

GURURAJ: Just put it there and then we'll have a little meditation. Just a few minutes.

VOICE: [INAUDIBLE]

GURURAJ: Yah. Well, today being the last day of us being together on this course, let's have a little meditation together for a few minutes.

[PAUSE]

GURURAJ: Now, we have some things here we've got to give out. Mary Frank.

AMRIT: Mary Frank here?

VOICE: [PARTIALLY INAUDIBLE] ...kitchen duty. ...later.

GURURAJ: Okay. Will someone take it to her?

VOICE: Yeah, I'm going to.

GURURAJ: [????????????????????].

VOICE: [INAUDIBLE]

[GURURAJ IS APPARENTLY RETURNING BLESSED OBJECTS OR DOING SOME OTHER TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL BLESSING]

GURURAJ: David [????????]. Margaret Warner. Ah, there she is. Sally [????????]. Ann Martin. Oh, there's our Ann. Linda [Basheen?]. Is that the way you pronounce it? Robert [B???]. [Beth?]. Russ [????????].

VOICE: I think he [INAUDIBLE]. [MUCH LAUGHTER]

GURURAJ: Let's see, therefore there might be another one for you. [MUCH LAUGHTER] My fault. I didn't [say it?]. [Daniel ??????].... [LAUGHTER] How did I get that? [LAUGHTER] Mark [?????????????]. Linda [?????????????]. Karen [Caine?]. Karen?

VOICE: Who?

VOICE: Karen.

GURURAJ: Oh, Karen. Is it Kairen, Karen?

VOICE: Karen.

GURURAJ: There's no name on this one. Oh, oh, oh, oh. It doesn't matter, as long as you're here. That's important. Nancy [?????????]. Some [?????????????????????????] this week. [Mame?]?

VOICE: You can't get [?????????????????]. [MUCH LAUGHTER]

GURURAJ: I give a subtle suggestion so they could make them out for themselves.

VOICE: Oh, I see. [LAUGHTER]

GURURAJ: Margaret Warner.
Is that the last of our [????????]? Fine. Good. Now, we can start with questions.

VOICE: Gururaj?

GURURAJ: Um hm.

VOICE: A book by Ram Dass called Grist For The Mill mentioned that for most spiritual seekers they go through three stages. The first stage is the [one of?] eclecticism, seeing truth in many different things, in many meditation techniques, this kind of thing. Many spiritual teachers. The second stage is the lineage. And the third stage would be universality.

GURURAJ: Now define the lineage.

VOICE: Yes.

GURURAJ: Linear procession?

VOICE: What he meant by lineage was that you would feel, you would fall into a particular cultural or a particular philosophical school, which you would feel tremendously comfortable with. Not in the sense that it was better than another, but one that you feel totally solid in.

GURURAJ: And then the universality starts.

VOICE: Yes. After pretty much finding the height of, maybe the maximum of your growth through the lineage then ends in universality. My question is on how important is the lineage step, and how can one really find their proper lineage? And like for myself, it's not something which I have an easy time with. It's just a feeling that I have of which there's certain things that I know are not my lineage. But as a Westerner, and particularly when you're confronted with so many Eastern systems, and I have a feeling that maybe my lineage is not there. It's somewhere else. I was just wondering how important that issue is.

GURURAJ: Beautiful. Right. Good. Fine. It's a lovely question.

Now, in our teachings there is no such thing as Eastern or Western. Our teachings are based upon universal truths, as you would know. Now, at first a person starts, a person who is intellectually inclined, would start with studying various systems and various forms of meditations and various philosophies. Now, if you study the life of Ramakrishna, as you have, you would find that there was a period when he went through life as a Mohammedan. There's a period when he went through life as a Christian, a period when he went through life as a Vedantist. And so he experienced and lived all these various forms of religious concepts and religious ideals. And then he came to the conclusion that all religions are

like rivers coming from different directions which ultimately become one in the same ocean. That was the discovery of Ramakrishna, and that discovery holds true. It had held true ages past, and it is still true.

Now, the seeking mind is always a groping mind. The seeking mind is always a groping mind, and it is one of the essential qualities of the seeking mind to grope. When we seek for light then we do realize that we are in some measure of darkness, because if we were not in darkness we would not be seeking for light. And what happens in darkness that a whole process of groping takes place. Now, in this groping, in this groping we study and try and practice various forms of religious concepts. Now, there is nothing wrong with that. All these...all these various concepts might not reflect the entire truth for us.

Now, there's a lovely little story of four blind men going through the forest trying to find the truth. So they came upon an elephant. The one got hold of the tail and said, "God is like a rope." The other got hold of the leg and said that, "God is like a tree stump." The one got hold of the trunk and said, "God is like something else." And like that all four of them had touched or were with a different part of the elephant. And then these four started squabbling with each other, one saying that God is like a rope, and the other saying God is like a tree stump. Good. So they were fortunate that a person that could see came along. The blind people were groping, and a person that could see came along. And he told them that, "All of you just know truth in part. The truth that you say, in truth, is not complete truth, but it is partial truth. And he showed them. Took them around the entire elephant and made them touch the trunk and the ears and the legs and the tail and all, and says that "When you can comprehend, when you can open your eyes, when you can see the light, you will see the entire elephant. And then you will know the entire truth."

Now, in that way religions have emphasized certain aspects of truth. So therefore, no one should really claim that every religion is complete. Now, religions within themselves are complete. But our conception of the religions that we follow may not be complete, because our conceptions, our minds, are narrow. So like this we progress on, discovering, finding, analyzing, all various philosophical concepts. Now, in this probe, in this groping, some little glimmer of light occurs, because no searching is ever in vain. Something is always gained.

Now, from that stage...from that stage of groping around the dark room there might just be a little slit in the door where some light is filtering through. And man finding that little light he is more attracted to that particular system which you have called lineage. Right. Now, what should always be remembered is this.... It reminds me of a legendary story of the hamsa. It's a Sanskrit word which literally would mean "the swan." Now, this legendary swan has the ability that if it is given a bowl of water and milk mixed, this legendary swan has the ability of extracting the milk only and leaving the water behind.

So when man progresses and develops, he also develops this ability of taking out the cream of all the religions he has studied. Now, when he follows a particular path, he might find to suit his own temperament more cream in that path and less water. And that is why he is inclined to follow that particular lineage of thought. But that is not the end. That is not the end, because the search might have been started on the mind level. And it had definitely started on the mind level, or else he would have not examined all religions or studied comparative religion. But there could be certain truths in all these religions which man can combine within himself and create his own way of life. This brings us back to what I have been saying. This brings us back to what I have been saying all the time, that if there are four thousand million people in this world, there should be four thousand million religions. Right.

So now we are at the second stage where a certain philosophy or a certain way of life appeals to us most. So by assiduously practicing that form of belief or religion or philosophy we are going through a expansion. There is an expansion taking place within us, because now we have found the way which is most conducive to our temperament. And man must always start from where he is. And what could be most conducive to one person might not be equally conducive to another person, because they are both not standing on the same spot. If we want to reach from here to San Francisco, some might be nearer San Francisco, and some might be further away. Those that are nearer the goal would naturally appreciate concepts which are more subtler, more with greater depth. And those that are further away would appreciate concepts which could be more grosser or more mundane. So that is the way one proceeds on the path of religion and faith or philosophy.

So now once having adopted to one's mind that a certain path is good for me, he follows that path assiduously. There is one drawback that one always has to remember, that the path that seems very conducive to me today might not be so conducive tomorrow because I am evolving. I am evolving. And as I evolve more and more, my perceptions would become more subtler, and my awareness would increase. And with the increase, or developing greater awareness, that which I am following today might have its value. It is not to be discarded, because that for me has been a stepping stone. And if I did not have that stepping stone, I would have not progressed further on the steps. That might have been the first rung of the ladder, but there are many more rungs I have to climb. So in that way nothing is ever to be discarded, for every teaching contains an element of truth. And it is by combining all these various elements of truth that we come to realize the wholeness of truth. So here, after studying various religions, we have now embarked upon a certain path that seems conducive to us. But the warning, to put it in another way, is not to become dogmatic about it. Because dogmatism leads to fanaticism, and fanaticism leads to all kinds of religious oppositions and religious strife. And that strife which is created by fanaticism must necessarily rebound back on us. So although we are following a certain path in life, although we adhere to a certain philosophy, we must always view everything else with an open mind.

Now, when we view everything else with an open mind, we become tolerant. We become tolerant of the Moslem faith. We become tolerant of the Hindu faith. We become tolerant of the Buddhist faith, or the Taoist faith, whatever it might be. We develop this tolerance because we have an open mind. Now, with this tolerance also develops an understanding, because man can never be tolerant without having understanding. If a person is capable of eating four ounces of food for his meal, we have no right to ram down his throat eight ounces. Good. So we develop this understanding that man is doing things to the best of his capacity. Now, when we have this tolerance we develop this understanding. When we have this tolerance we develop this understanding, and by developing understanding we are also developing love. So whatever path the person follows we love the person.

Now, I have known of families, I have know of families where the husband is a Protestant and the wife is a Catholic. Good. So in the morning, Sunday mornings when they go to church, the husband would drop the wife at the Catholic church and he would proceed on to the Protestant church. Good. And then when the services are over he picks her up again, and they live very, very happily. So what has happened, that the husband and wife they are both tolerant of each others beliefs, because they realize that each one must find his own path. Good. So this conception embraces tolerance, tolerance breeds understanding, understanding breeds love. Good.

Now, when all these qualities are combined within us, then we are sure to undergo greater expansion and greater awareness. And when we develop greater awareness, then the present path we are following would lead us to a universal path, and in that universality we find everything to be true. And that is why we say that even the opposites are true. When we embarked on the path of universality, everything existent, or everything existent within our perception, and everything existent beyond our perception is also true. And that is how we achieve maximum progress. And in that maximum progress, by developing this universality within us, we too become universal. And that is the aim and goal of life.

So here we start from the narrow path, from the narrow end of the cone, and proceed to the wide end, when every religion, every philosophy, every human being, every creature, every form of existence animate or inanimate is within our embrace, and we feel one with the universe; and the universe, in turn, feels one with us. And that is the end and aim, the goal of life; and that is total self integration, that is God realization in becoming oneness with the one. Hm? And all duality ceases there and then.

Hm?

VOICE: There's one point I'm still not clear on in what you just said.

GURURAJ: Um hm.

SAME QUESTIONER: And that is if it is possible for certain individuals to go from eclecticism into universality without having a specific lineage to follow or to be a part of?

GURURAJ: Yes. This...this lineage takes place automatically. And this lineage is more a matter of preference. It becomes preferential. Man has to adhere to something. Man's mind automatically sticks onto that which it would like most. You sit down to a table that is spread with a hundred goodies, and you will go for that which attracts you the most. So it is part of the process. It is definitely a part of the process. And once one goes to that which attracts us most, we will, sooner than we think, perhaps, even go beyond that preference when everything becomes our preference. Hm? Ya.

SAME QUESTIONER: Just one last little thing on that. What if your preference happens to be a kind of a system or a lineage which in fact embraces all of them? In other words, I've never been able to be totally comfortable with one specific approach, cultural or geographical or, you know, whether it's Christianity or Buddhism or Hinduism or whatever, that are [?????????]. My taste has always been for, like, you're simple, kind of...

GURURAJ: Yeah. That is very beautiful. Then you are our legendary swan. [LAUGHTER] You are...you are extracting from the mixed milk and water. You are extracting the milk. You are enjoying the benefits of that full, rich cream. All blessings upon you. [LAUGHTER]

AMRIT: Guruji, we have someone, we have a musician here who would like to play for us this morning. Would you like...

GURURAJ: Ah, that is very beautiful, yes. I think that would be a very nice note to end this program. Yes.

AMRIT: We also thought it would be nice if we had a chance to mingle a bit outside before lunch.

GURURAJ: That is very good.

AMRIT: And take a photograph of the whole group.

GURURAJ: And have a.... Yes, of the group, and have a few words. Now, I've had many personal interviews. I am so sorry that I just couldn't have a personal interview with each and every one. And you know sometimes some things do become physically impossible, because we have such a short time. And within these few days to cover all we want to cover is not always a possibility. It's not always a physical possibility. But one thing is very sure that each and every one that is here has been communicated with on the soul level. Yes. Yes. Yes. Good.

Why don't you...why don't you come and sit here? And I will go sit somewhere over there? Ha! [LAUGHTER]

VOICES: [DISCUSSING SEATING ARRANGEMENTS] We should have the best seat to him. [LAUGHTER]

VOICE: What I would like if someone would gong me in and then out.

VOICE: Okay.

[GONG AND THEN PLAYING OF STRINGED INSTRUMENT. DULCIMER, PERHAPS? APPROXIMATELY 6 MINUTES]

[APPLAUSE]

GURURAJ: Beautiful.

[PLAYING RESUMES, APPROX 6 MINUTES MORE]

[APPLAUSE]

VOICE: Thank you.

VOICE: [INAUDIBLE]

GURURAJ: Have you got it on tape? Good. [LAUGHTER]

VOICE: I'm going to have to get a copy of the tape for this lecture because I didn't hear it. [LAUGHTER]

[TAPE CUTS OFF, THEN STARTS AGAIN]

VOICE: [Ferdie?] said yes. [LAUGHTER] ...but I'm going to be a father [APPLAUSE AND COMMENTS] [INAUDIBLE]
This summer when I was in Great Britain, one of my dear friends over there and one of Guruji's closest companions was
The Reverend Doug McConnell, who is a preacher at a....

[END SIDE ONE]

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