

Self is the Only Certain Reality

Barrington, Illinois — March 27, 2015

Welcome, friends, to this monthly meeting we are having in the Chicagoland area. The idea of having these monthly meetings is that on the spiritual path the mind takes control over us and does not stay with us when we want to follow this path. It's a constant reminder we need for ourselves. Very often the effect of a meeting does not last more than a few days, sometimes a few hours. Sometimes we hear this very nice talk, very impressive, and we are going to meditate regularly now from today onwards—and next day we have forgotten. So that is why it is good to have these regular meetings as a reminder that let us not stray away from something which is so important for us.

This life of ours is so short compared to the cosmic time in which we are living, compared to billions of years which they say this world is existing and will exist. To stay here for a hundred years or so, or even less sometimes, is not much time. And the way we look back upon our lives we find that time flies very quickly and, therefore, we sometimes find that we regret we could have done so many things which we missed out because we thought there was plenty of time. There isn't plenty of time. Time is very limited in this physical body. It is quite possible that we have an immortal soul, which is beyond this time and space, which has never been born and never dies. If we are aware of that and are conscious of our soul and are able to experience who we are as a soul, we don't have to bother about time at all. But if we are not conscious of it, and we are only conscious of this physical body as our self, then time is of the essence. Time is very important then, and we must not waste any time at all. After all, when you take care of this body, you are taking care of it only for a very short time. The body—everybody leaves it. We watch people. People who claimed to be immortal—have died. People who are great masters have died. People who have said they have discovered the elixir of everlasting life over here in the physical body have all gone. We see them going. We don't seem to think that we are also going away like that. And we will go very suddenly and find that there was no time left at all to do anything.

What is the big importance of making it so important to be doing something in this physical body, in a physical life? The importance is that in order to escape from this cycle of birth and death, cycle of the world of duality, world of pain and pleasure—in order to get out of it—the only window of opportunity we have is the physical body. So that is why it is very important that we make full use of the time we have in this physical body and not waste it at all. Once we are out of this body, we have no control over anything. It's all predetermined. It's also predetermined here, but we don't see it like that. We don't experience it like that. We experience free will here. We experience the opportunity to make choices. And when we have the opportunity to make choices, we choose what is good for us. And that is why

we choose the spiritual path and say this is going to be a guarantee, an insurance for our well-being after we leave this body.

If we don't do it while we are in this physical body, it will be too late, and we'll be going round and round in circles of birth and re-birth. So that's why you can have many forms of life. The soul is a unit of consciousness. It can imbed itself in any form. It's actually right now in the form of plants, in the form of insects, animals, fish, fowl. They all have the same soul. The same soul we have. The soul is no different. It's only a unit of consciousness. And therefore, whenever something becomes alive, a form becomes alive, it has a soul. Soul is the life force that creates metabolic action in a form and allows it to grow, allows it to be born, grow and die. It follows this law of beginning, middle and end. All forms follow that law, no matter what form it is. There are forms which we cannot see with our eyes, such as angels, such as ghosts, such as disembodied spirits of people who have died and are still roaming around here because of their attachments. There are many forms. Those forms also die. They also have a birth. Every form that has ever been created has a life span. Even the mind which thinks and which we very often confuse to be the soul, even the thinking mind itself has a life span. It is born and dies. It may have a very long lifespan—it still has a lifespan. And just like in the physical body, at the end of the day when we are about to die, we say, "Oh, I could have done so much better." We say the same thing when our internal fine body, sensory system, the sensory body, when that dies, we say the same thing: "We could have made much better use of our sense perceptions." When the mind dies, we say the same thing: "I would have used this mind as my tool for so much activity. I spent it all in devising programs and plans outside in the illusory world that was being created by the mind. I could have done much better." All these thoughts come to us when any part of us is about to die.

Therefore, when we have these meetings—and now we are given the dates of these meetings in advance so some people like to come from little distance—they can make their arrangements in advance. They know the dates when we meet every month. The idea of meeting here is—let us remind ourselves this is a great opportunity to have this window open to us to get out of this mess which we call a physical world, because it is a world of duality, of pain and pleasure, of pairs of opposites. The only way we can do it is to seek, which is an option given to us because of free will. So long as we feel we can make a choice, we can seek. And it is the seeking that leads to our liberation from this big trap of birth and re-birth that we go through. People say, am I saying these things based on any philosophy? Is it an intellectual concept that somebody has created and we are following? Is it religion? Is it a set of dogmas somebody laid down? Or a scripture that was produced and we are following it? Not at all. I'm not suggesting any of these things. I am suggesting that the only definite proof we have of something is—that we exist. Everything else can just be made up by our perceptions. The fact that we are the experienter of perception is the only reality. And we start from there. What

can we perceive? What can we find out? What lies in our sense perceptions outside, and what can we find out about our soul and consciousness and mind inside? These opportunities are available to us now. You can belong to any religion, have any faith or no faith, be a God-fearing person or an atheist. This particular way of examining what the truth is, is open to all. It is not based on any dogma whatsoever. And if you have any idea that there is a dogma involved in exploring your own self, throw it away. To explore yourself, you just go within yourself. The self is the only reality we know for certain. We all know we exist and that is our self.

Of course, once we start from there, it becomes very easy to say, "If I am the self, where do I exist? If this is a world that I am experiencing through my perceptions, where am I doing it from?" When you put this question to yourself, it does not take very long to find out that so long as you are in a physical body, you are operating from within the physical body. The unit of consciousness is not operating from outside anywhere. It's operating from within the body, because the body seems to be enveloping it, covering it and closing it. And if we are enclosed by the physical body, then where are we if we are just a unit of consciousness and not the body? A little introspection tells us that we don't operate from our hands or our feet or legs, even torso or even the heart. In the wakeful state, we are operating from our heads. We open our eyes and look at the world and we feel we are right behind the eyes from where we look. Everything else in consciousness appears to be below us. We don't feel that we are sitting in the heart and above us are the eyes and the head. Nobody feels that. This heart is just an organ supplying blood and sustaining our life here, but is not the seat of consciousness. The seat of wakeful consciousness is behind the eyes, and we can feel with eyes closed that we have a body, which is below where we are as a unit of consciousness with no dimension.

Therefore, if we know that much, that our self exists within this body, in the head, behind the eyes—a very good starting point to examine who are we. What is our self? Go right there. Go right to the place where the self is sitting right now. The self is sitting behind the eyes, and in the head, and all we have to do is go there. Now how do we go somewhere? How do we travel? Supposing we have to travel in consciousness, but not with the body and we want to travel, say, to downtown Chicago from here. We can imagine what downtown Chicago is like, and we can feel we are there. We can see the streets. We can remember, can recall those things and, for a moment, we are there. What have we done? How did we go there? By putting our attention on this thought—that we are there. We imagined we were there. This is a wonderful gift we have got—of imagination—and putting our attention along with imagination where we like. If we can move our attention through imagination wherever we like, can we do the same thing to imagining that we are behind the eyes in the center and put our attention there? If you can do that, you'll find out who the self is. Let's not make too much mystery about these things, because the spiritual path is to discover the spirit, discover the soul, to discover who you are as a conscious entity. And if we know that the conscious entity lies behind the eyes in the head, and we can

use imagination and attention to go there, we found the way.

So, therefore, if we can do that, we get an answer to who we are. We would also discover how the body is creating an experience for us in the material world, that even when we have no body there is something else covering us which creates another experience of a different kind, that even if that cover is taken off and we only have the mind and soul together, the thinking mind and the intuitive soul—the soul that provides consciousness and power of life, and the mind that thinks and rationalizes—if we are only left with these two, we still know that the mind is covering us around and we are in the center of that. We are always in the center, the center of every cover that can create. And we are also in the center if there is no cover. Center is the truth. That's where the self is. So, starting from a single point behind the eyes in the physical body, we can have a discovery of all these things.

The difficulty is, and that is important, the difficulty is we have never tried to withdraw attention within ourselves behind the eyes. We were never taught that. We were taught how to focus attention on things. And that is why we try to focus attention. Even when we want to focus attention inside the eyes, we are focusing attention away from where we are focusing attention, where we are. People meditate and they even want to follow the third eye meditation. That means meditate behind the eyes. They close their eyes and imagine there's a space there and they see their little self sitting in the head and look at that and say, "That's me sitting." That's not you at all. You are the one looking at that. You are the one behind that. A very common mistake. We spend years on this kind of activity, thinking we are doing meditation on the self. The self is the one that looks at that image that we create. Therefore, looking at something, which is focusing attention on something away from yourself, does not work. It does not withdraw your attention to yourself. To withdraw your attention to yourself, you must use imagination that you are actually sitting there and cannot see anything. Can you see your own eyes in the physical body? Nobody can. We can see a reflection in a mirror. We see with the eyes and yet we can't see our own eyes. Same thing is true inside. You can't see your eyes. You can't see your face. You can feel you are there, like you feel you are here—you feel your eyes are working. Same thing is inside. That's a very common mistake we make in meditation, so I'm bringing it out, that if you can imagine you are there—not that you are seeing yourself there—that you are there looking around, looking at the darkness around, your eyes are closed, therefore it's dark, and you can see on both sides and that imaginative being that is seeing inside is not this body. You will notice that you can turn around inside with that self of yours without turning this head. You can look up, look down with that imaginative self inside and you are doing it. Who is that self that you can imagine is doing these things? To take a more gross example, if I were to say that you imagine that you have come and are standing next to me here, that you have left your chairs...just imagination...that you imagine have left your chairs, you are standing here. Now you are standing here. How many of you can imagine that—that you are standing here? You are all qualified for good meditation. That's what is required—if you can imagine you are standing here. How many of you can imagine you are standing here and looking back at the audience?

Wonderful, you are more qualified now. Meditation is to imagine you are there and from there you are looking what is inside the head. It's not that difficult. We should not make it into a ritual, make it into a very ceremonial thing. We should make it simple. The art of withdrawing attention behind the eyes is the art of imagining you are there. Now we have these wonderful gifts given to all of us. Some have a deeper sense, some have a little lighter sense, but they all have these gifts—the gift of imagination, the gift of moving attention where you like, the gift of concentrating your attention where you like. Imagine these three gifts are all that are required for good meditation. The gift of imagination, the gift of attention, which is the only part of consciousness, the awareness, that you move around. If you're sitting in this hall, the hall is where it is. You don't change anything. But you can decide to look this side or that side. You can decide to put your attention where you like. You cannot change awareness of this hall. But you can alter the direction of attention wherever you like. So, this power of attention which can move your awareness.

And then third thing, concentration of attention, that you can concentrate your attention on any point you like. If you go to a concert, and there are several musical instruments playing, and you like the drums more than the others and concentrate on listening to the drums, you will notice that the other musical instruments will become less noisy, less sound, and the drums will become loud. Nothing has happened there, but your concentration is wiping out some of the awareness of other instruments. The same thing is true here, that when you concentrate your attention on anything, you are able to exclude the awareness on other things. These are the three miraculous things we have been given, and they are the ones that enable us to discover who we are. There is no religion involved in this. Is imagination religion? Is attention religion? Is power of concentrating attention religion? Not at all. These are human qualities, and these have been given to us so that we can seek our truth and find ourselves inside. So that is why if we can imagine we are inside and continue to put our attention on where we are inside the head, and concentrate it there, you will slowly become unaware of what is around you. You will become slowly unaware even of the hands and feet of your own body. They start becoming numb, and then they go into unawareness. You don't even know you have them because you're concentrating there. You're looking what is there, not anywhere else. The more you concentrate on being there, the more you become unaware of the extremities of your body, ultimately your torso, ultimately the whole body. And you float in a sky which opens up, and you are not aware that you have a body. Such is the possibility of just using these three great gifts that we have been given. And that is true meditation. It does not require any label. It does not require any title at all. It is not the privilege of any particular society. Not the privilege of any class. Not the privilege of any nation. It's open to all human beings, and we all are good candidates for meditation that gives us a knowledge of our own true self.

Now if we can do that, what is the real problem when we try to do that? Those who have tried it, they tell us the main problem is that the mind which thinks starts thinking while we are there, while we are

imagining we are there. The mind starts thinking of things that are not there. The mind starts thinking of things that are outside of the body. The mind thinks of things to which we have been attached. The mind thinks of desires we have outside of the body. And therefore, it draws the attention out. Every time we think of something outside, we are drawn out. And therefore, we lose the awareness that we're inside behind the eyes. Only problem is the distraction of the mind by thinking of things to which we are attached and for which we have desires. These desires and attachments are holding us back. Nothing else. And there is nothing that we have to tackle in order to discover ourselves except our own mind and the distraction of the mind.

Now we have to find some ways how we can avoid the mind from thinking of other things. Because when it thinks of something else, it takes the attention right there. We start thinking of our children, our brothers, sisters, our parents, employers, employees, jobs, the problem we had with people, the fight we had, the new car we're going to buy, the broken things that we have to repair. Simple things. They draw our attention. We remember we lost our keys. We couldn't find our keys, but in meditation, you can find them. The mind wants to run to find things outside. These are the kinds of things that take us out of our self, out of the space where we want to concentrate our attention.

How do you control these? That is now the practical side of meditation. The concept, the actual practice is very simple. One mystic, Bulleh Shah, says, "*Rab da ki paana, etho putna te othey laana.*" He says, "It's not difficult to find God. Just pull your attention from here, put it there." He makes it one sentence. God realization is one sentence. And that's the truth. If you can do that, if you can put your whole attention there, you find God. But when we are distracted by the mind, now we have to work out a system. That's where we come to the nitty-gritty part of meditation, that how do we prevent the mind from running out into our distractions. There are several steps we can use. One, we can start repeating words inside our head to squeeze out the words of thought. We can repeat the words inside our head so that we listen to the words we are artificially repeating and not let the mind think of other things. Mostly mind thinks in language, in words. So when we introduce some new words... Of course those words should also not be distracting us. Supposing my mind is now distracted, is thinking about my car and I've got the repair of my car and I have to pay a bill for that. Suppose my mind is thinking that. And I say, "No, I am going to repeat the words, Ye Old Shakey's Pizza—something I liked and that's my mantra now." I say, "Shakey's Pizza, Shakey's Pizza"—it'll take me into Shakey's Pizza. It's just a diversion from one external thing to another external thing. It won't help.

Therefore, we must choose to repeat words that have no association with any of our things outside. But they should have association with what is happening inside. Supposing we can see some light inside, and I think of the light inside. I am then not distracting myself. If I think of a candle outside, I'm distracting. If I think of a candle burning inside, I'm pulling it in. If we can coin such words which have

no meaning for us outside, but have meaning inside, those words will be useful to squeeze the words of the mind outside and prevent it from getting so distracted by putting thoughts outside. This is why they have invented the use of mantra, the use of simran, the use of repetition of words, holy words. Why are they holy words? Because we don't use them outside. We use them in a holy place where the soul rests. We use them in the temple, the real temple, where we can find God inside our head. Since they come from there, they are holy words. They are charged words, empowered words. We can use any language, but the words are supposed to be those... But we can't really coin them, because all our language is based upon association of ideas with outside things. But we can go to somebody who has better knowledge of what is happening inside, who can guide us and tell us that, "I can give you some words which don't have any meaning outside. But I can tell you they have an association of ideas of things that happen inside." And we repeat those words. They don't mean anything to us. They don't distract us outside. But as we make progress in concentrating our attention, they begin to reveal to us why those words were there, because they relate to those experiences that are generated when you become unaware of this body. It's simple.

That's how the mantras have been made up. They were made for this simple purpose, that you repeat them and repeat them not with the tongue. That's no use. Repeat with the thinking mind. You have to prevent the mind from thinking. Therefore, they must be repeated with the mind, with the same thought stream by which you think. Put those words into that thought stream, so other thoughts can't come. It often happens that when we are repeating these words—and lot of people are doing this mantra—they come and tell me they have been repeating for years and nothing has happened. We repeat like a parrot. What good is this? That doesn't give us any self-realization, any idea of who we are. They are repeating like a parrot, these words. If you repeat like a parrot, you'll get nothing. You'll become a parrot, maybe, next life. But if you repeat with the thoughts, the thought stream, the very language, the very sound from which the thoughts come. Have you ever noticed how the thoughts speak? Do you recall? If you come to one of my meditation workshops, I'll tell you how to watch your mind and listen to it and you'll see. Mind, when it thinks, has a voice. And when you think of something, you're hearing words. Otherwise, you won't know you are thinking. Whenever you think, you're listening to words that your mind is speaking. It has a certain voice. It changes its voice also. It changes its voice when it thinks in two tones, in two channels. For example, you can be repeating certain words and the mind can then be commenting upon it. "Are you repeating too fast? Should you slow down?" You are repeating. Who is this voice? The second voice? And it's different. If you observe carefully the second voice is finer, thinner and different from the first voice of thought. If you examine the way the mind thinks, it's a wonderful exercise to see in how many channels it can think. It can comment upon the thinking. It can be a commentator on the comment, and so on. The further you examine how many channels it has, the finer that sound becomes and becomes so subtle that ultimately you can't notice it. Some people can notice it up to two levels, three levels. But some people

can notice even more.

I had the privilege of hosting His Holiness Dali Lama in India when he first left Tibet. I was given the duty to receive him and host him in India and we used to travel and discuss meditation. He was the one who said in his meditation, he could discover eight levels of mind thinking, one upon the other. Normally, it's not possible. Normally some people can go to three, some can go to five. If you examine the mind carefully in your head, you can find that the mind has several channels in which it thinks. So you could be repeating like a parrot in your mind and the top part of the mind is distracting you and you can be thinking of something else. Good repetition of mantra, if you want to do that, if you want to successfully repeat words of simran or mantra, it should be done with every voice that you can hear in the head. Start with one. Notice if there is any commentator sitting. Allow the commentator to join in and do the mantra in two voices, three, four—whatever is required. Then the mind can play another trick during meditation. It can make a picture of a person that you like, that you love. And that picture comes in front, and you are again distracted. You are repeating words, but your whole attention is on the person. Then if you want to use good repetition of a mantra, don't be distracted. Ask the guest who has arrived in your head to also join in the mantra. Supposing ten people come—ten can join. When I advised, somebody told me a large crowd came in the head. They all sang the mantra so loud, it was such a huge chorus, that the entire attention was withdrawn, and "We left the body here and flew away into the sky." I'm giving you these tips, because we are many of us are caught in the ritualistic repetition of mantra. Ritualistic meditation, thinking it's just a ritual and we have to do it on a regular basis and that's all. And people just sit to say how many hours we have sat in meditation, which is highly unimportant. People don't realize it's not the hours at all. It's not the time factor. It's the quality of meditation that matters. Five minutes of concentration in the manner I'm telling you is worth more than three hours of sitting and idly repeating the words and not having any concentration of attention on yourself taking place.

I remember once I met a friend of mine from California. He came to India. He invited me come and stay with him in California, many years ago. I said, "All right." I took a long journey from India to California. Arrived there tired. I thought I'll now sleep. And he said, "Very good. You are a good meditator. We'll meditate together." I thought I'd sleep for that night, especially with the jet lag. But I had to keep up my face, so I said, "O.K." I couldn't say I never meditate and I sleep, that I'm like anybody else. So, three o'clock, by alarm, we got up and we sat. He closed his eyes. I sat next to him. I was a little curious what the body looks like when is in such...because my experience is that when you are really meditating by imagining things and seeing things, you have a certain smile on your face, and that smile is so involuntary. It comes by the realization there is so much more inside. And you are smiling inside, and there is also a smile on your face outside. I was opening the corner of my eye to see that smile on his

face, because he was meditating so seriously. Somehow, by coincidence, every time I opened my eyes to look at him, he was opening his eye looking at his watch. He was wearing his watch when he was meditating. I don't know if he was looking all the time, but every time I opened my eye from the corner and saw, he would open and look like this. Two and a half hours we went through this torture of meditation. And after that, he gets up and says, "What a wonderful meditation we had. Two and a half hours. We are required to do two and a half hours." And I said, "My dear friend, we meditated for two and a half hours, but I want to mention that you meditated on your watch, not on your self, because the entire time the attention was on the watch." And the strange thing is that subjective time flows so differently. When we are sitting in company, with good friends, chatting with friends, "Oh, my God, three hours have passed. I didn't realize." And when we sit in meditation, "Must be two hours. Ten minutes only?" It looks like the subjective time changes so much, because when you enjoy something, time flies. Also, I know I've sat with friends and we've sat on the floor with crossed legs and chatted away, had coffee and snacks and enjoyed for two-three hours, and there was no pain in the knees, nothing hurting. When we tried meditation, after few minutes, "Oh, my knees are hurting now. Now I can't sit. My body is aching." How can there be such a big difference?

The truth is the mind fights us. The truth is we have given so much power to our own mind. Our soul has empowered the mind to such an extent to give it a separate entity, as if it is independent, as if it is running the show, as if it is our self, as if we have sold our self to our mind. That's our life. That's what we have made ourselves. Whereas the mind was given as a beautiful, wonderful thinking machine we could use to think whatever we like. Do you see the big difference? When a machine, a computer-like machine is given to you called the human mind, and you can think whatever you like. Imagine what a great gift it is. What are we doing with it? We're not using it. We allow the mind to randomly think whatever it likes, and then we follow it blindly. We have made a servant, a slave our master. And that's why the mind takes advantage of it. Because the mind by taking advantage keeps our attention continuously on the desires and attachments it creates outside. And that's why when we become a slave of our own mind, it's very hard to pull our attention back. We're following the mind, the mind wants to follow the senses, senses want to follow the world outside and not inside. We have to take control of the mind. Doing simran, or repetition of words, or mantra is a means of taking control over the mind. It's trying to put thoughts that we like to put into the mind and not allow it think on its own. Make it a slave. And with practice you can control the mind to the extent that it will think what you want it to think. Now who is you when I say, "You want it to think?" Very often we are confused because we think we are the mind itself. When we say, "I want to think this," who is that "I"? If we say "I" is the mind, we can't get out of this trap. If we know "I" is the conscious power that is making the mind think, that is making the senses work, that is making this body work, then we're separate from the mind. Then we can give it instruction.

How can we distinguish between what is our mind and what is our self? Not very difficult. Because these two are performing, the functions the mind and the soul are performing, are totally different. The function of the mind is to think. Every time you think it's the mind. Never confuse it, "Now my soul is thinking." The soul never thinks. Every time you speak, the mind speaks. Every time you speak, whether with the tongue or the mind inside your head, the mind speaks. The mind is always the speaker. Soul never speaks. Soul listens. Soul listens to the mind. Soul is the consciousness that is picking up what the mind is speaking. Soul is the self that is experiencing everything. Soul is the experiencer. Mind is one of the actors, one of the instruments that we are using for creating experience. Therefore, when you listen, it's the soul in action. When you speak or think, it's the mind in action. But there are better ways to distinguish between the two.

What takes time, like thinking, sensing, rationalizing, applying logic, trying to make sense of things, is all mind. What does not take time is soul. Now what are the things we are experiencing that does not take time? These three things I can immediately tell you. One: Intuition. The intuitive knowledge never takes time. It comes sudden, with no time. Intuition is not a function of the mind and does not take time. Love is instantaneous. It's not created by thinking. It does not take time. The experience of appreciating beauty and joy and having that bliss—soul, not mind. So, there are some functions that soul is performing at the same time as the mind. The mind is thinking, soul is getting intuitive, gut feelings of things. We are continuously experiencing these things. So, there is a big distinction. The functions of the mind are always in time and space, and the functions of soul are beyond it. And they both work together, because the soul, our empowering power, the unit of consciousness, has attached itself to the mind and covered itself with the mind like a garment. It's wearing the mind and is using it to think. Using it to communicate. Using it to create. Using it to build castles in the air and on the ground. All this is being done by the mind with the help of the power of the soul. Then the mind then covers itself with senses and divides perception into seeing, touching, tasting, smelling separately. Then all these get covered by a physical body with a short life and stay inside. And gradually physical body disintegrates, becomes old. We shed it off. Then we take another one. But while we do that, the inner bodies remain intact.

What are these inner bodies we talk of? This physical body is made of matter and by wearing it we have an experience of a material world, of a physical world. If we don't wear this, we don't see this physical world. We see it in a different way. We see the sense perceptions. The power to see, hear, touch, taste, smell do not belong only to this physical body. They belong to the inner body. If you become totally unaware of this body by putting your attention behind the eyes and do not know you have a body, that imaginative body of yours has all the sense perceptions intact. You can fly where you like. It has no gravity, no weight. It has power to travel at high speeds. It's not bound like this body. You are using it when you call it imaginary things. Imagination is being derived from there, from the inner body. And we

don't realize it. So therefore, the inner body has a longer life. It was there before we came into this body. It will be there after this body dies. Some people loosely call it the soul. Soul went from one body to another. Reincarnated. Soul is not reincarnating. Soul never reincarnates. It's the astral body, the inner body, the sensory body that reincarnates. And that is why that body has a longer life. In terms of physical years, the average life of a sensory body is one thousand to three thousand years of physical time. So during that time you can have so many different bodies, different experiences. People say we have past life regression. In past life regression they can remember what happened two hundred years ago. They say must be a past life body. Not necessary, because the inner body itself has that body and retains all the memory.

Not only that. If you were to be unaware of the inner body also and become aware only of the soul and the mind covering it, the mind itself is like a body. And we call it the causal body. It causes all experiences to happen in space and time and the three worlds that we see around us—causal, astral and physical, the world of concepts, the world of ideas and the world of matter. All these three worlds are being created from there. Therefore, we say that's the cause. That's the universal mind from where we experience the individuated mind here. Just like from our own true source, from where we came as a soul, where there's only one soul, one totality of consciousness. We experience division. We are so many. Similarly, the mind from the top of the third causal stage comes up and becomes individuated and becomes individual mind attached to individual souls. That's the experience we are having now. These are things that are all verifiable by anyone through simple process of good effective meditation, by going within, continuously going within. Go within this body to open up the next. Go within that body to open up the next. Go within that to open up your soul and find out who you are. The whole secret is going within. Because what we are doing is to go without, to go outside. All the time we are moving outside. These bodies were created to move outside, more outside, and now we have to reverse it and go within. And that's the secret of finding out who you are and eventually finding what your true home is.

It's such a remarkable thing that the mind which with we think is only thinking. No, it's creating everything. It's creating all the experiences we are having at all levels. Even now. But there's no way to prove it when you are sitting here. The reason why we cannot prove that the mind is creating all this is because this is our only reality. We have no comparison with any other reality. When we go to sleep at night and have a dream, the dream looks real. We move about, we have emotions, we cry, we laugh, we have real contact with people. When we wake up, the dream becomes unreal. But while we are sleeping, this body is unreal, because we don't know we are sleeping. We have no consciousness of the body. The dream is the only reality. We wake up, this is the only reality. If we go to a higher level of consciousness, that becomes the only reality. When we come back this becomes the only reality. We have to remember: we did not go about this business of creating illusions. We went about the business

of creating reality. These are levels of reality. People were calling them levels of consciousness, that these are illusions. They're not illusions. Does this look illusion to you? If this is an illusion, why would I waste my time in an illusion? If we were all shadows, I would not be talking here. It's our reality, our only reality. Not only is it real, it's our only reality. We have nothing to compare it with.

So that is why this beautiful system of wearing covers, becoming unaware of what is inside and taking the experience of the cover as our only reality makes these different levels of realities. And when we rise to stage of realities, it does not mean that we always remember. For example, you go to sleep. You say, "Next time I go to sleep I'm going to remember I'm awake also." You can't do it. In the dream...supposing you come to know in a dream that you are dreaming. It has happened. So many people say, "We know it's a dream." I've had that experience and gone about telling people, "You know, I know it's a dream." If I knew it's a dream, would I be telling those people who are not there even? We realize that in a dream, when you know it's a dream, you shout, "It's a dream." Who are you telling? When you wake up, you don't shout at all. You don't tell anybody. Because although you're speaking the truth, you're telling the truth in the dream, that it's a dream—you're not aware of it. Same thing here. We're talking of higher levels of consciousness. We're telling the truth, but we're not aware of it. The only way to be really aware of it is to move into that reality by waking up. It is a series of wakefulness. When we say that we can pull our attention behind the eyes and become unconscious of this body, it's a means of waking up to a different reality and discovering that reality. So that is why these are a series of awakenings. They could be likened to awakenings. And, more so, because when you awaken you find that you never left. When we go to sleep in our bed and have a dream, we go far off to different places. When we wake up we're still in our same bed—we never left. We had an experience we were very far away. When you awaken to your own reality from this dream we call the wakeful state, you discover we never left. All these experiences of going around here are part of a dream, a dream-like experience.

But the nature of laws of this particular experience are different. Laws of this experience are different at every level. In a dream, when you go to sleep in a dream, you can instantly go from one place to another—it looks normal. You are now, in one moment, you are here in Chicago, next moment you're in London, third moment you're in Tokyo. Very normal. Nobody ever questions how did I come so quickly. Nobody has ever said that. Secondly, things move so fast in a dream you can be in one moment at this time and ten hours later without any passage of time you are there next morning, you are there next night. You move time so swiftly. You can't do it here. And it looks absolutely normal in a dream. Looks real. And here, it would look absurd if that happened. We would be screaming. Freak out. How is it happening? We never freak out in a dream. The rules that govern... We fall in a dream from a house and you never get hurt. And here, you fall from here, you get hurt. So, the rules that govern our

experience in a dream state are so different from the rules that govern...We call them laws of nature. The laws of nature of a dream state are different than the laws of nature of the physical state. Similarly, the laws of nature of the sensory system, when you rise to the next reality, are totally different from the laws of this physical reality. I can give you some examples which you will encounter when you go there.

We have an experience, what we call telepathy here. Telepathic communication, that one person can think and other person can understand—some people have that experience. Actually, we all have that experience, but we don't use it because we don't believe in it. There's so much depending on belief that we don't believe it's possible. Unless I talk to you how can you understand what I'm thinking? That this is all secret, my thoughts are all secret—nobody can see them. In the next higher level of awareness, the astral stage, there are no secrets. You can read everybody's mind. It's a different life altogether. Imagine what a big difference that itself creates. Secondly, telepathy does not require spoken or written language. Here we cannot communicate except by spoken or written language. In telepathy you can speak in German, think in German—somebody who doesn't speak German can understand you. Because telepathy does not convey the language. Telepathy conveys the meaning of what you're trying to say. You understood it one language which you associated with those ideas. Another person is using another language, but the meaning is still the same. Here we can't transfer meaning without using language, so we get bound down. But at the astral plane you can think in any language, and the other person can understand the meaning. Very big difference. Incidentally, people who do telepathic communication even here know that language is not used in telepathic communication. Only the meaning is conveyed. Even here. They never get the words of what are being spoken—they get the meaning of what the words are. Telepathy is the same thing. It's just a little, infrequent experience here, where it's a regular experience there. Very big difference. Another difference—there is no gravity in that astral plane. Nobody is taking weight control pills or something. Nobody is doing exercise for keeping the body trim. Everybody has a wonderful time. And they can fly. They can go about. They can do telepathic things. Knowledge is picked up by volume of knowledge instead of volumes of books. Lot of differences are there. And then, your recall/memory becomes so sharp—you can recall what happened 100 years ago, you can recall previous lives. You also recall that the name you have given to your physical body before you withdraw your attention there is not your name. It's the name of the body, and you've had several names of different bodies in the past.

These are all experiences that are available to us when we are human beings and we meditate properly by going within. It's just a matter of practice that we can do all this. It's not a fairy tale I'm trying to tell you to make it look beautiful. I'm saying this is all possible. Check it out. Try it at least. We all have the capability to do it. We call ourselves seekers of truth. Let's seek properly where it belongs. Let's seek

where it is. It's all within. It's all inside. It's not outside.

So, by rising to that level...we go to the level of our mind we discover completely different laws operating. At the causal plane where only mind exists, and no sense perceptions, we find perception is only one activity. We divided it deliberately at the astral and physical planes to have a wider spectrum of experience, that hearing, touching, tasting, smelling are all the same thing when you want to perceive something. We can't understand it here, but you do understand it at the causal plane. That's how you perceive. Very big difference in the experience there. Secondly, you discover a very important fact—that what we know about time here is totally different from what time actually is. Here we think that time flows, time is flowing, and we are going along with it—today is today and tomorrow will come. Actually, you find there that time never flows. Time is static. Time is built at one time, at one go, the entire time was created, all events are placed upon it, and we are going on it from one point of event to another. We are time traveling. Time is not moving. We used to say, “Egyptians learned how to time travel.” I say we are learning it now. We don't have to learn. We are doing it right now. Are we not moving on time? Are we not moving from one event to another? That's time travel. Time does not move at all. In fact, we discover in the causal plane that time actually does not exist. It's created by a little device called memory. Real time never exists even now, here. And when I explain that, people think it's something extraordinary that time doesn't exist when we are all experiencing it right here. I give them a simple method of testing it out. What is present? I'm talking to you in the present. If present is now, and people tell me you should live in the now. Big philosophers are advising, you should live in the now, *The Power of Now*. And I wonder if anybody is living in any other place than now. We're all living in now all the time. There's no way to get out of it. Has anybody ever lived in any time other than now? What are we telling people? Live in the now? You're living in the now. You can't live in the past or future. You can only live in the now. The surprising thing is that now has no time at all in which we are living. Not even a billionth part of a nanosecond. The moment the nanosecond is passing, it's past. Before that, it was future. Now is a meeting point between past and future and does not exist as time. How are we experiencing it? If it doesn't even exist in the now, how are we experiencing it? We are calling that which is immediate past as present. We are calling that as now. I speak a word. I've just spoken now. No, it was in past. Nobody can speak in the now. Nobody can do anything in the now. Nobody can think in the now. Nobody can live in the now. We're living in the past. Consider carefully that if you want to examine the nature of time, you understand that time, if it is now, and now has no time, and we're all living in the now, we're not living in time. What are we living in? What is giving us the feeling of time? We are living in the past—instant, immediate past, which we call present. Old past, which we call past. Therefore, past is the only reality.

What about future? Maybe there's something called future, where all the events are going to come

upon us and tomorrow will come and day after tomorrow will come—that must be existing. Of course not. If we could delete three words from the dictionaries of this world—hope, fear, anticipation... Actually all these three are the same thing. Hope is positive anticipation. Fear is negative anticipation. Anticipation neutral. If we can eliminate that, we eliminate future. Did you ever notice that if you don't have these, there's no future at all? Future ceases to exist unless we hope and fear that this might happen, this might happen. It's our experience in the now, which has no time. To hope takes time, which means it's in the past. To fear takes time—it's in the past. To anticipate takes time—it's in the past. Everything is in the past. What we call past, present and future is all past. And nobody can live in the past except through memory. Therefore, once you install a memory capsule into consciousness at the causal stage, all time becomes real for us. All events become real, and time begins to flow. Actually, there's no time at all here, in the astral plane or anywhere. But we're experiencing it. The way it's created is so remarkable, when you see how wonderful consciousness can create the experience of time, when there's actually no time, through memory. Now it makes it very easy to explain what is our destiny. Destiny is merely a memory capsule, which we picked up. We picked up like a DVD, encapsulated DVD, at the causal plane, play it, it becomes our life. It becomes our causal life, our astral life and our physical life. We can pick up one little DVD for one life, come here for one life—"Let me go just for a trip to this physical/material world and then I'll go back"—we pick up one capsule, come for one life, and we discover that one life is dependent upon a past life, because that's the law of nature here. In the physical plane, in the astral plane, the causal plane, the law, like other laws I just explained to you, is cause and effect. That's how it's created through the experience of time, cause and effect, law of karma. That's a great law. We talk of it all the time. Law of karma. It's all my karma.

What is karma? Karma is the experience embedded in that capsule we pick up at the causal stage. And then we play it out. In order for any event to take place in the DVD, there must be a prior event, a prior cause. Probably another life. Because this life can't start without some prior lives. Now we have never lived a prior life. We just want to come first time. Soul on an adventure into the land of time and space. And the soul comes and takes one life and tagged onto that one life is a previous life. And previous life cannot exist without another previous life. That cannot exist without another...infinite number of previous lives are immediately added on to us. It's a memory capsule that becomes our life. We remember them. We remember as if we lived them. We are responsible for them. Karma becomes our real activity. Karma becomes reality for us. It's not real at all. Even lives are not real. Even past lives are not real. But we have to create the past lives to create a present life. And therefore, once we pick up that destiny from that causal plane, and we bring it here, it creates past lives, and the current life creates the future lives. And therefore, we get trapped. Once we are here and we do not go back to realize that we came here for adventure, we do not say, "Adventure over. Let's go home," we don't say that, we continuously move in this trap of life after life.

All that I am telling you, check it out. Verify. That's how it's working and can be done at the second stage, causal stage of awareness, which can be achieved by becoming unaware of the physical body and unaware of your astral-sensory body, and you come to know all these things. So, it's amazing how this whole Creation has been made from consciousness, that consciousness can pick up and create memory, and memory is merely a creation in no time. You create a capsule of memory and that expands to create a past, present and future in which you are living. If you go above that...supposing you are able to go beyond the mind. That means leave that causal system behind and discover your soul and separate it, which can be done. If you separate yourself, all karma, all this duality, everything is left behind. You don't carry anything. The soul never had karma and never will. Soul is beyond karma. Only the mind can have karma. The mind carries all karma. When we identify ourselves with the mind, we become subject to the law of karma. When we identify ourselves with the sense perceptions, sense perceptions become our reality. When we identify ourselves with this physical body, physical body becomes our self. That's how it's happened. We can reverse the whole process and become unaware of these, pull our awareness out of these and discover the truth.

It's a matter of practice. I could keep on talking to you for days on these subjects, but the thing is, practice—go within and check it out. “This guy said something. I want to check it out for myself. I don't want to believe anything blindly.” And I recommend very strongly that the true spiritual path does not have any blind faith at all. It's totally experiential, and you should only believe what you experience. And the leap of faith if required should only be for one step forward. And say, “Let me test. This has happened. Let me see if the next can happen.” If the next doesn't happen, hold on. If the next happens, then be willing to take the next leap of faith, no more. Don't sit at home and say, “I've found the whole pathway to God and now I've found my true home and now I have to just sit and wait.” That's blind faith. Living faith, faith that grows like living things, every day new experience happens and your faith grows. Small miracles happen, and you know they were not happening before—what has happened now? Small coincidences happen. They build living faith. Whereas just to believe somebody has gone to a temple or a church or a synagogue, somebody said something, you believe it. That's blind faith. Make it a living faith. That means every day experience should be added on and make it living.

We'll take a little break now. Thank you very much.

https://youtu.be/gA7B_5QaADM

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