent to it and the temples constitute a very sensitive field. In ancient times, meditation was done on these, and in the system of preksha dhyana, too, this centre has been accorded due importance.

Q. According to available references to the meditation-posture of the great preceptors and other yogis, there was prevalent a tradition of meditating on the tip of the nose. Is there located a psychic centre there, too?

Ans. The ancient tradition of meditating on the tip of the nose has been long prevalent. Acharya Hem Chandra, describing the meditation-posture of Lord Mahavir, says :

○ Lord! The posture of your totally relaxed body in the lying-down position with unwinking eyes fixed on the tip of the nose, is most remarkable! And it is not accessible to everyone.

The main reason for fixing the gaze on the tip of the nose is the existence there of vital energy. Although

the vital energy abides in other parts of the body, too, the front part of the nose is its principal centre. The moment consciousness is fixed there, the fundamental nerve is tensed and *mulabandh* materialises of itself. The tip of the nose is a typical point of consciousness. It is known as *Prana Kendra*, the Centre of Vitality. Many acharyas have advocated meditation on *Prana Kendra*, with articulation of 'Om' or of the aspirate. The centre there commands significance, along with the mantra. The nose-tip is the centre of vital electricity. Thus, the activation of this centre is very necessary for the invigoration of vital power. The vital power abiding in our body is all important. Only a man endowed with vital power can do something. He whose vital power languishes, can do nothing. A man devoid of vitality is sunk in despair and becomes frustrated. To remove despair and frustration, meditation on *Prana Kendra*, the Centre of Vitality, is very useful.

Q. What psychic centre should be meditated upon to — conquer lust? What other ways are open to a sadhak in this context?

Ans. Brahmacharya is connected with *Brahma Kendra*. — Brahma means the soul. For self-remembering, meditation on this centre is a must. It is located on the tongue. The tongue is not concerned only with eating and speaking, it is also connected with sexual desire. Sexual craving has two end-points—the tongue and the genitals. Only the sadhak who is capable of controlling these two sense organs, can conquer lust.

Some people are of the opinion that the control of the senses is not necessary for meditation, that this control inevitably comes into being in the practice of meditation. From one angle, this idea may be all right. Yet every sadhak is not so capable as to properly use the energy

released by meditation without practising self-control. In the absence of control, if the current of energy is turned in a contrary direction, the possibility of some great calamity occurring cannot be denied. Therefore, the control of the senses is also necessary. The man who has no control over his palate will find it difficult to be free from lust. If the electrical vibrations of the tongue are tranquil, the electrical vibrations of the genitals, too, will remain tranquil. Although all the senses are factors in the stimulation of the sex-centre, the tongue occupies the foremost place among them.

Whoever has written anything about Brahmcharya at whatever time, has also elaborated upon moderation in food. It is not a matter of some gross connection, rather the question pertains to the intimate relationship between the tongue and the genitals. Research was done on this interrelationship and its results have proved to be infallible from the point of view of sadhana. Through control over the senses, moderation in food, easy and regular life, and the practice of meditation, a man can conquer lust. He has also to take certain precautions from the practical point of view. Combined with all this, meditation on *Brahma Kendra*, is a sure means of realising brahmcharya.

AN UNPARALLELED BOON FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

*The Centre of Purity certainly is the chaste
pit of the throat,*

*Transmitting nectar through auspicious
jalandhar-bandha!*

*The centre of high bliss, yielding joy
absolute, is*

*The heart-chakra, for ever joined with heart
consciousness;*

*Tejas Kendra, remover of all darkness,
bejewelled, beautiful,*

*Located in the navel, opening ever-new
dimensions!*

*The Centre of Health and Power, the
great Muladhara;*

By awakening it, men rise to Truth!

Q. The great problem of the modern age is disequilibrium, lack of balance. One immediately loses one's balance in the face of a little opposition. Even if one person allied with group consciousness, becomes unbalanced, he directly or indirectly influences the whole group. What kind of meditation do you suggest for a durable and certain resolution of the problem of mental imbalance?

Ans. From the physiological point of view, the thyroid gland is very important. The metabolic process is regulated by it. From the point of view of sadhana, it is the seat of the Centre of Purity. For the purification of feeling, meditation on this centre is very necessary. Problems arising out of meditation on the lower centres can be resolved through it. In the purification of intense emotions like anger, etc. it is actively beneficial. The relaxation of the larynx and the perception of the Centre of Purity simultaneously make a rare harmonious and beautiful combination. The sadhak who attains such a combination, after surmounting many difficulties of life, reaches a point from where his goal is clearly visible to him.

One of the processes of hatha-yoga is *jalandhar-bandha*. The chin is made to rest in the notch between the collar bones and at the top of the breast-bone. In that state, one has a feeling as if nectar is flowing down one's throat. It happens in the region around *Vishudhi Kendra*, the Centre of Purity. This centre has an important role in obviating the restlessness of the mind. A simple resolution of the problem of mental imbalance is the relaxing of the larynx and *jalandhar-bandha*. Meditation on *Vishudhi Kendra*, the Centre of Purity, and *kayotsarg* of the throat remove all uncertainty. Imbalance arises because the mind is caught in uncertainty. With the dissolution of uncertainty, the mind grows tranquil and the state of disequilibrium comes to an end.

Q. If a sadhak wants to undertake advanced exercises — in sadhana and wishes to avoid strong emotions that might arise during meditation, what psychic centre should he concentrate upon?

Ans. There is a centre of consciousness near the heart, — called *Anand Kendra*, the Centre of Bliss. This centre represents feeling. The consciousness of the brain, and the consciousness of the heart—these two phrases are often mentioned. The brain is associated with logic and the heart with feeling. With the awakening of the Centre of Knowledge, a man becomes logical and argumentative, while the activation of the Centre of Bliss results in the development of faith. Consciousness is said to be directly connected with the brain, though our inner consciousness is connected with the endocrine system, too, through which our feelings manifest themselves. The consciousness of the heart is intimately connected with feelings. Our heart immediately gets hold of the sensations of pleasure or pain. The heart and the whole region adjacent to it, is influenced by the Centre of Bliss. Some people call it the *Chakra* of the Heart. In Hatha-Yoga, it is called the *Anahata-Chakra*. Meditation on this centre along with the recitation of mantras is a good beginning. Some specific spiritual disciplines are also practised through the medium of this centre. There is no room here for the risks and difficulties involved in the practice of meditation on the lower centres. From this angle, the Centre of Bliss is a typical and convenient centre for meditation.

Q. *Manipur Chakra* is said to be in the neighbourhood — of *Anahata Chakra*. Where is this *chakra* located? What is its function? And for what psychic centre may it serve as a substitute?

Ans. *Manipur Chakra*, so called in Hatha-Yoga, is — known as *Tejas Kendra* (the Centre of Bio-Electricity) in *Preksha Dhyana*. The physiological term for it is 'adrenal glands'. It is located in the region around the navel. It is said to be the centre which produces vital power. According to the physiologists, the adrenal glands are responsible for the transmission of energy. In certain special situations, these glands make typical secretions which result in an unthought-of increase in power. Meditation on *Tejas Kendra*, the Centre of Bio-Electricity, develops the vital power. From the point of view of *sadhana*, this centre is the principle source of making available abundant bio-electricity. Bio-electricity is the energy which a *sadhak* needs most. A man without energy is incapable of doing advanced exercises in the field of *sadhana*, nor can he succeed in them. Ordinarily, bio-electricity is to be found in the whole of the body, still there are certain principal centres, among which the rear part of the navel is important. Energy develops through meditation on this portion and this energy could be utilized in awakening the remaining psychic centres.

Q. The psychic centres which you have discussed so — far, are all located above the navel. some people think that only these centres above the navel are good for meditation, that meditation on the lower centres is fraught with risk. Is it so? What psychic centres are found below the navel? Should one meditate upon them or not?

Ans. The psychic centres are mainly connected with — our spinal cord and some other typical parts of the body. All the psychic centres in the body have not yet been discovered. The physiologists know about these even less. All the same it is correct that the centres situated above the navel are pure and clean. Normally, prolonged

meditation is practised on these centres. The lower centres are not so pure. In the system of *preksha dhyana* so far only two lower centres have been used for meditation—the Centre of Health and the Centre of Energy.

The psychic centre located between the navel and the pubic region is the Centre of Health. In Hatha-Yoga it is called *Svadhithana Chakra* (the hypogastric plexus.) In the language of physiology, this region is influenced by the gonads. From the point of view of brahmcharya, this centre is of great utility. The relationship between brahmcharya and health is not yet fully known to modern physiology. However, the ancient masters of spirituality gave it a good deal of attention. According to the discoveries made by them, from the points of view of both sadhana and health, the practice of brahmcharya has a special importance in the acquisition and preservation of energy.

Below the Centre of Health is the Centre of Energy. In Hatha-Yoga it is called the *Muladhara Chakra*. It is the lower-most of the fundamental centres. It is connected with *sushumna* or the nervous system. The energy which is created by *Tejas Kendra*, the Centre of Bio-electricity has its source in *Shakti Kendra*, the Centre of Power. From this viewpoint, it is also called the Centre of Energy. The electricity or energy required by our brain is supplied by this centre. That is indeed the objective of the exercise of the internal trip during which consciousness is made to move up and down, from the Centre of Energy to the Centre of Knowledge and back. During that trip our consciousness, becoming the vehicle of energy, conveys it to the Centre of Knowledge in the brain. Thus, all the psychic centres make an unparalleled contribution to our physical, mental and emotional health and spiritual development.

Tejas Kendra (the Centre of Bio-electricity) in the rear part of the navel, *Swasthya Kendra* (the Centre of Health) located between the navel and the pubic region, and *Shakti*

Kendra (the Centre of Energy) below are not so important from the point of view of spiritual development, but they have their utility from the physical point of view. *Tejas Kendra* is the centre of vital power (bio-electricity); it is, therefore, essential for survival and health. To meditate upon *Swasthya Kendra* (the Centre of Health) and *Shakti Kendra* (the Centre of Energy), is not that essential. Generally, one should meditate upon and above *Anand Kendra* (the Centre of Bliss). In the preliminary stages, sadhaks are made to meditate upon the lower centres, too, for a little while. But along with these, it is necessary to meditate upon the upper centres. If *Darshan Kendra* (the Centre of Intuition) and *Jyoti Kendra* (the Centre of Enlightenment) get activated, there is then no need to concentrate upon the lower centres at all. As to what particular psychic centres and in what condition should a sadhak meditate, one should seek guidance from experienced people.

Q. Some people have been practising meditation for — years together and other are novices. Whose psychic centres get awakened early? Does a sadhak come to know clearly that his psychic centres have been activated?

Ans. There is no fixed rule about the time taken for — the awakening of the psychic centres. Some sadhaks do not experience any change within themselves even after practising meditation for a long period. Their psychic centres also remain inert. However, some sadhaks make good progress within a short time. Such a transformation takes place in them as to fill themselves with surprise. No one in the beginning has direct intimation of the activation or otherwise of the psychic centres, but it may be definitely asserted that the psychological and intellectual development, the diminution of egoism, higher instincts, the sublimation of personality, the resolution of mental confusion and diseases, are strong proofs that the psychic centres are very much alive.

'KUNDALINI' IN JAIN-YOGA

*Flowing for ever in the backbone, tranquil
 Sushumna!
 Pleasant Jnana Kendra above, boundless
 energy below;
 Near the Centre of Power is 'Kundalini'
 located,
 Also called Tejoleshya or Tejas-tan.
 Two forms has Kundalini: dormant and awake;
 Only connoisseurs of yoga know its
 true nature!
 The worship of kundalini can become a curse;
 Without proper guidance, one only comes
 to grief.
 But he who masters it, attains deep samadhi!
 Hair and nails cease growing, all pains
 melt away.
 Resplendent Kundalini is of two kinds!
 abundant and abridged;
 Dormant power is brief, but when roused it's
 colossal!*

Q. Whether one knows it or not, the field of yoga is a
 — region of many secrets. Those who have gone into
 it, have sought and discovered many unknown secrets

and through their sadhana have opened up new dimensions. Kundalini, too, is a mysterious element of yoga. Jain Agamas are silent over it. From the point of view of Jain Yoga, is kundalini a power or not? If yes, where is it to be found?

Ans. In Jain Agamic literature, the word 'Kundalini' finds no mention. However, in subsequent literature influenced by Tantrism or Hatha-Yoga, this word has been used. Kundalini is certainly a mystery; nevertheless, in Jain Agamas is to be found a detailed description of its nature. The difference of name is there of course, but there is no question of denying its existence. Among the accomplishments of yoga, kundalini is recognised as a form of energy. In Jain yoga it is established as a special power under the name of *Tejoleshya* or *Tejolabdhi*.

In our body there are chiefly three kinds of vital currents. The central current flows through Sushumna in the backbone. Below Sushumna, is *Shakti Kendra*, the Centre of Power. Above Sushumna is *Jnana Kendra*, the Centre of Knowledge. Both these centres are connected with Sushumna. Without power or energy there can be no development of knowledge and without knowledge, energy is not properly utilized. Therefore, both these centres and the medial region between them constitute an important part of the body. From the point of view of sadhana, all the systems of sadhana have recognised the importance of this region. Near *Shakti Kendra*, the Centre of Power, there is another storehouse of energy, which can be taken as the location of kundalini. In the system of *preksha dhyana*, *Tejoleshya*, *Tejolabdhi* and *Tejas-body* are three mysterious words. The secret of kundalini is to be found in these.

Tejolabdhi has two forms—dormant or inactive and awakened or active. When this energy is dormant or inactive, instincts remain unsublimated. The sublimation of instincts too requires energy. A man without energy can-

not perform even minor tasks. How can he then accomplish such a great task as that of sublimation of his nature. When the power of Tejas, bio-electricity, is awakened or activated, utmost care must be exercised in its utilization. As long as electricity is conducted through insulated wires, it provides coolness in summer, warmth in winter, light in darkness and it can run great engines. But when the insulation of wires is not adequate, it can cause unimaginable harm. Similarly, the power of bio-electricity when used in the right direction, proves to be a great boon, but wrongly used it can turn into a curse. In view of this it is necessary to awaken the Centre of Knowledge along with the Centre of Energy. Without the awakening of the upper centres, the activation of the lower centres can pose a great danger. Therefore, in this whole process, it is necessary to obtain guidance from a guru. In the absence of proper guidance, difficulties are bound to arise.

Q. From the point of view of sadhana, what kind of — guru must one find? What is the criterion? The guru's scholarship? His experience? Or his sadhana?

Ans. In this matter, the qualification of the guru cannot — be measured on the basis of book-knowledge. Only an accomplished and experienced person can efficiently discharge the important functions of the guru. Just as treatment done under the supervision of an experienced doctor proves successful, similarly, sadhana practised under the care of an experienced guru produces the right results. A doctor prescribes some medicine, and in the case of it producing a reaction, a worsening of the disease, he also knows its antidote. The unfavourable reaction produced by one drug he can neutralize by administering another drug. Experienced gurus, too, keep assessing regularly a sadhak's physical, mental and emotional condition. Their watchfulness is most valuable since it prevents a sadhak from coming to harm in the case of an experiment having gone wrong.

Q. In many yoga books, kundalini has been depicted as — a coiled she-serpent. Is the Tejas power (bio-electrical energy) mentioned by you in this context similarly portrayed?

Ans. The 'she-serpent' is a metaphor. Just as a serpent — moves in a winding fashion, similarly, our *sushumna* artery is shaped deviously, not straight. When the she-serpent sits coiled, it is calm. Our bio-electricity energy, too, while inactive or dormant, is in the same condition. If the she-serpent is provoked and infuriated, she becomes dangerous. Similarly, if energy starts moving upwards and does not find the right channel, it becomes troublesome. If the flow of bio-electricity is miscarried to the right or the left, it produces fatal diseases, like inflammation or burning-fever. Thus, a sadhak has to put up with both physical and mental dangers. Sometimes it results in madness. Therefore, while mastering the kundalini, or moving the bio-electricity upwards, it is necessary to exercise utmost care.

Bio-electricity is a kind of energy. It evolves out of the food one takes. Tejas Kendra, the Centre of Bio-electricity is also a producer of vital energy. Radiations therefrom activate the life-force. The power of the body referred to in Hatha-Yoga as kundalini, is the same as Tejas-Shakti (bio-electricity) of Jain-Yoga.

Q. The awakening of kundalini or tejas-shakti is fraught — with many risks. On this there is complete unanimity. Why should one entertain so many dangers to develop this power?

Ans. Just because it involves certain risks, an important — task is not left undone. Is there a task which involves no risk? Above, below, across—dangers surround us on all sides. A valiant man passes through them

for high achievement. He who surrenders in the face of dangers, can never make any progress. It may be the path of sadhana, or of business, of scientific inventions or cooking food, dangers abound everywhere. The process of awakening kundalini is also not free from danger, but without awakening this energy, the state of samadhi or even the condition of total concentration and certainty is not possible. The state of samadhi is attainable only through concentration of attention. Otherwise the indiscriminate traffic of thoughts cannot be stopped. With the awakening of tejas-shakti, life becomes rhythmical of itself. No thoughts intrude upon one's consciousness then. Then, one may have to force oneself out of samadhi, in case of need, but to go into the state of samadhi requires little effort.

In ancient texts are mentioned some other results of the awakening of tejas-shakti or kundalini. Normally, everyone's hair and nails grow. With the growth of tejas-shakti, this outgrowth is withheld. Physical and mental diseases are cured. Such changes are not impossible, in view of the many chemical changes taking place in the body.

In the marvellous tales of the omniscients (Tirthankars) all these things are authenticated. The hair and nails of the omniscients cease growing. This is a fact, no exaggeration. The omniscients are also free from all kinds of pains and diseases. Mental diseases do not touch them at all. Even physical diseases are temporary visitors. They cause no defilement. So much electricity is active in their body, that the atoms of disease are simply incinerated.

Bio-electrical energy is of two kinds—cool and hot. Cool energy is used for favour, and hot for subdual. This energy which can act both as a boon and a curse, is important from many points of view. That is why, despite the risks involved, the sadhak continually makes efforts to develop and awaken this power.

THE AURA

*Tejoleshya's influence on the mind is divine;
From the bright envelope of light, joy flows!
How fascinating is the sweetly-smiling face!
Like a new spring blossoming in autumn!*

Q. *Tejoleshya*, *tejolabdhi* and *tejas-shakti*, are all synonyms. *Labdhi* and *Shakti* are found in many books. But, *leshya* perhaps is a technical word of Jain philosophy alone. What new facts do the words *leshya* and *tejoleshya* allude to?

Ans. The doctrine of *leshya* in Jain philosophy is very comprehensive and of far-reaching influence. *Tejoleshya* or *kundalini* is a form thereof. It is the door to spirituality. Without the awakening and activation of *tejoleshya*, one cannot enter the field of *sadhana*. Nor can there be any progress in spirituality. When the vibrations of this *leshya* arise, they exercise a divine influence upon the mind. The experience of these moments is so beatific that it beggars description. With the activation of this *leshya*, the envelope of light surrounding a person gets purified, producing sweet sensations such as can never

emanate from material objects. In the individual whose *tejoleshya* is developed, all regret and malice produced by worldly contact comes to an end. He is invested with a natural grace and becomes a centre of attraction. The more extensive his *tejoleshya*, the more purified are his feelings. He is totally free from anxiety and a sweet smile spreads on his face. Anyone who comes into contact with such a man, is naturally drawn to him. The man whose *tejas-shakti* is awakened, becomes spontaneously incapable of bad contact and behaviour. He never thinks ill of anyone nor does he cause pain to anyone by his actions.

Leshya or *tejoleshya* is a kind of subtle physical force which forms the basis of one's inner feeling. One's conduct is determined by the kind of *leshya* one possesses. From the point of view of both personality and spiritual development, the field of *leshya* is very extensive. The colour, smell, taste, and touch of physical *leshya* are also typical, and it is therefore, helpful in the development of personality.

Q. Are *leshya* and the aura one and the same thing?

Ans. The sun is a mass of brilliant atoms. Its rays spread out from and are again incorporated in the source. *Tejas-shakti* or *tejoleshya* can be understood only in this way. It is within the body. During meditation, its rays come out. The diffusion of the atoms of these rays gives rise to an envelope of light. *Leshya* is of two kinds—psychical and physical. The former is connected with the soul (the flow of emotions). Physical *leshya* is a formation of radiating material atoms. This is the aura, the envelope of light. Its dimness or brightness depends upon the psychical *leshya*. If the psychical *leshya* is pure, the aura would be bright and if it is impure, the aura would be dim.

The aura forms not only in man, but also in the vegetable kingdom. There is consciousness in the vegetable kingdom, but the aura exists even in unconscious matter. The material objects may not possess life, but at least they do have electricity. The aura of conscious beings is changeable, because with a change in their emotional current their electrical field also undergoes a change. But the unconscious has no current of feeling, consequently its aura is unchanging. Where certain materials have innate attraction for others, the cause is to be found in their aura. Some people have no physical beauty. Neither are they well-formed nor fair-complexioned, and yet they become a centre of attraction. The physical structure of certain people is very elegant, they are also fair-complexioned and have a robust body, yet no one seems to be particularly attracted towards them. The main reason for this is the quality of their aura. The brighter a man's aura, the more attractive, impressive, helpful, and estimable he would be. This is a fact, tested and confirmed.

Q. Does a man's aura remain for ever what it is, or is — it possible to change it? How can we make it more radiant?

Ans. The aura is directly related to the purity of ——— thought and feeling. As a man's feelings become purer, his aura gets brighter. The less a man is dominated by negative emotions like anger, hatred, envy, malice, etc., the weaker the feelings which incite in him destructive tendencies like violence, sabotage, arson, plunder, etc., the better and more radiant his aura would be. In the language of Jain philosophy, the purity of *leshya* means the purity of the aura, and in the language of practical conduct, the purity of thoughts is a factor in the radiance of the aura. Thought is invariably charac-

terised by comparison, and this everlasting sense of comparison affects the aura too.

Meditation, of course, is a strong factor in making the aura radiant. Study, contemplation, discourse, discussion and thought are ever efficient means of ensuring purity. He who deliberately sets about broadening his thinking effortlessly succeeds in making his aura radiant.

A visitor from Calcutta related how he got a good idea from Maharajna Yuvacharya. "I must always preserve good thoughts in my mind". He got hold of this idea, and was very much alive to it all the day long. His practice matured. Bad thoughts dissolved of themselves. His relatives and acquaintances now feel that if all people become like him, there will never be any tension in the family. All the time he reminds himself, "I'll not entertain any harmful thought and I shall do nothing which might hurt another!" Such firm resolves help to make one's aura brighter and still brighter.

An unclean aura makes a man selfish, arrogant, immoderate, cruel and obstinate. Such a man does nothing in his life which might help him in his spiritual development. His consciousness is extravertive, his thinking is partial, his decisions have in them a touch of aggressive pertinacity, and he can never be intimate with another.

Q. Is there a criterion for determining the quality of a — man's aura? A sadhak carries on his practice, but without knowing whither he is tending, what progress he has made, how long will he continue on his path?

Ans. That a man should practise sadhana and it — should not bear any fruit, is impossible. Every good or bad action of man produces a result. If the results

are gross, one comes to know them roughly; but if these are subtle, one sometimes has no inkling of them at all. In such a situation, how is it that a man is not keen to know the results of his evil disposition? There are many in contact with us, who are impatient to see the results of their sadhana in the very initial stage itself, but they never think and say to themselves, "I've deceived that man, I've called him bad names, I've divested another of his livelihood, I've indulged in anger, in conspiracy, and God knows what else! What will be the result of all this? Who will come forward to share with me the results of these evil actions?"

It is an indisputable fact that every action is followed by certain consequences. At a very subtle level, the radiance of his aura may not be perceptible to a man. Nevertheless, it is true that no evil impressions can easily be transmitted to a pure aura. A man with a pure aura, is not influenced by wickedness at all. He also remains immune from the effects of evil practices. He experiences pure bliss. Then comes to him total freedom from fear. The chief source of fearlessness is right vision. Right vision makes the aura bright and a radiant aura destroys the feeling of fear. Only that man's morale keeps high who is utterly fearless. The worship of the deity, spiritual development, surrender to the soul, introversion, a mind free from contradiction, etc. are numerous points which constitute a powerful testimony of the radiance of the aura. On the basis of these consummations, any man can rightly appraise his aura.

TEJOLABDHI : ACHIEVEMENT AND USE

*Awakens the power of control; the digestive
system activated;
The magic spell of humility, steadfastness
and fear of sin!
Resplendent leshya: a collection of atoms,
A consummation of thought, with due
emotion mixed;
A combination of materials, pure, purer,
purest!
Increasing, ample refulgence! All pains subside!
The science of leshya, during the time
of meditation
On the basis of colours is perfectly intelligible.*

Q. Does the aura influence only the mind, or the body,
— too? Does moral strength purify the aura or is it that
a pure aura is conducive to the development of mental
power?

Ans. There is a profound mutual connection between
— the mind and the body. If the body is diseased,

the mind becomes restless, and when the mind is restless, the body grows languid. Thus, the influences working on the body and the mind cannot be separated; they are mutually interdependent. The purity of aura simultaneously influences both the mind and the body, thus increasing the power of control. This controlling power is connected with both the body and the mind. Deliberate control is not permanent, but the discipline wrought by the aura, or *tejoleshya* is spontaneous and secure.

Tejas-shakti (bio-electricity) affects the body—it activates the digestive system. When the digestive system functions properly, the metabolism of food is proper. The food properly metabolised nurtures the body. A strong body helps in developing a strong mind.

The purification of *tejoleshya* develops the tendency to avoid evil conduct and feelings; in other words, it develops in a man the instinct to fear sin. Licentiousness comes to an end. There is growth of humility and of will-power. All conflicts arising from the unsteadiness of the mind cease, and one begins to experience the joy of solitude even in the midst of a crowd. All this comes to pass due to the activation of bio-electricity (*tejas-sharir*) and a pure aura.

Q. What is *tejoleshya*? Is it physical energy or a spiritual — culmination? Does the purification of *leshya* lead to the abatement of diseases?

Ans. *Tejoleshya* has two forms—one material, the other — spiritual. Its material form is made up of atoms of electricity. These atoms are very auspicious and pleasurable. Its other form is made up of feelings which form the basis of our thoughts. The formulation and dissolution of thoughts mostly depends upon feelings. *Leshya* is directly connected with feelings. Through the medium of the current of feeling thoughts are influenced.

The atoms of electricity are not of the same quality. Some of them are pure, others purer, still others the purest. Similarly, there is an ascending order of feelings: there are pure feelings, purer feelings and the purest. Radiant *tejoleshya* increases vitality and splendour, and removes many kinds of psychological and psychosomatic diseases. To say that every disease ends, would be a one-sided, partial view which we do not share. The dissolution of diseases is a relative matter. That diseases caused by viral and bacterial infection from outside should end, is not inevitable. However, psychosomatic diseases can certainly be cured. Cosmic therapy is a successful and recognised method of treatment today. This is a practical form of *leshya* dhyana.

Q. What importance does *leshya* command in the context of scientific values? Like cosmic therapy, colour therapy is also the vogue today. Is this, too, an application of *leshya*?

Ans. *Leshya* in itself is a major science. It is very important to understand it from the point of view of dhyana-sadhana. The subtle nature of colour and cosmic therapies can be understood through the medium of *leshya* dhyana. Because of the deficiency of colour in our body, disorders arise. Similarly, the insufficiency of light is responsible for physical disequilibrium. Many physical and psychological changes occur on the basis of colour and light-rays. That is why colour and cosmic therapies are assuming increasing importance. Both these systems of treatment are the product of *leshya* dhyana. Just as bodily changes take place when the body is exposed to the colours of the sun-rays, or to the contents of the coloured-glass bottles, similarly, the occurrence of a change in feeling by meditation on colours cannot be denied. These days, many scientists are working on this

topic. Due to the experiments performed and analyses made by these scientists, new facts are coming to light. During the next decade, the application of *leshya* dhyana is likely to win recognition as a form of scientific exercise. We feel that there would be no difficulty in a decisive materialization of this possibility.

Q. *Leshya* is an infallible method of purifying our feelings. It is also conducive to physical and psychosomatic health. But this is possible when *leshya* itself is pure. What is the process of purifying *leshya*?

Ans. An important method of purifying *leshya* is meditation. All attempts for the purification of feeling connected with dhyana, serve to purify *leshya*. In this, the role of environmental purification is as important as that of austerities and penances, self-study, contemplation and reflection. Favourable circumstances and spiritual purification are equally important. All these, together or separately, influence our feelings and thus help to purify and brighten our *leshya*.

Q. Today's scientists are accumulating solar energy for its utilization in public life. The elements of light and colour available in solar energy are also present in *leshya*. Is there a process by which the energy of *leshya* can be collected for utilization in everyday conduct?

Ans. What else is meant by *tejolabdhi*? It is nothing but an expression of collected energy. It is also used on the individual level. He who possesses *tejolabdhi*, can utilize it for constructive as well as destructive purposes. In ancient language it was called application/blessing and restraint/curse. Energy utilized as a favour or blessing, was called cool *tejoleshya* and that

used for restraint or curse was called hot *tejoleshya*. From this angle, the sensations of pleasure and pain, willingness and reluctance, blessing and curse, are all consequences of energy or electricity. Nothing can be accomplished without electricity. Just as electricity creates for itself a magnetic field, similarly *tejoleshya* creates its own magnetic field. Its electrical current helps in the formation of an individual's personality, and it is also a factor in other attainments.

Generally, every individual more or less gathers electricity. The greater amount of electricity increases one's capacity and only a capable person has the power to bless or to curse. There are three principal factors in the attainment of *tejolabdhī*—*atapana* (exposure to the sun), endurance and penance. *Atapana* (exposure to the sun) is in a way a prelude to the acquisition of solar energy. Keeping in view the posture or sitting position in which the greatest amount of solar energy may be collected, it is ordained that earnest sadhaks should perform *atapana* in a standing position. Rarely does one come across any rule for observing disciplines in a recumbent position. A comprehensive discussion about it occurs in *Brihatkalpa Bhasya*.

Endurance is an element which develops *tejas*, electricity. A sadhak without any capacity for tolerance becomes unsteady or loses his equilibrium when faced with physical or psychological adversities. Although every man is naturally endowed with a *tejas-sharīr* (electric generator), it mostly remains dormant in the body. Electricity produced by austerities alone has utility in conduct. Tolerance or endurance is a kind of austerity. Among the ten commandments for the wandering monks, endurance or tolerance is the first. In order to master *tejolabdhī*, the acquisition of tolerance is a must.

The third element is penance without water. Water is contralateral to electricity. In penance where water is used, *tejas* cannot be made as strong as when no water is used. On being asked the method of acquiring *tejolabdhi*, Lord Mahavir said :

The sadhak who observes two-day fasts without or with little water, and for his first meal after the fasts, takes a handful of *urad* (black gram) with only a palmful of water, and who, raising his arms high, exposes himself to the sun, acquires *tejolabdhi* within six months.

In conclusion it may be said that Lord Mahavir's system of sadhana, as also that of the Jains, is a predominantly *tejas-oriented* system. He who practises meditation in accordance with this system, can adequately develop his *tejas-shakti*, i.e., his bio-electrical power.

FOUNDATION OF MENTAL PEACE

*What leshya? What colour? And what
the fruit thereof?
Listen with a tranquil mind to awaken
the soul within!
Call it etheric body, call it subtle feeling,
Leshya is its name; understand it patiently.
Material environment known by the
name of leshya
Is an atomic glow, a unique refluence!
Two forms it has concomitant, material
and spiritual;
Matter being a consummation of atoms,
and of diligence foremost.
And that which the yogis call the envelope
of light,
Is leshya, combination of material atoms,
A conjunction from which feelings originate;
It is this cycle of feeling that activates
the aura.*

Q. You have given us detailed information about — *tejoleshya* and *tejolabdhi*. But it is only one kind of *leshya*. Will you also kindly shed some light on the semantic journey which one must undertake to understand this word in its totality?

Ans. A detailed description of the aura which comes — into being on the basis of feeling is available in the system of Jain sadhana. Feeling is called psychical *leshya* and the aura is called material *leshya*. It may be called etheric body. A lot of discussion about it is found here and there in spiritual literature, but the elaborate treatment of it by Jain masters is unsurpassable. The doctrine of *leshya* has a great significance in Jain philosophy. In the bondage of karma and the release therefrom, *leshya* plays an important role. The kind of vibrations produced by *karma sharir*, determines the nature of the feelings originating from it. The nature of feelings determines the radiation of the *tejas*-atoms. And the quality of radiation creates its own kind of environment. And the nature of the environment in turn determines our current of feeling and this current is called *leshya*.

Q. It is said that the *leshya* at the moment of death — determines the nature of the environment in which a man is reborn after transmigration. Is it correct? What are the factors behind auspicious or inauspicious *leshya*? What achievement, if any, is possible through *leshya*?

Ans. It is true that one is born in the same *leshya* in — which one surrenders one's body at death. A strong basis for the above conclusion is the Agam saying:

The way thou diest, the same way thou art born!

As regards the formation of good or bad *leshya*, this too is indisputable. A man through his efforts can turn an inauspicious *leshya* into an auspicious one and auspicious *leshya* into more auspicious and the most auspicious. Various causes have their own importance in life. Good causes or factors are capable of changing an individual's environment, feeling and thought. Similarly bad causes or factors exercise their own influence. Thus, it may be said that whatever good happens in life, happens through good factors or good *leshya* and wherever impediments present themselves, it happens because of bad factors and inauspicious *leshya*. Purification of *leshya* leads to the memory of one's past life, to clairvoyance and the faculty of comprehending mental states; it also leads to the ascetic life.

Q. Apart from Jain philosophy, what other philosophies recognize *leshya*? In what form do they accept it?

Ans. Whether the word '*leshya*', is used by them or not, many philosophers have recognised the influence of colour on a man's life and have accepted its importance in the spiritual tradition. In this connection, Sankhya philosophy and Vedic philosophy are noteworthy. It seems that Patanjali, through the phrases, 'the dark type' and 'the white type' has represented these two kinds of *leshya*.

Similarly, in the background of the prayers prevalent among the Vedics, too, the doctrine of *leshya* is at work. According to the Puranic belief, the Vedic system of meditation is tri-coloured. In the three prayers held by them, they worship the trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. The colour of Brahma is recognised as white, that of Vishnu blue, and that of Mahesh red. According

to the fundamental rules of worship through recitation of Vedic hymns, it is necessary to meditate on colours. The basic colours for meditation have been recognised as white, blue and red.

Q. Is there any utility of colour of *leshya* from the — scientific point of view? Have any experiments been made in this connection in the field of science?

Ans. From the scientific point of view, colours have — a spectacular effect on the body and on feelings. Many discoveries have been made by science in this context. According to the researchers in this field, the pink colour is very useful in the maintenance of a happy mood. On the basis of this fact, the colour of wall-distemper in school-rooms was changed. Students studying in rooms which had been painted bright red were found to be coarse, indisciplined and easily excitable. On the other hand, those studying in rooms painted pink, were courteous, disciplined and peaceful.

Q. If by merely changing the colour of room walls, a — change in character comes about, then there should not be any problem whatsoever. Then there is no need for any kind of sadhana or practice for bringing about a transformation of the mind.

Ans. We do not believe that everything can be — changed by changing the colour. The colour is only a factor. A factor is something which exercises an influence. If an adverse factor leaves its impact upon the mind, why should not a beneficent one be equally effective? The colour factor and the sadhak's temper, are useful stimuli. The fundamental element is feeling. How intimately connected are feeling and colour becomes apparent from the functioning of one's nerves. How

strong and effective is the manifestation would depend upon the factors involved.

One stout youth was exposed to different colours and the results evaluated. He was asked to practise weight-lifting in a sky-blue room. The maximum weight he could lift there was 65 kg. The same youth when placed in a room painted red, was able to lift 70-75 kg.

So the colours are only stimuli which are useful in the development of physical power and feeling. It was on this basis that colour-therapy evolved. Its effect has been clearly marked.

Q. Colour is physical, and feeling psychical. It appears — from what you have said about the influence of colours, that matter affects our consciousness. How many forms of colour or *leshya* are there which leave their impact upon consciousness?

Ans. The psychical order of existence is so intimately — connected with the physical order of existence that the former cannot remain unaffected by the latter. All the colours found in the world are physical. In the language of Jain philosophy, material environment too is *leshya*.

Leshya has two forms—material *leshya*, and psychical *leshya*. Psychical *leshya* evolves out of matter. It has colour, smell, taste and tactility. The volition or the current of feeling which develops on the basis of these, is psychical *leshya* (*bhava*). Physical *leshya* may be called the aura in the language of yoga. If the atoms of which the aura is made up, are auspicious, the aura is radiant; if these are inauspicious, the aura is dim. The purer the aura, the purer is the current of feeling. In conclusion it may be said that the aura is a factor in the purity or

otherwise of the current of feeling, and the current of feeling strengthens the aura.

Q. Is the effect of the aura and the current of feeling — limited only to the body or does this also influence the mind? What is the foundation of mental peace?

Ans. Mental peace or joy is deeply connected with the — aura and the current of feeling. The brighter, the purer and more radiant the environment, the greater is the peace of mind. As a matter of fact, peace and joy are not essentially connected with material things. The concept of finding peace and joy through material objects is purely a figment of imagination. The real source of joy lies within man—that is, his pure feelings or the atoms which stimulate feeling. With the help of these atoms, it is possible to find unimaginable joy without recourse to material things, and mental peace descends of itself. Without the purity of feeling, all kinds of material objects fail to give one that extraordinary sense of bliss which transcends understanding.

The hermit Nasiruddin sat outside the village. A rich man came to him. He had bags full of lakhs of rupees, and yet he was distressed. He placed all his money before Nasiruddin and said, "I have everything, but I have no peace. I am ready to give you all I have. Will you kindly give me happiness?" Nasiruddin kept silent. Because he knew that neither accumulation nor renunciation of money could bring peace. The fountain of delight sprouts from the purity of the aura and the inner current of feeling, and only this immaterial joy can give a man lasting peace.

THE WAY TO PEACE : PURIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENT

*Pure environment fills a man with bliss;
Then shine upon him for ever the alpha
rays undimmed!*

*Unclean environment makes for rising
melancholy;*

*There doubtless beat mostly the beta
vibrations!*

*The task of conveying the atom up to the soul,
The cycle of leshya tirelessly performs!*

Q. From the purity of the aura or the cycle of feeling,
— mental peace ensues. Who experiences this bliss?
Does only the man to whom peace has come, experience
it, or is it possible for another man also to have some
understanding of it? Is there a parameter to measure
mental peace or mental agitation?

Ans. There exist many old ways of measuring the tran-
— quillity of the mind or its agitation. A man's facial

expression or his conduct does indicate whether he is at peace or lost in confusion. In the modern age many scientific devices have been developed to assess a man's inner condition. Electrical machines take a graph of the vibrations in the brain and on the basis of such graphs, the state of peace or disquiet can be ascertained. The mental condition of an individual can also be known on the basis of cerebral vibrations during sleep or the dreaming state.

Tranquillity is found where the environment is clean and there is a preponderance of alpha rays. In other words, wherever the vibrations of the alpha rays are active, there can be no disquiet. Mental agitation or gloom are symbolised by beta-vibrations. Alpha vibrations and mental peace are found only in a clean and pure environment. When the environment is defiled, there are no alpha vibrations, nor mental peace. With the help of electrical devices it is possible to study an individual's state of mind or his environment and to determine whether he is at peace or in turmoil.

Q. How do we determine in what kind of environment — does a particular individual live? What is an individual's state of mind? Where are to be found the alpha vibrations and which man is happy or unhappy? What is the utility of knowing all this?

Ans. Many times a man is mistaken in understanding — his own defect. A man cannot himself see his own weakness, but others are able to grasp it immediately. A sick man goes to a doctor. Such a visit has two objectives—a correct diagnosis of the disease and its treatment. However, some patients, after getting their disease diagnosed by one doctor, seek another diagnosis from a second doctor, or even from a third. Their purpose in later visits is not to get any treatment—only to verify

and confirm if the diagnosis made by the first doctor is correct. But even for this they are required to consult two additional doctors. It is certain that the patient will not get himself treated by the later physicians, still consultation is done with them for his mental satisfaction. However, this makes it clear that the diagnosis and the treatment are two different things. To know is one thing, and to suggest a remedy quite another.

It is only after knowing the defects of the soul that a way of purifying it is sought. That indeed is the objective of the biofeedback system. Experiments in this connection are in progress at many places in the western countries. With the help of an instrument, an individual's state of mind is known. His voice reveals many of his habits. Any man could call himself a great meditator or sadhak, but the instruments clearly reveal how deep his meditation is and what stage his sadhana has reached. This information is not meant to ridicule him, but to suggest ways of making further progress. Experiments with auto-suggestion, etc., are a step in this direction.

The essence of this statement is that the diagnosis and the treatment cannot be separated. If they are separated, desired results would not accrue. Similarly, the diagnosis of feelings is made on the basis of the aura. After a correct diagnosis is made, the process of transformation of feelings is initiated with the help of *preksha* and *anupreksha* (concentration of perception and contemplation) etc. These experiments have been tried and tested. Those participating in these exercises with devotion and regularity, have experienced a change within themselves.

Q. *Karma* is the cause of the defilement of the soul. Is there a method of forestalling the effect of *karma*, so that the soul remains unaffected and pure?

Ans. The soul and the *karma*—between the two lies — the bridge of *leshya*. Without crossing this bridge, no atom of *karma* can reach the soul. The Jain Agamas contain an elaborate treatment of this subject. It may even be asserted that about 25 per cent part of Jain Agamas deals with *leshya*. The more shabby, unclean the *leshya* is, the more defiled and perverted the soul would be. Therefore, the purity of the soul is dependent upon the purity of *leshya* or the aura.

Q. What is the method of making *leshya* pure or good?

Ans. We just mentioned the biofeedback system. After — ascertaining facts through this systems, the right kind of feelings can be evolved. When the impact of good feelings is felt by the *karma*-vibrations, *nirjara* (the dissolution of past conditioning) takes place. With the dissolution of past conditioning, feelings become pure and *karma*-vibrations are refined. With the refinement of *karma*-vibrations, pure feelings arise. It is possible to keep *leshya* pure through the purification of feelings, conduct and behaviour.

The development of feelings like humility, steadfastness, simplicity and non-greed, etc. makes *leshya* good, and when *leshya* is good, these feelings develop. In a way this constitutes a cycle. Now, what kind of aura has a particular man? Apart from the information acquired through the electrical devices, a man's behaviour also is revelatory. Conduct marked by cheerfulness, tranquillity, patience, tolerance, etc. is a proof of good *leshya*, whereas peevishness, impatience, insolence, etc. are culminations of unclean and imperfect *leshya*.

Q. Which feeling is the culmination of which *leshya*, — can be known on the basis of one's conduct and it

is possible to change an inauspicious feeling. Why are then no experiments done with the students? Their contumeliousness has become a big problem in the world of education. Is it possible to give a new direction to these students through *preksha dhyana*?

Ans. It is this work which is sought to be accomplished in schools and colleges through the Science of Living. The Science of Living is an experimental system for bringing about a transformation of feelings. It is a part of *preksha dhyana*. With this objective in view, a shivir for teachers was held at Tulsi Adhyatam Needam of Jain Vishva Bharati in the last month of 1980. In that shivir, some exercises of asanas, pranayama and meditation were established. If, along with academic instruction, the children are also made to practise the Science of Living, it could bring about an extraordinary change in their character, outlook and conduct. But then this exercise must continue for forty minutes every day for the whole session to yield any useful results.

Q. Has the programme of training in the Science of — Living been pursued in certain schools and colleges? If yes, what were the results?

Ans. Initially, this programme was organised in 12 — selected schools in 12 districts. Training was imparted in the practice of asanas, meditation, etc. Generally, the teachers and the students in all these schools evinced great interest in this experiment. The programme lasted a full session. Now a report is under preparation by the N.C.E.R.T. Only on the basis of that report, would the future plans be finalized.

Is this aura found in all living beings? Or only in man?
Does a lifeless object also have an aura?

Ans. The current of feeling and the aura are to be — found not only in man, but in all living beings. What to speak of animals and birds, even those living beings whose level of consciousness is very low, have an aura and a current of feeling. In the vegetable kingdom, it is quite apparent and clear. Some people have taken photographs of these, on the basis of which a comparative study is being made of the nature of man and that of plants. A lifeless object has an aura, but no current of feeling. That is why, the aura of a lifeless object is unchangeable. The current of feeling is liable to change. Any change in the current of feeling affects the aura. That is why the aura of conscious living beings is changeable.

The aura and the current of feeling are related to the body. There is a class of souls which have no body and are called emancipated. These are called free. They have neither aura nor any current of feeling. Their form is pure luminosity and this luminosity has no shape because it is an immaterial, conscious element. The fundamental element is consciousness. As long as consciousness is not emancipated, it is covered by *karma sharir* and *tejas-sharir*. The vibrations emanating from *karma sharir* produce feeling. From the point of view of *karma shastra*, feeling is susceptible to the effect of delusion. Intellect represents the feelings. When the mind is healthy, intelligence is sparkling. The pith of it all is that awareness, intelligence and the mind, all three, are the activities of consciousness.

Q. You just said that the vibrations of *karma sharir* — create feelings, and feelings are susceptible to de-

lusion. This has given rise to a doubt as to whether feelings create *karma* or is it *karma* that creates the feelings?

Ans. It has already been said that a person liberated — from *karma* has no current of feeling. Feeling comes into being through *karma* vibrations of a person engaged in action. This only means that the current of feeling of a living being is the factor behind the attraction of *karma*-atoms and this would remain so as long as a person does not become emancipated from *karma*. Thus, the interdependence of the current of feeling and action is apparent. The objective of pointing out the connection between feeling and delusion is that it is through association or non-association with delusion that feeling becomes indisciplined or disciplined. The current of feeling which is connected with the rise of delusion produces unclean feelings—like the negative emotions of anger, greed, pride, etc. But the current of feeling in which delusion subsides, gives rise to pure feelings—such as positive feelings of tranquillity, contentment, humility, etc. That is why it has been observed that fundamentally the bondage of *karma* is connected with feeling. But in the perversion or purification of feelings, ignorance or infatuation plays a great role. Because action born of illusory knowledge only serves to mask true knowledge. Though illusory action masks true knowledge, it cannot distort it. But the distortion of feelings is solely caused by illusory action.

Q. Is the current of feeling and aura you are talking — about, of one kind or there are different kinds and there are divisions and sub-divisions in them?

Ans. In Jain philosophy, for both the current of feeling — and the aura, the same word '*leshya*' is used.

Although, according to the degree of purification, these can be divided into various classes, basically six forms of *leshya* are recognised—black, blue, grey, red, lotus-coloured and white. Corresponding to these six *leshyas*, the currents of feeling as well as the auras are also recognized to be of six kinds.

The above mentioned six *leshyas* may be grouped into two classes—benevolent and malevolent. The black, the blue and the grey—these three are the malevolent *leshyas*. These produce sorrow and a restless mind. Red, lotus-coloured and white *leshyas* are benevolent. They dissolve mental anguish.

Q. What is the basis on which *leshya* is recognized as — benevolent or malevolent?

Ans. The classification of *leshyas* has been done on the — basis of colour. Colour is of two kinds—auspicious and inauspicious. *Leshyas* associated with auspicious colours are benevolent; those associated with inauspicious colours are malevolent. In this context, the doctrine of the science of colours has been recognized. Basically, colours are of two kinds—dark and bright. Dark colour has been recognized as inauspicious and bright colour has been recognized as auspicious. Dark colour is the result of dark atoms and the source of bright colour is light-atoms. Dark atoms are inauspicious and therefore they become the cause of malevolent *leshya*. Radiant atoms are auspicious and therefore they become the cause of benevolent *leshya*. Just as *leshyas* are influenced by colour, the basis of pure and impure feelings is also colour.

Q. Is the classification of *leshyas* on the basis of colour — alone, or is there also some other factor involved?

Ans. Just as *leshya* has many colours, similarly, there are in *leshya*, smell, relish and tactility. In the comprehension of personality, smell, taste, etc., like colour, are the principal criteria. It is said about the omniscients (*Tirthankars*) that—

Their body has a unique appearance and smell. It is immune from disease, perspiration and defilement. Their breath smells like lotus. Their blood and flesh are white like the cow's milk.

It is apparent here that in the evolution of personality, form, taste, smell, etc. are all combined. Therefore on the basis of these elements, many imperceptible facts of life can be known.

The colour, taste, etc. of the first three *leshyas* are unpleasant. Therefore, these are known as malevolent or sinful *leshyas*. The colour, smell, and touch of the remaining three *leshyas* are pleasant, therefore, these are recognized as benevolent or virtuous *leshyas*. In the development of life these three *leshyas* play an important role. As *leshyas* become purer and more benevolent, passions decay, and in impure or malevolent *leshyas*, passions grow more virulent. To put it differently, wherever passions subside, *leshyas* are pure, and wherever passions are strong, *leshyas* are impure. Detailed discussion of the colour, smell and taste etc. of *leshyas* is found in *Uttaradhyana*. That would form the basis of our discussion in the next chapter.

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Q. Colour, smell and taste, etc. are the qualities of matter, therefore devoid of consciousness. The current of feeling is something living. No attribute of a living being can be lifeless. The aura is lifeless. Colour, smell taste etc. are important in identifying it. But how can the current or *leshya* of feeling be identified through these?

Ans. The soul of the world is neither soul nor matter — in the essential meaning of these terms—it is a combination, an alloy of soul and matter. In terms of Jain philosophy, it is a progression, a vigorous sequence. Man, too, is a sequel thereof. The attribute of the soul is consciousness. The attributes of matter are colour, smell, taste and touch. Feeling is psychic and the aura is physical. The feeling and the aura both have a deep, mutual relationship. Thus, it is possible to interpret the aura through feelings, and the feelings through the aura.

Q. The six *leshyas*, by their very names, are indicative — of their colours. Still, for the sake of greater clarity, will you kindly give us a practical introduction to these.

Ans. *Uttaradhyana Sutra* contains an exposition, — through examples, of the *leshya* colours. The following description is based thereon :

- (1) *Krishna leshya* is black like dark cloud, collyrium, the pupil of the eye, a black crow, and a buffalo's horn.
- (2) *Neel leshya* is dark blue like the wing of a blue bird, emerald, and the Asoka tree.
- (3) *Kapot leshya* is grey as a pigeon's neck, linseed flowers and the wings of a cuckoo.
- (4) *Tejo leshya* is red as vermilion, ochre, the flame of a lamp and the rising sun.

- (5) *Padma leshya* is yellow as turmeric, orpiment, and hemp flowers.
- (6) *Shukla leshya* is white like a conch-shell, a gem, silver, a garland of pearls, a white flower and a stream of milk.

Q. A living being does not have only one *leshya*, and — different *leshyas* have different colours. Is the aura of a living being possessed of many *leshyas*, of some special kind, or is there in it a combination of different colours?

Ans. The aura is not only of one colour. In it there is — a combination of many colours, because it evolves out of many *leshyas*. The colours of *leshyas* depend upon an individual's particular feelings. Certain feelings are predominant in a particular individual. The *leshya* colours take after those predominant feelings. Whatever colours are there in the *leshya*, are also reflected in the aura. Good feelings are white, bad feelings black. On the basis of colours reflected in the pictures taken of the aura, even feelings changing from moment to moment can be grasped.

Q. Can pictures be taken of the aura?

Ans. It is not very difficult to take pictures of the aura. — Many scientists are engaged in research and experimentation in this connection. The photographs taken by the Russian scientists, the Kirlyan couple, are quite famous. An American woman, J.C. Trust has written a book entitled *Atom and Aura*. This book is not a collection of imaginary or predominantly ideological facts. The writer has taken pictures of the aura or the ring of light and has printed them. These pictures have been analysed.

What kind of aura a person has, is not dependent upon his outward appearance. There are some people whose clothes are dirty, whose complexion is dark, whose features are not at all attractive, yet their aura may be very bright. On the contrary, those who wear clean clothes, are fair-complexioned, have a high standard of living, and have daily correspondence with the great, may have an extremely filthy aura.

The above facts are indicative of the mystery that no man can be truly known on the basis of his outward appearance. Some white-collared people have no hesitation in committing terrible crimes. Their appearance and conversation gives no hint whatever that these people are capable of perpetrating such heinous acts. But the filthiness or darkness of their aura clearly reveals their inward nature.

Q. You have said that a true assessment of personality — can only be made on the basis of an individual's aura. If someone's aura is dirty and he comes to know it, he would want to make it bright. What is the simple process of making one's aura bright?

Ans. The process may be simple or complex, but he — who wants to become or achieve something, will have to pass through it. The moment a keen urge is aroused in the mind, an individual is ready to traverse even the most difficult path. Possessed by an indomitable desire to reach Ratnawali, Saint Tulsi Das crossed the raging stream with the support of a swollen corpse. Otherwise, one dare not stir abroad on an awful night like that.

Similarly, in the field of sadhana, too, there is need for awakening such an indomitable desire. The man who

wants to make his aura radiant, must first of all concentrate on purifying his feelings. When the purification of feelings aims at promoting awareness and alertness, a transformation of the aura begins of itself. As sadhana for awareness and alertness matures, the aura becomes brighter and still more bright. There is a way to achieve it—constant practice of *preksha* and *anupreksha*.

Q. Can the direction of life be changed by merely — making the purification of feelings as one's aim?

Ans. The determination of one's aim brings about — integrated thinking. This intensifies mental impressions. Such deep impressions can be a chief factor in changing one's direction of life. Many women are so conditioned that if a bad thought enters their mind, they cannot rest content until they atone for it by doing some penance. Such a development would be unimaginable in the case of an aimless person. So there should not be any difficulty in recognizing that the determination of a goal is a prominent factor in changing the direction of one's life.

TASTE, SMELL AND TOUCH THERAPY

*Bitter gourd, the extracts of margosa
and soapnut—
Far more acrid than these is the taste of
the first, krishna leshya!
Dry ginger, pipal and black pepper
all combined—
More pungent than these is the taste of
neel leshya!
Unripe mango and wood-apple have an
astringent taste,
Still more astringent than these is the taste
of kapot leshya!
Sweet, fully-ripened apple, and its
delicious juice!
But far more sweet and riper is great
tejoleshya!
There are all kinds of juices and sweet wines,
But the flavour of padma leshya is far
greater than these!
And currants, milk, dates and sugar, together,
Taste not as sweet as superb shukla leshya!*

Q. *Leshya* is material. All that is material, has colour, — odour, taste and tactility. You have made us acquainted with the nature of *leshya* on the basis of colour. But does it also have odour, taste and touch? Is an analysis thereof available in the Jain Agamas?

Ans. As also mentioned earlier, about 25 per cent of — space in the Jain Agamas is taken up with the exposition of *leshya*. *Uttaradhyana* Agama formed the basis of our discussion on *leshya* colours. This Agama also contains an interpretation of *leshya* tastes. The *leshya* atoms, besides different colours, have various tastes and these exercise an influence upon man. These have been classified as follows :

The taste of *krishna leshya* atoms is more acrid than bitter gourd and the extracts of margosa and soapnut;

And more pungent than the essence of dry ginger, pipal and black pepper, is the essence of the atoms of *neel leshya*;

And more astringent than the juice of unripe mango and wood apple, is the taste of the atoms of *kapot leshya*;

And far sweeter than the juice of ripe mango and apple is the essence of the atoms of *tejoleshya*;

And far more delightful than the flavour of different kinds of juices and wines is the flavour of the atoms of *padma leshya*;

And far more delicious than the beverage made of currants, milk, dates and sugar, is the taste of the atoms of *shukla leshya*.

Q. The *leshya* colours are directly connected with a person's aura. The character and habits of a man can be examined by observing the colour of his aura. What impact do the flavours of various *leshyas* have and where?

Ans. Colour is the object of the eye, the organ of — seeing. In the acquisition of sensory knowledge, the eye is our most vivid sense organ. The senses of taste, touch, etc. also provide direct knowledge, still in everyday living, the knowledge that comes with seeing is generally regarded as the most direct and tangible. The object of vision is colour. It has a powerful effect on man. However, taste, smell, etc. are also connected with vision. Some parts of the body are more affected by colour. Similarly, some other parts are specifically affected by taste, smell and touch.

What is the taste of a man's tongue? Just as disease is diagnosed on this basis, similarly a man's feelings can also be examined.

The mouth of a man in whose body the bile is predominant, tastes bitter. Likewise with a man in a fit of anger.

In a predominantly phlegmatic organism, the mouth tastes too sweet. Likewise the mouth of a greedy person.

With a change in the colour of a man's *leshya*, his taste, smell and touch also change. The colour in a man's aura has been specifically treated. Taste etc. can also be similarly interpreted. But no subtle technique has yet been evolved for it. It continues to be a subject for research. Only a chemical analysis of the atoms of *leshya* might reveal how far a change of feelings affects its odour.

Q. Is a person's individuality identifiable on the basis — of smell and touch?

Ans. A woman has conducted some marvellous experiments in this connection. She has analysed the personalities of ten people on the basis of the odour

of the atoms of their hands. Just as colour is a part of a man's aura, similarly the current of feeling and the aura can be understood on the basis of smell and touch. The bodies of people possessed of an unclean feeling (*leshya*) give out a foul smell, whereas fragrance seems to sprout from the bodies of people blessed with an auspicious feeling. It has been said :

The stench of the corpse of a cow, dog or serpent
is foul,

But a hundred times more hateful is the stink of
the first three *leshyas*.

Whereas atoms of auspicious *leshyas*, like sweet-smelling flowers,

Give out a divine fragrance from moment to moment!

The prospecting of the mineral elements hid in the womb of the earth is often done by inhaling the odour of the prospective ground. Some prospectors are able to tell on the basis of the odour of the ground they stand upon whether there is oil or water beneath.

In the identification of typical women, the odour of their body forms the basis of classification. There is a lot of talk about Padmini (the lotus-woman, an extremely charming one) in literature. A question was posed as to which woman may be called Padmini. It was answered thus : "When a woman is bathing, and black bees hover over her clothes piled on the ground, it is an indication that she is Padmini."

Apparel oft proclaims the man. Similarly, correct information about a man's personality is gained by observing and smelling his hair. Some doctors have conducted new experiments in the field of homeopathy. In one experiment, the doctor sends for the patient's hair,

treats it at his own house. He puts the hair into a medicated solution; the effect on the hair gets transmitted to the patient's body. It is on the basis of such experiments that taste-therapy, smell-therapy and touch-therapy have evolved and are being further developed.

A king's prime minister lost his eye-sight. The king procured from abroad a special collyrium for his faithful minister. Only two collyrium-smearred spokes could be procured—one for each eye. The minister passed one spoke through one of his eyes. He found his lost vision restored. He was about to pass the second spoke through the other eye when he reflected, "Of course, I would regain my vision of both eyes, but what about thousands of sightless people in my country?" And instead of passing the second spoke through his other eye, he applied it to his tongue. Some people said, "What foolishness!" But the prime minister kept silent. He was an analyst of flavours. By tasting the powder he knew what its constituents were. On the basis of his experience and knowledge, he prepared a large quantity of collyrium and was thus able to benefit a large number of people in the kingdom. All were filled with admiration for the prime minister's intelligence, and made their obeisance to him.

Q. You have given us a good deal of information about — the colour, taste and smell of *leshyas*. What about the concept of touch in the Jain Agamas?

Ans. In the classification of colour and taste, a detailed — analysis in respect of each *leshya* separately is available in the Jain Agamas. But in the classification of *leshyas* on the basis of smell, only two alternatives—clean and unclean—are given. Likewise, in the classification

on the basis of touch, only two distinctions—auspicious *leshya* and inauspicious *leshya*—have been analysed.

The first three *leshyas* are inauspicious or unclean. Their touch is harsh like that of the cow's dung, and sharp like the teeth of a hand saw or the leaves of shāk trees. The remaining three *leshyas* are auspicious or clean. Their touch is soft like that of butter, and of the leaves of *boor* and *shiris* trees.

The touch of *leshyas*, too, is an excellent means of coming to know a person's feelings. In today's medical science, certain experiments are being conducted in touch-therapy. According to Dr. Ramakant Keni, such a treatment may be called spiritual-therapy, psychic surgery, mental-waves treatment or touch-therapy. Manhar Chauhan's interview with Dr. Keni has been published in two numbers of the magazine, *Saptahik Hindustan*. This has served to highlight many facts about touch-therapy. Probably, new discoveries would be made in this field and more new facts brought to light during the next decade.

HOW TO AVOID AN UNCLEAN CURRENT OF FEELING?

*Unbridled play of the senses! incessant,
 attached, blatant functioning;
 Impetuous, petty, bold, and feigning,
 Indisciplined, arrogant, cruel, overcome
 by sleep, sloth and lust;
 Predominantly black; all these show
 one possessed of krishna leshya.
 Envious, angry, proud, shameless,
 ignorant, inastere,
 Deceitful, drunk, malicious, wicked,
 gluttonous, ever-seeking
 Pleasure, ever-preoccupied, mean, insolent,
 guilty and vain;
 Deceptive; blue-coloured—typical product
 of neel leshya!
 Perverse in conduct and speech, insincere,
 sinful wretch
 Full of guile, hiding self-defects, ingoble,
 mendacious,*

*Jocular, speaking vile, theiving, jealous,
violent;*

Green his colour, of kapot leshya sure sign!

Q. While discussing the current of feeling and the aura,
— you said that these could also be known from the conduct of the individual concerned. In order to identify an unclean feeling or aura, what attributes do we look for?

Ans. Unclean, disorderly feeling or inauspicious *leshya*
— and a filthy aura can be identified from the instincts and actions of the individual concerned. Violence, untruth, stealing, lust, possessiveness, accumulation of material objects, mental, verbal and physical flightiness, pettiness, audacity, arbitrariness, sensual indiscipline, cruelty, excessive sleep, and sloth—on the basis of these attributes, it can be concluded that the feelings of *krishna leshya* are primarily at work in a particular individual and his aura is predominantly black. The above mentioned attributes are possible only in a state of *krishna leshya*.

The behaviour of all those possessed of *krishna leshya* is not similar. There can be wide variations. In the language of the Agamas, it is called *chhathhanvarya*, which literally means that the thought or conduct of one *krishna leshya* being, as compared to other *krishna leshya* living beings, can be infinitely 'more unfortunate' or 'more lacking in merit.'

Envy, anger, pride, effrontery, ignorance, illusion, negligence, malice, wickedness, gourmandism, constant desire for comfort, voluptuousness, ceaseless activity, meanness and boldness—these attributes indicate the predominance of *neel leshya*.

Crookedness of behaviour, obliquity of speech, duplicity and deceit, the desire to hide one's defects, false-

hood, excessive jocularity, vile utterance, thieving, malice, and violence—these are the attributes of *kapot leshya*.

Krishna, neel, kapot—all the three are inauspicious *leshyas*. All effort stands vitiated by their virulence and impurity. And the shabbiness of effort affects one's conduct. The purification of *leshya* and action alone promotes good conduct.

Q. Outwardly, some people appear to be religious. — They faithfully perform all the rituals of the received tradition. But their instincts remain unsublimated. Is mere outward show or self-exhibition an adequate basis for the determination of one's *leshya*?

Ans. Outward exhibition is of little use in the determination of *leshya*. How can there be any decisiveness in conduct, if there is only exhibition of religiosity, and no religion at all. No fleeting tendency can provide a factual analysis of a person's individuality. The determination of *leshya* depends upon long-term activity.

Sometimes one can be mistaken in assessing a person's conduct. Similarly, there is the possibility of negligence in understanding *leshya*. In fact, *leshya* is much more connected with a person's behaviour.

Wherever there is a display of religiosity, life turns into a kind of farce. The tendency to hide one's defects and to put a gloss on one's conduct may deceive another person. Still the deception cannot last for long. Continued cohabitation cannot but lay bare the fundamental nature of a man. The story of Rama, the heron and the fish in this connection adduced earlier, highlights the fact that religiousness may be feigned, but such deception is short-lived. The moment the curtain of artificiality falls, the true nature of a person stands revealed.

Q. Every sensible person would want that unclean — *leshya* does not dominate his life. What should he do to ensure this?

Ans. Clean *leshya* can influence unclean *leshya* and vice versa. For one to influence the other, there is need to make it strong. If clean *leshya* is stronger, the unclean *leshya* cannot influence it. It is a kind of a race. Whoever gets in the lead, dominates the other. Therefore, one must exert to make clean *leshya* stronger and more effective.

In our view, one way of making clean *leshya* strong is the creation of an armour. Many *mantra-sadhaks* have recourse to it to protect themselves from inauspicious outer influences. Some *sadhaks* make themselves a hardy defence, a Parshvanath shield. The novices make use of a *mantra*, also body-armour. Different communities use different *mantras*. This is the method commonly employed for avoiding the danger of external influences.

The second method is awareness, eternal wakefulness. If one's aim is to be constantly open to good feelings, bad feelings would have no occasion to manifest themselves. An accident takes place only when attention flags. This equally applies to the influence of unclean *leshya*. If a man is fully alert and aware of himself from moment to moment, no undesirable element could dominate him.

The strengthening of clean *leshya*, building a self-protective armour, total awareness—with these any person can fulfil his urge to be free from the influence of unclean *leshya*, and lead a life free from contradiction.

USE OF FEELING IN THE EVOLUTION OF PERSONALITY

*Tranquil yogi, polite and tender,
Neither guileful nor inquisitive,
Capable, humble, master of his senses,
Learned in scripture, in austerities confirmed,
Lover of religion, firm believer,
Fearful of sin, introversive,
Temperate eater of wholesome food, healthful,
Which develops his power of resistance,
Activating the nervous system,
Promoting the development of knowledge!
His love of red colour
Shows him to be possessed of tejoleshya.*

Q. The inner current of feeling is of two kinds—clean — and unclean. Similarly, the aura is of two kinds—bright and dull. What kind of feeling or aura one has, is known only to a particular individual, or do even common people come to know it? Has it any special characteristics?

Ans. The purity of feeling and the brightness of the aura are interrelated. Pure feeling makes the aura bright, and a bright aura makes for pure vision. The purity of feelings and colours is a strong factor. But then there are degrees of purity. There exists an evolutionary order in which red, yellow and white are recognized to be pure, the purer, and the purest respectively. The red colour is the entrance door to spiritual development; the yellow is indicative of a stage ahead, and the white of still further development.

Unsteadiness is a problem. Steadfastness is the solution to it. The activation of *tejoleshya* marks the beginning of the development of mental, verbal and physical stability. The growth of steadiness means the development of religiousness or spirituality. That a man should be religious or spiritual, and yet unsteady, is impossible. More complex than the unsteadiness of body and speech, is the unsteadiness of the mind. With the decrease of mental unsteadiness, there occurs a corresponding decrease in rude or impertinent behaviour, with a corresponding development of politeness.

The greatest impediment in the achievement of stability is the lack of control over the senses and the mind. Indisciplined instincts give rise to pride, deceitfulness and inquisitiveness. With the growth of *tejoleshya*, all these behaviours begin to change and positive feelings manifest themselves. Arrogance is transformed into gentleness, deceitfulness into sincerity, and inquisitiveness into detachment.

Q. Do the current of feeling and the aura affect only the outward behaviour of a person or does a change also occur in his inner attitude?

Ans. As long as unclean *leshya* and colours are predominant, one's interest in studies remains unrefined. The literature of violence and sex appeals only to

those whose current of feeling is uncultured. With the development of *tejoleshya*, the mind begins to evince greater reverence for and growing interest in spiritual and religious books. Disinclination towards penance and austerities is also transformed into intelligent inquiry. Those people do better in sadhana in whom the vibrations of *tejoleshya* become activated.

The vibrations of *tejoleshya* turn an individual into a lover of religion and a firm believer therein. In the case of unclean *leshya* being dominant, there can be no reverence for religion, nor any strong faith. The mind becomes a prey to doubts on the slightest excuse. In the face of little opposition, or unfavourable circumstances, one's faith begins to waver. But with the refinement of *leshya*, a positive approach towards religion is awakened. But this in itself, is not enough. Without will-power no pledge can be carried out. For a firm determination to continue in the accepted religion and for the acquisition of such capacity, it is necessary to keep alive in oneself the vibrations of *tejoleshya*.

Q. There is a psychological theory that evil is contagious. An individual gets infected with it without any effort on his part. What should a person do to protect himself from evil?

Ans. One great cause of an individual being infected — by evil is his lack of resolve to avoid it. "There's nothing bad about it," "everybody does it," "That's the way of the world,"—such formulations can only serve to push a man further towards evil. The vibrations of *tejolesyha* create in him a fear of evil, or the desire to avoid it. This is a big achievement. It is called "the fear of sin or of doing wrong." Of course, some evils are habitually perpetrated, but even in the evolution and change of habits, "the fear of sin" plays an important role.

With the development of "the fear of sin" also develops goodwill towards all. An individual who wishes everybody well, in his own interest and in the interest of all, avoids harmful pursuits and works for the welfare of all. The cause of this mental attitude is the man's innate power of resistance. Whenever in a man's body or mind, the power of resistance or rejection is activated, the atoms of evil cannot assail him. In view of this, the individual who wishes to avoid evil and wants to be associated with universal well-being, should purify his feelings.

Q. Resistance or rejection does not constitute action. — In the opinion of certain thinkers, the talk of resistance or rejection only blunts action. The vibrations of *tejoleshya* develop the power of resistance. Does not resistance, then, result in stilling a person's capacity for action?

Ans. The red colour denotes agility and vigour. The — vibrations of *tejoleshya* tone up the functioning of the nervous system. Lethargy and inaction disappear. Again action quickens the development of knowledge and knowledge in turn purifies action. Therefore, there is no possibility of the vibrations of *tejoleshya* causing frustration or stupefaction.

The colour of *tejoleshya* has been recognized as red. This colour is of two kinds—auspicious and inauspicious. The virtue of the red colour vibrations mentioned earlier, is associated with the auspicious red. The vibrations of the inauspicious or dark red give rise to cruelty and passion. Light-red or pink colour is the auspicious-red proper.

Recognising the great contribution of the red colour and of the feelings aroused by it in the evolution of personality, every individual should be active in purifying his current of feeling and his aura.

Q. *Padma leshya* produces yellow-coloured vibrations.
— The yellow colour has been recognised to be purer

than the red. In the yellow-coloured aura the process of spiritual development is faster. What is the criterion of this development in the preliminary stages?

Ans. The most advanced stage of spiritual development is *veetaragta* (total freedom from passions and affections). The aura of one who has achieved *veetaragta* is bright and his *leshya shukla*. Before the stage of *veetaragta* is reached, *padma leshya* remains active. While it is active, yellowness becomes apparent in the vibrations thereof. The aura of a man possessed of *padma leshya* is also yellow. In a yellow aura, passions get cooled, the mind becomes tranquil and one begins to experience a feeling of self-conquest. Victory over oneself is frequently mentioned in the scriptures. It is also the subject of many discourses. The man who achieves victory over ten lakh warriors, yet far lags behind the great hero who has achieved victory over himself and sits quietly by himself.

To listen to a discourse on self-conquest is one thing; to directly experience it is quite another. What is meant by victory over oneself? How does a man grow tranquil? The need for such a discourse is felt only as long as one does not get into a transcendental state, beyond words. In that state, one experiences meaning without and beyond words. Right contemplation of the Agamas is not possible until the vibrations of *padma leshya* become active. The essence of the Agam sayings is not amenable to mere intellectual formulation. However, in the activation of *padma leshya*, one comes to directly experience, not the words but the essential meaning behind the words. A man's psychological and spiritual problems then stand resolved.

One great problem of the human world is indiscipline. What to speak of others, even a man's own body and his mind are not under his control. It is not possible

to achieve control over these through Hatha-Yoga. That is why even great ascetics and sadhaks are troubled by this problem and are much concerned about it. One simple resolution to this problem lies in the development of yellow vibrations. People whose lives are suffused by these vibrations, experience a heightening of their faculties. Their mind grows tranquil and their language is restrained. To put it differently, their sense organs engage in no unnecessary activity, the mind is no more restless, and all unnecessary speaking comes to an end. As the outer activity decreases, the sensory nerves become activated, the brain gets fertile and spontaneous joy comes into one's life.

Q. On the occasion of your discussion of the current — of feeling and the aura, you said that with a change in the aura, the current of feeling also changes and if there is a change in the current of feeling, the aura also undergoes a transformation. There is no inevitability of one or the other changing first. But we have also heard it said that the auras of the *devas* (celestial beings) are bright, yet their current of feeling becomes tainted. Is it correct?

Ans. The processes of change in the current of feeling — and in the aura are generally interdependent, but there are certain exceptions, too. The aura of the celestial beings is symbolic of such an exceptional situation. The *leshya* in the celestial beings is said to be determined on the basis of their bodily complexion or the colour of their aura. The colour of the body is called material *leshya* but this is different from the *leshya* that accounts for divergence in the aura of the celestial beings and their current of feeling.

Generally, the intellectual power of the man affected by the atoms of yellow colour increases, and his mental health improves and he becomes activated in the direction

of self-realization. From the viewpoint of sadhana, the accepted religion begins to assume the form of natural or inner religion. In case of the development of natural religion, the passions cease to exist and the control over the senses becomes more pronounced.

Q. Listening to the talk about the transformation of — feeling, I too am beginning to desire that this great benefit should accrue to me as well as to all others. The material cause of such benefit is the purity of the aura and the current of feeling. Are there any other contributory factors to strengthen this cause?

Ans. No cause can manifest itself without the instrumental factors. From this point of view, the opportunity of expression has great importance. In the absence of a proper occasion, even a powerful inspiration remains ineffective. That is why a man should never boast that he has acquired many powers. It is necessary that he should desire to express his powers and aim at self-expression, but there are all kinds of factors involved, good and bad. What kind of cause gets acted upon, depends on what instrumental factors are strong. For the transformation of feelings too, one should exercise one's valour, keeping in view the following four factors—substance, space, time and specific functional character.

Q. What do you mean by substance, space, time and — specific functional character?

Ans. In the achievement of any aim, these four—sub— stance, space, time and functional character— combine. Substance is the individual himself. He can be both conscious and unconscious. Space means the place of action. Time is indicative of the moment of action, and

the functional character implies the prevailing situation. For example, if someone wishes to make a pitcher, he will first of all require some earth. That earth can be moulded into the form of a pitcher at a particular place and time. The blackness, the yellowness, etc. of the earth is its essential virtue.

In the transformation of feeling, the influence of space and time would be apparent anywhere. That at a particular time, a typical virtue manifests itself, is a tested truth. Therefore it is necessary to be constantly alert about bringing about a fundamental change. One has to be careful about the materials one works with—about their colour, smell, taste and touch. One must ensure that these do not exercise a malevolent influence upon one's mind. One should be constantly aware of the qualities of materials in use, such as, food, air, clothes, vessel, house, etc. Thus, a man can protect himself from an environment which defiles his thoughts and feelings.

NATURE OF SPIRITUAL REALIZATION

*Distress and fury afflict him not,
His meditation is always pure and bright!
Absolutely calm, the conqueror of passions,
Secure, self-integrated, wise!
Always natural, self-aware, victorious
over senses!*

*Generally, the lover of white colour;
Such a one is possessed of shukla leshya!*

Q. *Shukla leshya* is the most pre-eminent among all the — *leshyas*. Its colour is white. How does the awakening of its vibrations benefit a man?

Ans. The white colour is an original and most — powerful colour from the point of view of dhyana-sadhana. For purity, freedom from defilements and spiritual progress, it has the utmost value. The man visualizing the vibrations of the atoms of this colour, would never indulge in mental concentration resulting from a state of distress or fury.

Distress-concentration means mental anguish or painful sensations born of attachment to the pleasant and aversion for the unpleasant. Such sensations are felt only by those whose lives are marked by pain, regret, tension and helplessness. Separation from some dear one in the family, becomes unbearable for them. Similarly, assailed by restlessness and extreme impatience because of some disease, they lose their balance altogether. *Shukla leshya* saves them from all this pain. It increases forbearance and ends impatience. Restlessness caused by like and dislike is also out of place here. The activation of the vibrations of *shukla leshya* is absolutely necessary for the development of a steady, stable and healthy mind.

Q. Is the state of *shukla leshya* uniformly even, or is there in it an ascending or descending order?

Ans. There is no continuity of *shukla leshya*. It is not uniformly even. Its excellence lasts for a short while. Generally, three degrees of excellence are recognized: excellent, more excellent and most excellent. The most excellent *shukla leshya* is possessed by a *veetarag* (one who has transcended all passion). *Shukla leshya* of the first degree is commonly found in a tranquil person and *shukla leshya* of the second order is found in a person who never loses his equilibrium under any circumstances. The *shrman* of the standing of one-year's initiation experiences a happiness that exceeds all kinds of known pleasures. This happens only in a state of *shukla leshya*. The colour of *shukla leshya* is white (bright white). In the case of white colour, chemical changes take place much more quickly. The glands responsible for imparting to us the sensation of pleasure can be stimulated only by the vibrations of this colour.

Fury-ridden concentration like distress-concentration is also an inauspicious thing. In the presence of

shukla leshya vibrations, the feelings of rage or fury just do not originate. Rage or fury culminates in the development of violence, thieving, cruelty, lying on a large scale and negative or destructive feelings. When faced with *shukla leshya*, all these above tendencies and feelings suffer a natural diminution.

Q. You have talked about the evils from which a man — possessed of *shukla leshya* is free. But what are the positive qualities found in him?

Ans. The creation of the right environment for meditation is possible only in a state of *shukla leshya*. There are also other types of meditation, referred to earlier as distress and fury-ridden concentration. But, as a matter of fact, these do not form a part of *dhyana sadhana*. These only act as hurdles in the way of *sadhana*. Without the *sadhak* distancing himself from these, there can be no possibility or development of *dharmya* or *shukla* meditation. In the state of *shukla leshya*, distress- and rage-ridden meditations do not altogether vanish, still their intensity is greatly diminished and the door to introversion is opened.

The foremost objective of introversion is *dharmya* meditation. It is the discovery of the truth or actuality of what constitutes religion. Unless one enters the depths of *dharmya* meditation, one can never experience absolute joy which lies beyond material objects. Material objects can only afford transient pleasure, but such pleasure can never be absolute or complete. Therefore, it is necessary to develop *dharmya* meditation, and this is possible only in a state of *shukla-leshya*.

The ultimate stage of introversion is *shukla* meditation. The consummation of *shukla* meditation is the flow-

ering of self-realization. The sadhak who finds himself on the path of self-realization, is blessed. All material craving then comes to an end and he passes through a state of complete transformation.

Q. What do you mean by self-realization? Does one — have a direct experience of the soul in this state? What does actually transpire?

Ans. There is an element inside our body which cannot be experienced from the outside. In the state of self-realization or soul-realization, one comes face to face with that element. One directly experiences the very source of the current. There is no hindrance whatever. One has a direct experience of consciousness. But very few people reach that stage. Therefore, by self-realization in the present context we only mean the perception of all kinds of gross and subtle movements of the body, within and without.

Thus, breath-perception is also a part of self- or soul-realization, because breath has been recognized as the material apparatus of the soul. The perception of the sense organs is a part of self-realization. Similarly, the perception of bodily vibrations, or the experiencing of the *karma sharir*, is also a form of self-realization. In the very midst of these realizations there comes a moment when one has a direct experience of consciousness.

Consciousness is the fundamental quality of the soul. But in common parlance, the soul has other connotations, too. For example, the sentence "I surrender myself", implies the transcendence of self, of passions, of body-consciousness, and of all that is false. Similarly, "victory over oneself", too, implies control over the senses, passions, etc.

Q. Is there any other consummation of the vibrations
— of *shukla leshya*?

Ans. Through the vibrations of *shukla leshya*, the mind
— becomes absolutely still, and one achieves control over the passions. The mind, the tongue, and the body are perfectly disciplined, and one's approach is wholesome. Healthfulness ensues, the senses are controlled and awareness suffuses one's whole being. Whether the individual is attached or wholly detached, he always acts spontaneously in the state of *shukla leshya*. The colour of this *leshya* is white; therefore, the aura connected with it is also white and bright.

THE BIRTH OF EQUANIMITY

*The more extensive the leshya, the greater
the equanimity;
From equanimity flows internal joy!
In pleasure and pain, profit and loss,
honour-dishonour,
Praise-dispraise, in life and death alike,
Equanimity is the Law of Life, of great utility;
Action thereof alone provides life-sustenance!
All souls are equal, all have the same nature,
Division into 'touchable' and 'untouchable'
is the mind's creation.
In the feeling of oneness, money and power
their importance lose.
Colour, sex, or caste, different ways of
thinking,
Convenience and self-interest, national
and regional barriers create,
But mankind is one, let no man mistake!*

Q. According to the system of Jain sadhana, the
fundamental objective is the development of

veetaragta or the achievement of equanimity. The question arises as to how one may achieve equanimity in life.

Ans. The nature of Jain religion is tranquillity-equanimity.

The means of achieving it is the purification of *leshya*. Until *leshya* is freed from defilement, equanimity is not possible. The achievement of equanimity is the goal of every sadhak. From the point of view of sadhana, it may be recognized as essential. The birth of equanimity in the life of an individual is always for his good. Inner happiness is possible only through it. However, there can be no development of equanimity in the absence of purification of *leshya* or feelings. Therefore, a sadhak must concentrate all his attention on the purification of feelings.

Q. The essence of equanimity is to keep calm both in — favourable and unfavourable circumstances, and not to be affected by emotional outbursts. According to medical science, the specific sensory glands are a factor in the creation of emotional excitements. If these centres are removed through operation, all provocability ends. If a little surgery can bring about equanimity, why need one undertake a long course of meditation for it?

Ans. To remain unaffected by contradictory extremes—pleasure and pain, profit and loss, honour and dishonour, praise and dispraise, and life and death—is possible only under two conditions: (1) dissolution of attachment, and (2) the extraction of the specific sensory centres through a surgical operation. The resultants of these two activities appear to be similar, but, as a matter of fact, there is a vast difference between the two. The removal of the sensory centers does lessen excitement, but it does not, cannot, lead to the development of equanimity, or constructive feelings. Drug-treatment or sur-

gery may help reduce a man's excitability, but the process of development or any progress can take place only on the conscious level. The change wrought by a surgical operation is not permanent, and it is also fraught with the risk of causing an irreparable harm to the human organism.

All the parts of the body are balanced in a state of equilibrium and have their utility. Any harm caused to any one part is liable to affect the entire organism. The removal of a single healthy sinew of the body may result in the deformation or perversion of a limb. Therefore, instead of removing particular centres through surgery, it is far more profitable to bring about a chemical change in them. By effecting a change in feelings, such a chemical change takes place of itself. In this process, there is a spontaneous development of independent consciousness. By anaesthetizing consciousness, anger does come to an end, but this is not the way of progress. All this only serves to underline the fact that the effect of removing the sensory centres through a surgical operation, and that of bringing about a change in the endocrine secretions through the transformation of feelings, are radically different. To neutralize negative feeling is one thing, but to create a positive, constructive outlook is something quite different. The joy of a constructive outlook is possible only through the development of equanimity, not by severing a centre.

The sages have termed equanimity arising from the development of consciousness, as the Law of Life and of great utility. Action influenced by equanimity is the greatest provision in the life of a sadhak. From this angle, the practice of equanimity is very necessary.

Q. It has been said in the *Neetivakyamrit* that of all — behaviours, equanimity is the best. Why is equanimity the best? Why most useful?

Ans. A man longs for happiness. That conduct which brings happiness is the best.

The happiness referred to here is inner joy, not sensuous pleasure. Inner joy is independent of all means. Pleasure dependent on material objects is ever attended by pain. Only absolute or inner joy is free from pain. Such joy manifests itself in a state of equanimity. Equanimity creates a state of consciousness from which sprout the fountains of joy, in which the glands are activated and chemical changes take place. No outside circumstances can adversely affect this joy.

Q. Sangam Dev perpetrated upon Lord Mahavir twenty death-dealing tortures. Did this cause no impediment whatsoever to Mahavir's joy?

Ans. That Sangam inflicted great tortures upon Lord Mahavir, is true. But all his actions failed to disturb Lord Mahavir's inner peace. He did not even experience any physical pain, it seems. Because unbearable pain often makes a man unconscious, but Lord Mahavir bore all his travails very consciously. Which means that Lord Mahavir's consciousness was not affected by pain, rather his painful situation itself was quite overwhelmed by the fountains of inner joy which sprouted within him.

Q. A rare individual, instead of being overwhelmed by pain, can quite overpower the circumstances of pain themselves. Does it happen through spiritual power, or is there a scientific reason for it, too?

Ans. Such a thing does not occur without a cause. The scientific reason for it is quite clear. Each physical body has its unique organisation, which is regulated by a chemical called melatonin. The function of that chemical

is to take the organism into samadhi or unconsciousness. In the absence of a situation requiring endurance of pain, a person straightaway goes into unconsciousness. Whether it is Lord Mahavir or somebody else, if not supported by equanimity in fatal pain, he cannot remain fully conscious. The joy of equanimity is so strong that one does not experience any sensation of pain whatsoever. That is why it has been said that equanimity is the Law of Life. It is of great utility and an infallible support.

To have no sensation of pain, even when pain is inflicted upon one, appears to be strange, yet it is true. A material witness of this is the technique of acupuncture. Through acupuncture, the pain-carrying nerves are inactivated, with the result that the sensation of pain never reaches the brain. With the growth of equanimity, too, the pain-conveying tendrils are inactivated, so one does not experience pain.

Q. What is the philosophical basis of equanimity? Is it — an element imposed from outside, or a spontaneous state of mind?

Ans. Equanimity cannot be imposed. It is the fundamental nature of the soul. From the point of view of consciousness, all souls are equal. All have an equal capacity for development. This is the philosophical basis of equanimity. All the inequalities found in human society, all conceptions based upon untouchability, sex, etc. are man-created, not natural. Material inequalities are also imaginative impositions. From the point of view of utility or convenience, the caste, regional and national frontiers are all artificial and unnatural. Devoid of intellectual or utilitarian divisions, the whole of mankind is one, indivisible, each human being endowed with the same existential capacity. There should be no imposition of inequality there.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN SELF-STUDY AND MEDITATION

*If you really wish to practise equanimity,
 Practise self-contemplation above all!
 Between meditation and study, there's a bridge,
 Call it anupreksha, or discretion;
 It's derived from the word meaning
 'inter-meditation';
 He who practises it, finds immortal Truth.
 Whether a meditator or a scholar or
 a scientist,
 The path of anupreksha is open to all!
 After perceiving a fact, contemplate upon
 it well!
 What you discover is the fruit of anupreksha!
 When a known fact is subjected to
 personal reflection,
 A new truth is born; that is applied
 anupreksha!
 Among the five kinds of study mentioned
 in the Agamas,*

*Reading, Questioning, Intelligent Recounting,
Anuperksha, Discourse;
Anupreksha is the most original and thriving!
Without it, the discourse is for ever wanting!
Anupreksha or feeling alone provides a solid
foundation;
Hear it described, to reap great spiritual
satisfaction!*

Q. It is clear that the development of equanimity is — necessary for inner happiness. But the mind's problem is not resolved. After all, how is one to develop equanimity?

Ans. For the development of equanimity, it is necessary to practise anupreksha. Preksha and anupreksha constitute a pair. In the system of preksha dhyana, thought commands the same importance as the act of observation. Anupreksha is a thought-induced, suggestive, process. Thought is very necessary for a clear comprehension of the essential religious elements. It is called contemplation or reflection. The essentials are known through contemplation. In the process of knowing these, arise occasions of like and dislike, of attachment and aversion. Unless one is free from like and dislike, meditation can pose a danger. In avoiding like and dislike, contemplation on the 'transitoriness' and 'uncertainty' of life, can be very helpful. That is why it has been called "inter-meditation. It is a process which takes place between two meditations. From this point of view, contemplation (anupreksha) serves as a bridge between self-study and meditation.

Q. Anupreksha means argument or thought. Wherever there is thought, there is conflict. Where there

is conflict, there is suffering. Conflict leads to sorrow, and sorrow leads to conflict. In this situation, how can like and dislike be obviated while practising anupreksha?

Ans. Thought has two forms—dialectical and supra-rational. The feelings of preference and aversion cannot be separated from dialectical thought. However, thought which transcends reason, is free from any feelings of like and dislike. A sadhak practising meditation, experiences pleasant and unpleasant sensations. If he cannot find a way out of these, he is lost in like and dislike. However, by practising anupreksha, by taking recourse to thought and suggestion, a transformation of instincts inevitably takes place. From the point of view of character-transformation, the practice of anupreksha is more important than that of preksha.

Q. Thinking and experiencing are two different things. — Anupreksha is allied to thought, and preksha to experiencing. Anupreksha is verbal. So is *japa*. Are *japa* and anupreksha one and the same thing?

Ans. Anupreksha is something not merely verbal. — Continued reflection can lead to direct realization. The technique of *japa* is different; here, the sentence, "I bow to the Enlightened", is repeated time and again. The iteration of words sets going sound-vibrations which promote both mental integration and peace. However, the mere iteration of words without mindfulness does not increase the length of the sound-waves, and therefore concentration does not become perfect. Such a *japa* is not very productive. But if after pronouncing a word, one is totally immersed in its meaning, without the interruption of another thought, if this state of total and choiceless concentration continues for half a minute, one then experiences indescribable bliss. Whatever verse is recited

or dwelt upon, to wholly merge one's consciousness, mind, feeling and experience in it, is the process of integrated or mindful sadhana.

Q. The practice of *japa* produces sound vibrations. — Does benefit to the sadhak accrue from this or is it the union of *japa* with *bhavana* (i.e. repeated practice of principles) that is really productive?

Ans. The sound-waves have their limited utility. But, — combined with *bhavana* (repeated practice of certain principles) their utility increases manifold. Certain drugs are naturally beneficial, but when these are treated and infused with other substances, their potency increases still further. It is the virtue of myrobalan to effect a purgation, but myrobalan treated with certain medicinal herbs is much more beneficial than the common preparation. Similarly, when the sound vibrations of *japa* are combined with *bhavana*, these propel a man in the direction of self-realization. In the absence of *bhavana*, no spiritual rites can be fully consummated.

Vipassana is a system of sadhana. It takes a man towards a state of non-conceptualization or nothingness. This is also a process. But in our view this is not the only process. If to be in a state which transcends thought is sadhana, to think is sadhana, too. The combination of these two makes for wholeness. This is the new concept of the Jain meditation system. According to it, the greater the reflection or contemplation of a received fact, the more wholesome is the consummation.

Once a guru taught a dull-witted pupil of his the lesson of equanimity. There was little room for an elaborate discussion or understanding. So the guru got him to memorise two proverbs, 'Ma rush', 'Ma tush' ('No anger!' 'No gratification',) which meant that under no

circumstances should a man entertain anger or seek gratification. After a short while, the pupil forgot the words taught him by his master, and instead iterated 'mash tush, mash tush'. Contemplating upon these words, he set out for seeking alms. He stood before the residence of a householder. The housewife was washing black grams. The Sanskrit word 'mash' means black grams, 'tush' means the husks.

The monk asked the housewife, "Sister, what is it that you are doing?" The housewife said—"Muni Sri! I'm separating the beans from the husks." On hearing this, the monk's eyes sparkled. He exclaimed, "I've got it! Just as the beans are different from the husks, similarly, the soul is different from the body!" The understanding of and continued reflection upon this distinction turned the monk introversive. In the state of introversion, he experienced a heightening of consciousness and attained transcendental knowledge. In the holy trinity of reflection, contemplation and absorption alone is this highest realization possible.

Q. What are the starting and the culminating points of — a sadhak's unique pilgrimage in his search for truth?

Ans. The starting point of the search for truth is listening and the ultimate is fulfilment. In between there are eight more stages in the following order :

- (i) Listening
- (ii) Knowledge
- (iii) Science
- (iv) Abstinence
- (v) Penance
- (vi) Control

- (vii) Steadfastness
- (viii) Purification
- (ix) Non-Action
- (x) Realization

In this order, one begins to know what is good or bad at Stage IV, and the path becomes clear for the discovery of new truths. Here, too, the practice of anupreksha proves most useful. In *Uttaradhyana* are mentioned five kinds of study, the fourth of which is anupreksha. Before it come, reading, questioning, intelligent recounting. Only after anupreksha, comes discourse. Generally, every sadhak tends to assume the role of a religious speaker. However, according to a prominent tradition, only he has the right to discourse, who practises anupreksha. Through continual practice of anupreksha, one's comprehension of the essential meaning becomes so sharp and clear that words grow secondary, and the cotemplator embodies all meaning in himself. From this angle, anupreksha or feeling becomes a solid basis for the evolution of a state of complete identification.

IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR PRACTICE

*In this vulnerable world, there is
nothing stable!
Who can say he's going to last for ever!
Time swallows everything, moving
and unmoving,
Wittingly or no, it befools all men!
As a particle of water on a blade of
grass is life,
Like a water-bubble is the present moment!
A man's youth is so very restless
and wavering!
How can he ever find the meaning of life?
Not only man, even paradise mortal is;
There's not to be found there a trace of
absolute joy!
Is there a thing in the entire creation
Which remains the same for ever and ever?
The playmates with whom one frolicked
in childhood,*

*To whom one remains so attached for ever!
 All those near and dear ones departed!
 Who can prevent our passing away?
 Waves emerge from the restless ocean,
 To slide again into its embrace!
 How illusory is the union of kith and kin!
 How can this overpower a sadhak true?
 All is transient here, nothing lasts for ever;
 "Born to die" is the Universal Way!
 The sadhak who comprehends this Law!
 Is sure set on the path of salvation!*

Q. Anupreksha is related to argument, ideas and — thinking. Is this thinking about any material or immaterial object, or does it have any definite basis? If so, will you kindly talk about it in detail?

Ans. The context and connotation in which the word, — anupreksha has been used, is a pure spiritual element. From the verbal point of view canalised thinking about any object may be called anupreksha, but that is not the intention here. Therefore, it would be pertinent here to talk about the grounds of anupreksha. The first ground is the transience of life.

In this world, there are two kinds of elements—lasting and transitory. To treat the eternal as transient, and the transient as eternal, only serves to strengthen illusion. The pleasure of identification with an object or the pain of separation from it, is illusory, not real. As long as the network of illusion lasts, listening to or reading a thousand discourses leads to no real understanding of spirituality. Illusion, indeed, is our greatest problem. The most important method of breaking it is the contemplation of what is transitory. As the transience of matter is

gradually driven home, the network of illusion disintegrates. Only then does one fully grasp the secret of the transience of the world.

Q. This world, which forms the basis of our joy—is this transitory, too? What is its real nature?

Ans. The world offers no protection. It is mortal. Everything here is transient. All attempts to make it stable are destined to fail because the cycle of time destroys everything.

Human life in this world is considered to be the most important, but everybody knows how transient it is. Imagine the existence of a particle of water on a blade of grass! Human life is no less uncertain than that. A man is proud of his life, youth, property. He is caught in an illusion. All that he prides in is unsubstantial. Without first dissolving this illusion, the true significance of human life remains hidden from view.

What to talk of man, even paradise which is looked upon as eternal, is mortal, not free from death. Even the immortals are destined to leave their heaven and shift to a different world. Even the pleasures of heaven which man is so eager to attain, are not absolute. Even these come to an end. What happiness can a man imagine which would last all through his life? Everything that comes into existence finally ceases to be. That is the ultimate destiny. It is universally acknowledged that everything in this world is transitory. If so, how can one find eternal joy through what is transient?

Q. Which path should a seeker after Truth adopt, so that he can directly experience eternity and be free from illusion?

Ans. The realization of transience and the direct experiencing of its reality, pushes a man in the direction of the eternal. The living form of transience is before us all. The people a man lives with, in whose company he spends his childhood and youth and with whom he plays and whose joys and sorrows he shares, all who ever loved one are ultimately burnt to ashes. Here one is face to face with the challenge of transitoriness. Waves arise in the ocean and subside. Similarly, in the world, things come into being and disappear. In such a state, if there is a steady companion for man, it is his own consciousness. Excepting his own consciousness, nothing else can give a man constant company.

In order to come face to face with the eternal, the simplest way is the contemplation of transience. Union and separation are inevitably interlinked. The man whose mind is permeated by this reflection, succeeds in breaking out of the circle of illusion. Only the sadhak who comprehends transience can pierce the veil of delusion and do obeisance at the altar of awakening.

Q. Every sensible person knows that the world is mortal, that all worldly pleasure is fleeting, all union transitory and the individual himself lasts for a short time, and yet he is not able to come out of the illusion about the world, about pleasure, about one's kin and about himself. Why?

Ans. Mere theoretical knowledge serves little purpose. Many people know many things, but do they achieve their goal? The way to realize anything is through constant practice. Eklavay's constant practice turned him into an eminent archer. Whether it be the path of art or of sadhana, without practice nothing is achieved.

Lord Mahavir was a self-realized soul from birth. Still before renouncing home, he practised a life of austerity and penance for two years. Why? He had been called upon to be a witness to his own sadhana. During this two-year sadhana great valour sprouted forth from every part of his body.

Here was the ground of daily conduct, no mere intellectual play. Standing on that ground, Lord Mahavir was engrossed in contemplation of transitoriness for six months. He was so much permeated by this anupreksha of transience that the song of transience burst forth from every pore of his being. In those moments, he grew so highly sensitive and throbbing with energy that a whole current of transience with its tremendous vigour coursed out of his life, leaving behind the illumination of eternal consciousness. In order to assimilate that transcendental light, Mahavir started on a pilgrimage and kept going until he became an embodiment of light himself.

Prolonged anupreksha is a must for strengthening one's comprehension of the transience of the world. The minimum duration thereof is three months. Without practising anupreksha for three to six months, no worthwhile result is possible. Gurdjieff selected 32 sadhaks and kept them in a room. They were made to practise monistic anupreksha. When they ventured out of the room after three months, they found the whole world transformed. Even in the midst of a crowd, they experienced a sense of solitariness. This experience changed the entire course of their life. Such an experience comes about only through practice. Therefore, in order to taste or assimilate any truth, one must always remember to practise anupreksha.

CAN DEATH BE STALLED?

*Can there be any salvation in this world?
 Or any refuge or dignity, O Brother?
 Even he who enjoys the wealth of the
 six continents,
 Absolute power, yet suffers frustration! Why?
 Great glory lasts as long as proud
 illusion endures,
 Till life remains unswallowed by cruel death!
 Horses, elephants, chariots, armies and
 great warriors
 Are of little avail, when Death chooses
 to come!
 Houses made of steel, yet is man afraid!
 In humility bent! What might rescue him?
 Neither ascending to the mountain top,
 nor lunging into the sea,
 Doth offer any protection against
 impending death!
 The holding of the breath, and the
 practice of yoga,*

*Learning and magic, too, are here to
mockery reduced!*
*Disease and old age come, the body
grows inert*
What medicine here can cure a man of these?
Yet a four-fold refuge is ever available to him!
*The Enlightened, the Liberated, the Saints and
true and perfect Religion!*
*Salvation for reprobates, for the helpless,
hope,*
*Loving care for the orphans, for the drowning,
a hand*
*A friend to the friendless, to the abandoned,
a brother,*
The saviour of all, whether rich or poor!

Q. The illusion of taking the transient for the eternal
— is the result of delusion. The cause of delusion is the illusory nature of one's approach. On account of a perverse point of view, a man's conceptions go awry. One aspect of those conceptions you have cleared up. But there must be some other aspects, too. Will you kindly talk about these?

Ans. When the mortal is taken to be immortal, it is
— a patently false approach. Similarly, to look upon that which has no refuge as a haven betrays an illusory perception. Man seeks protection in material objects and thus further sinks into delusion. If we go into it deeply, we shall find that none in the family, society and the country, can give salvation to man. To begin with, it seems that the greater the extension of relationship, the more solid is one's base, but even those things which, in the process of their acquisition, seemed to offer lasting joy, are later found to be wanting. What seemed

to offer salvation, later appears to bring damnation. That some person or thing might bring us salvation at the time of calamity, or in the moment of death, is a false belief, and one must come to see it as such.

The empire and the army are considered to be saviours. But neither the empire nor the army can save a man about to be swallowed by death.

Changez Khan greatly feared death. Because of this fear he killed millions of people. The kith and kin of the killed became his enemies. His fear increased. A sentinel was appointed for his protection. But Changez Khan grew suspicious of him. Another sentinel had to be appointed. But growing suspicion necessitated an increase in the number of sentinels. However, Changez Khan was not reassured even when seven sentinels kept watch for him. He sat all night with a sword in his hand.

He had left his royal palace for sometime and lived in tents with his army. One night he dozed off for a while. At that very moment, a horse tied to a nearby post broke loose. It caused a tumult. Changez Khan woke up with a start. He thought the enemy had assaulted. In great panic, he started to move out of the tent. While fleeing, he stumbled over a spike. A pointed stake pierced his stomach and he died. Changez Khan had the tent with stakes erected for his safety, and yet his very means for salvation were responsible for his death.

Q. Is it possible to stall death?

Ans. For thousands of years, the avoidance of death has been contemplated upon. Research is being carried out in this connection. Even today the scientists are occupied with this problem. They say death can certainly be stalled. In proof of their assertion, they say

that the basis of life is healthy cells. These cells can be repaired and kept going in good order for a long time. As long as, a dying cell, after being rejuvenated, retains the capacity for division and for reproduction of a new cell, life would continue. The scientists have succeeded in replacing inert or dead parts of the body by transplanting in it new parts. They have also achieved success in heart-transplantations. But they have not been able to achieve victory over death. If, as claimed by them, they can stall death by rejuvenating the cells, it would create a great commotion in the world of philosophy and science. Right now it seems hardly possible.

Q. Can death be stalled according to Jain philosophy?
— The scientists say that life is connected with the cells of the body. How does Jain philosophy react to it?

Ans. Jain philosophy is the philosophy of conquering death. The wished-for consummation lies in getting rid of the cycle of life and death. But this happens only in a state of perfect freedom. The soul wandering in the world has no deliverer; it will have to accept death one day, sooner or later. But the frontiers of death can be modified; untimely death can be avoided.

According to Jain philosophy, it is the vital energy that regulates life. In theoretical language, it may be called *oja*, the vital food.* As long as the effect of *oja* lasts, life continues. *Oja* is the name given to the atoms of the life-force. Every living being, in the first moment of its existence, receives these atoms. As long as this source remains active, death cannot occur.

• The cell begins its new life by taking the fertilized egg of the mother. This process is called *ojahar*.

There are chance happenings which bring home to us the importance of the life-giving force. For example, a house fell and a person was buried under the debris. It took five to seven days to clear away the debris. And the man, when pulled out, still had life in him. He survived because his *oja* was secure. However, if the *oja* or life-force itself had been hit, his life would have instantly ended. It was just a matter of chance. Everything depended on the preservation or non-preservation of the life-force!

Q. In the opinion of some people the practice of breath — control leads to immortality. Is there any truth in it?

Ans. Life is connected with inhalation-exhalation. In — view of this some monks go into deep meditation for long periods. But even this practice cannot save any one from death. The use of learning and magic in this connection also does not prove effective. Some people build strong and powerful mansions for their security; others go to the mountain tops, still others cross over the ocean, but nowhere is it possible to avoid death. Disease and old age are indicative of man's utter helplessness and lack of security. In the case of the body getting ill, recourse is taken to the vairs, doctors and medicines. By these means some diseases get cured. Yet the fact remains that in spite of these facilities, many diseases are incurable. When the life-force or bio-electricity in an organism gets weakened, doctors and drugs become meaningless. If, doctors and medicines could prolong life endlessly, death itself would have died.

Sometimes towards the end, a drug is administered which makes even a moribund man speak out, but its effect does not last for long. Similarly, a lot of research is being done to stall old age. However, these efforts

have not as yet yielded any satisfactory results. This much, of course, is possible that old age should be free from pain or its arrival delayed.

Disease and old age are painful conditions from which none can deliver us. How can then mortal chance offer any protection? The only means to salvation in this atmosphere of uncertainty is constantly awakened consciousness. In other words, a man's own soul is his only refuge. "I seek refuge in the Enlightened Ones; I seek refuge in the Liberated Ones; I seek refuge in the Saints; I seek refuge in Religion, the Way of Salvation"—this fourfold refuge is symbolic. The enlightened, the accomplished, the monks and religion symbolise four forms of the soul. Excepting these, nothing in this world can ensure salvation. Through constant contemplation of the total absence of salvation in this world, it is possible to neutralize concepts which only serve to increase delusion.

