

AUTUMN LECTURES 1962: Second Series

THE SHIVAPURI BABA AND HIS MESSAGE

J. G. Bennett
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THE THREE LIVES OF MAN

Whenever it is necessary to talk about man and his spiritual life, a special language is needed. To be generally understood, the language is taken from some tradition. Attempts to invent a new language for talking about the inner life of man are not likely to succeed, because the traditions are very ancient, and based upon not centuries but thousands of years of experience in solving the problems of conveying from man to man something about the Invisible Reality. There are a number of traditional ways of speaking about man's nature, most of which originated in Asia, and they all have certain features in common. In the case of the Shivapuri Baba his tradition, very naturally, is the Indian-Hindu tradition which goes back a very long way to the ancient Vedic tradition – about which I spoke to you in the last series of lectures¹. It originated perhaps as many as ten or even fifteen thousand years ago. Indeed, all such traditions are much older than we know: that is to say, their roots go beyond history.

When someone arrives at the point where he has direct insight into Reality, he can perceive the meaning behind the traditional forms; but it is very unlikely that he will depart from the traditional forms when he speaks of and describes the invisible realities. What is really interesting therefore, is to observe how he presents his own tradition, for it is probably characteristic of his own experience, and probably will contain something which is important for his own time. Although the traditions themselves are perennial and the wisdom they transmit from generation to generation is, in its essence, always the same – and the fundamental content is the same for all traditions – something special is needed in every new period of history, when the external conditions of human life have changed. Certainly, these conditions have changed very much in our time; and therefore the traditional, ancient ways conveying the invisible truths have to be adapted to the present conditions of life. Only those who are able to make this adaptation by appeal to their own direct experience can really help us here. Any attempt not based upon direct, inner experience to re-state what is contained in the old traditions in another – perhaps 'up-to-date' – language, can be terribly misleading.

This is something that I realised a very long time ago, when I found in reading modern books about the traditions – whether the Christian, or the Muslim, the Hindu, or the Buddhist – that these books were somehow hollow – no authentic ring sounded from them. That is why I was driven back to studying as far as I could the original sources; and how I acquired a taste for going back to the source whenever possible. This increased my dislike for popularisations written in would-be modern terms. These very seldom ring true as far as the ancient traditions are concerned.

¹ Autumn Lectures 1962: First Series. *Natural Catastrophes that Change History*. Third Lecture: 'The Hyperborean Culture – Its Origin and Diffusion', 15 October 1962.

It is quite different when you meet with someone who has a direct authentic experience of the Reality about which he is speaking. Then it does not matter that he adapts the traditional language to his own needs; because instead of weakening it, he strengthens it by what he is saying; for he speaks of a Reality into which he himself has entered. If he is truly a realised man – a *Jivanmukta*, an *Insan-i-Kamil*, or *Orang Sempurna* – that Reality will not be just a memory, but something he carries about with him every minute of his life. I believe the Shivapuri Baba to be such a man. Therefore when he spoke, I was quite prepared to find that he was going to use the language that belongs to the Hindu tradition; and not surprised that he used the language of that tradition as it is contained in the *Bhagavad Gita*, which represents the highest phase of development of the post-Vedic religion.

The *Gita* is a compendium of a number of different traditions, all brought together in a very beautiful work of art. They tend to be confusing to the Western reader, because the different chapters are taken from different sources. Each one seems to be complete in itself and even to contradict the others. One chapter may tell you that any kind of action is a mere waste of time and another will tell you that the salvation or self-realisation of man depends only upon action. One chapter will be written in realistic terms – that this world around us is a real world – another will tell you that it is all illusion and that there is nothing but the One Reality; all our everyday experience being no more than a projection, a shadow, of that One. So the *Gita* often seems to contradict itself, because it brings together a number of traditions, all of which are authentic in their origin, and each of which is very important for the understanding of man and his destiny. Therefore they are not to be taken as a kind of treatise: a self-consistent exposition. On the contrary, the *Gita* puts before us a number of penetrating insights, as if you were looking at the same room through a number of keyholes; and what you see through each keyhole may be different. To enter the room, to be there oneself, to look all round and see how it is put together – this is something quite otherwise than that. We have to graduate from the keyhole views to the view of the one who is in the room; and who is able to turn round and see everything around him.

Body-Mind-Spirit

About the Shivapuri Baba's exposition of man, his nature and destiny; one has the overwhelming impression that he speaks only of what he has directly and completely seen as one who has 'been there'. One of the things that struck me very much in pondering over all I heard from him personally and all I have been told by other people who have visited him – because virtually nothing has been written about this – is that he presents man's nature and destiny as composed of three almost independent lives, each of which must be understood and lived through for its own sake, for fulfilling the obligations which that particular life imposes. The three lives are: first this earthly life, the life of this body on earth; the second is that of our own nature, our own 'soul-nature' we may call it – which the Shivapuri Baba, when speaking in English, calls *mind*. Mind is a part of man which is not confined to this earthly existence and is able to turn itself both towards the earth-life and also towards the spirit-life. For the third life is that of the spirit, which the same as the 'I' is. This third life is the divine part of man which contains the seeds of the imperishable. It is in this third life that we are to meet God.

These three lives are quite different in their importance, but not so unrelated that one can be followed without reference to the other two. Let me explain what I mean: there is an earthly life; there is this body; it is doomed to perish; it will only serve us as an instrument for a certain time, as we all know very well. It has its own needs; it has its impulses, its

satisfactions, and it has its obligations. These are only concerned with that phase of our existence which is lived here on this earth. There is something much more significant for man in his mind, in his soul-life, which is to go beyond this earthly-life. It might, therefore be supposed that the earth-life, or the body, could be neglected and there would be no need to make any special study of it, because mind, or soul, is of a far higher order of importance. But the Shivapuri Baba says this is a misunderstanding. It is not like that. If the requirements of this earthly life are not satisfied, and the obligations connected with it are not fulfilled; then the life of the mind, or the life of the soul, cannot be right. So that although the earthly life is only a temporary phase which will pass, the way it is lived is a condition for what will happen to the second life; that is, to the mind or soul-life. Similarly, although the soul and mind-life is destined to be merged into and swallowed up in the spirit-life, it does not mean that man can live by the spirit-life alone. If he neglects his mind-life, then his spirit-life will be deprived of what is necessary for it and will be unable to find its fulfilment.

That emphasis on the independence and yet the necessity for the three lives to be fulfilled, differs from anything I have seen in the Hindu scriptures or heard from other Hindu teachers. It seems to me to be a very important contribution from this old man towards the present problems of the human race. These three have to be taken in just that way.

At one time it was thought that human life could be lived satisfactorily without reference to the body and its needs. That was connected with the Greek tradition or notion that this body is merely a prison, this earth a place to be escaped from and, with that, a certain despising of the body; an attitude from which Plato cannot be dissociated, and which we in the West have inherited from Greek thought. But that attitude just does not work nowadays, and it is clear enough that mankind has got to liberate itself from it. This Greek attitude, which no longer is taken seriously by many people, was in its time very influential. A corresponding attitude prevailed in the East for a long time, particularly in Buddhism; that is, of despising the body as something which is only an obstacle or a prison, and of regarding the satisfactions of this earthly life as something of which we should be ashamed and try to liberate ourselves. Modern man does not feel that way, and modern man is right not to feel that way because that is not how things are. It is a false tradition from which we have been right to liberate ourselves.

The striking thing we observe with the Shivapuri Baba is that no such question arises for him. But this does not mean that in his presentation the earthly life is to be taken as having any importance as compared with the mind; or the mind as having importance compared with the spirit – simply that each is an obligatory and necessary part of our whole existence. That is the first point I want to make about his presentation. Man has this three-fold nature; this makes a three-fold demand upon him, and the three demands are completely different, standing one to the other as nothing to infinity. That is, the demands and the values of the earthly life are as nothing to the demands and values of the soul-life. The demands and values of the soul-life are as nothing compared with the demands of the spirit-life. But in spite of that, the demands of the earth-life, of the body-life, are imperative. They have to be satisfied. Our earth-life must be properly lived: it is a condition for everything else to be right.

Body

1. Now in what does this right-living of the earth-life consist? First of all there is this body. It must be known. It must be known for each one of us from our own experience. It is

not just to be studied theoretically – like physiology, psychology and so on, or the study of skills and aptitudes. Each one of us must get to know his own body, so that it can be given the appropriate treatment. The needs of the body must be satisfied, but they must not be given what is beyond necessity, or this will rob the other parts of our nature. For example, man should know for himself what he should eat and how much, and when he should abstain from eating. He should know for himself what is right in the way of sleep. Of the other bodily functions, how much exercise, for example, his body requires, and what sort of exercise he needs for a harmonious balance of the bodily functions.

When asked how one can learn to know this he replied:

“By experience. You have to learn as you would learn how to make tea. You are asked how to make a cup of tea; today there is something wrong; it is not giving the taste that is wanted. You notice what is wrong; tomorrow you correct it. Still there is something wrong; the day after you correct it. You go on until you really know how to make tea. Then, after you know how to make tea, you have to maintain your tea-making according to what you have discovered for yourself.”

I would just say here that this tea-making perhaps seems like an arbitrarily chosen example; but those of you who have travelled in Asia will have noticed how the making of tea – in almost all Asiatic countries – is something which is taken very seriously; and that to produce the exact right taste of tea and to let it be drunk under exactly the right conditions, is regarded as a serious obligation of man all the way from Syria and Persia to India, China and Japan. So when he takes the example of tea he is taking an example that for Asiatic people is one that does mean something.

Now this may seem to make an exaggerated demand – and I must say that when I first heard about it I thought that one would hardly have time to study all one’s bodily functions to that extent. I thought about this and came to the conclusion that there is really nothing exaggerated about it, and that it is even quite practical for people in our conditions of life. That is, that we should learn to observe the needs of our body and note them carefully, and take this as a rule of life.

If we have observed, for example, that it is really necessary for our body that the muscles should be exercised in a certain way, then we should not neglect that particular kind of exercise. Or if we see that a certain kind of exercise is bad for our body – as I discovered years ago, that what I thought was good, plunging into cold water in the early morning, was not good for me – then we should abstain from such practices. We should remember all this, and take it all seriously. One should therefore be building up in oneself, from early youth, a picture of one’s own body as an instrument to be taken care of. Of course this does not mean there should be an undue interest in the condition of the body – least of all a kind of hypochondria, an excessive sensitiveness to the state of one’s body, as if one were constantly looking at it to see how it is. No, one should find these things out, and then hold to a definite way of life: of what one allows and of what one does not allow one’s body to have.

Of course, when one sees a man who is as old as the Shivapuri Baba; one whose bodily condition is so remarkable, one sees how that kind of discipline will enable a life to be lived very fully and very fruitfully.

This kind of self-knowledge should be acquired early. In relation to children he said that the parents should, from quite an early age, direct the attention of their children to this care of the body, and enable them to see that everything of the body in excess or neglect must be avoided; so that they can learn to have this bodily self-knowledge which leads to a condition of balance.

2. The second of our early duties in this bodily life concerns our *environment*. We are born into a certain family and find ourselves surrounded by people with whom we have reciprocal relations of giving-and-taking. We owe that environment a certain duty. We receive from it and we must give back. There must be justice, balance and harmony in our relationships with our immediate human environment. A man must neither neglect his duties towards his environment nor must he be a slave to it. He must not allow the demands of family and friends and his immediate social environment – nor any larger society to which he belongs – to encroach upon the more important parts of his life. That is to say, he must give to that family and environment what it needs, neither more nor less; give to it intelligently and therefore economically. This too must be studied and remembered.

3. Thirdly a man has what the Shivapuri Baba calls a *professional* duty. On one hand the problem of maintaining his own existence – of carrying out his duties on this earth – requires certain material resources. On the other he has also an obligation to give to the human environment from the talents and abilities he has received and developed. Therefore with this third kind of duty, one makes a wise and economical use of one's own powers of mind and body to ensure one has the material needs of this life and then, if one has skills and powers over and above one's own needs – and perhaps other than and greater than those of the environment – with those one should give to and serve in some way the society to which one belongs.

Those three things: first the care of one's body; second, one's responsibility of duty towards immediate family and the human society in which we are; third, one's professional duties – all of those are connected with the body – they are 'earth-duties'. They do not change the level of a man's Being. They do not bring him into touch with spiritual realities. And yet, the neglect of these duties will be an obstacle – and a serious neglect, even a decisive obstacle – to any spiritual advancement. That is an important thing to understand about this presentation. Doing our duties of the first kinds: living this life on this earth, knowing our own body and what we can do and what we can give – all of that is an obligation which has to be fulfilled; but it is not in itself a means by which man will mount the spiritual ladder. And so it can happen that people will fulfil these duties and still remain upon the earthly level; not having acquired anything belonging to a higher level or a spiritual reality.

Mind

Then comes the second life, which this old man refers to as 'mind' or sometimes 'the soul'. The mind, as I gathered from the way he speaks, can be looked upon as a vessel – and so he speaks of the 'contents' of the mind. But it is a living vessel which has its own powers, therefore it is possible to speak of a 'strong' mind or a 'weak' mind. To have a strong mind is necessary for the further and higher stages of a man's spiritual progress. A man with a strong mind is free from his environment; he is free in relation to his earthly life; he is free in relation to his own nature; he is able to accept what is right and reject what is wrong – all of that is strength of mind. The mind becomes strong through the exercise of its own power. And then there comes this interesting notion – which he does not make specific but which

summarises what he says – that the mind is really both a polarised and a dualistic instrument; that is, the mind is polarised into a higher and a lower part. He certainly speaks of its ‘higher’ and a ‘lower’ nature; and of the mind as being associated with such dualisms as ‘like and dislike’, with ‘pleasure and suffering’ and so on; but also with pairs of qualities such as ‘fearlessness or cowardice’; ‘straightforwardness or crookedness’; ‘anger or freedom from anger’ and the rest. These qualities belong not to the body but to the mind: they are inner qualities of character. They are associated with something in a man which is not limited to this earthly life. This mind or soul can therefore presumably exist without dependence upon the physical body; but its mode of existence depends upon its content.

This notion of the mind and its content is a difficult idea. When he was asked a question: “what about this troublesome lower self of ours, with its impatience, and cowardice, and anger and the rest of it...Where does this come from?” he said:

*“This is the **content** of the mind. The mind picks up these qualities if it is too much attracted to the earthly life and not turned towards the spiritual life. A man should be able to recognise in himself the impulses that come from the higher part of the mind and those which come from the lower part – or from his ‘higher self’ and the ‘lower self’. There should be in him a constant watchfulness to reject the impulses of the lower self and bring into the mind more and more of the content of the higher self – such as fearlessness, straight-forwardness, patience, love of kind....”*

We recognise all those as good moral qualities. This requirement is distinct from the needs of the body; it looks further than those. It is preparing in a man a mind which will be able to turn towards the spiritual world. He is very emphatic that to enter the spiritual world a man must have a strong mind. If he enters it with a weak mind, he will be without defence against the powerful forces which will there be acting upon him. In order to have a strong mind man must practise always turning towards the positive impulses of his higher nature. But above all, he must set himself to be free from what are called the ‘pairs of opposites’ – that is, not to be such that his mind is disturbed by ‘like and dislike’, ‘pleasure and pain’ and others such.

But here it is very important to notice that when he was asked whether man should turn away from pleasure, he replied:

“No, certainly not! Pleasure will come and it should not be rejected. Only a man must understand that pleasure will come, and pain will come. When happiness comes it should be enjoyed; it should not be rejected. Only the ignorant and foolish mind thinks it is possible to have the one without the other. These two are always balanced. If there is pleasure, there will be pain; if there is happiness there will be suffering. Therefore the man who has a strong mind must not be affected by this. That is, he must not be disturbed and distressed, nor lose his inward peace, if suffering and trouble come. But also, if happiness comes, he must be able to enjoy and accept it. He will not get more happiness by looking for it, or by trying to force it, or by trying to hold on to happiness that has come. If it is to go it will go whatever he may do. If it is to come it will come whatever he may do. Therefore it is useless to seek for happiness or to try to avoid pain, because these will come and go. It does not mean that a man should be indifferent to satisfactions or reject them when they come, whatever kind of satisfactions they may be. His mind should be able to see that the nature of all these

pairs of things is such that one of a pair cannot be present without the other also being somewhere.”

This is of course an ancient and traditional teaching and there is nothing new in what the Shivapuri Baba says about it, except possibly to make it quite explicit that asceticism for its own sake – the throwing-away of satisfactions, the avoidance of pleasures, or the inflicting of pain and suffering on oneself with the idea that such things are good in themselves – is rejected. It is not by way of that sort of asceticism that a man will achieve his goal, but by acquiring the strength of mind which will enable him to remain at peace whatever may come. And this strength of mind is achieved by the practice of “Yes” and “No” – of “Yes” to all the positive impulses of the higher nature and “No” to the impulses of the lower nature. And therefore, in order to practise this and arrive at the necessary strength of mind, a man must know and be able to recognise these impulses immediately – even before they arrive. Then, before they have taken possession of him, he can open or close his mind to whatever may come. When asked how this can be done in the turmoil of life, where we are exposed to such a rapid succession of pleasant and unpleasant impulses that it is very difficult to keep this state of peace, he replied:

“It is difficult, but it is not impossible.”

He took as simile his own little place in the woods: how it is surrounded by a wire-fence and there is just the one gate:

“This is the picture of how your mind must be. There must be the one gate to your mind. By this you will admit the visitors you wish and refuse the visitors that you do not wish.”

All this is an old tradition, but the special thing he says about it is that the independence of this particular moral activity is a something in itself – and still not yet any attainment of the spiritual world. That is to say, the whole of this moral life which is directed towards the strengthening of the mind is still only the preparing of a condition for coming to the third life, which is the true aim of human existence on the earth – to come to the knowledge of God. This alone belongs to the spiritual part of a man’s life – and nothing but this belongs to it. That is to say: the spiritual life of man has only one meaning: that a man should come to the knowledge of God – to the knowledge of the meaning of life – of the full realisation.

Spirit

In the spirit life neither the intelligence which is needed for the earthly life, nor the strength of mind needed for the moral life are of any service to us. When we enter the spiritual world there is nothing further that can guide us or help us. We have then to turn towards God by Faith and Faith alone. When I played the recording of his voice last week, you heard him say:

“Think of God alone.”

Of course, this does not merely mean “think about God” but, as he says again on the recording:

“Empty yourself of every thought, only this...”

In this connection, there is one interesting thing which, when I spoke to him last year and again this year he referred to – and that is about wishing. It is generally held – especially in Eastern traditions – that in the search for God all desires must go, and that every kind of desire is an obstacle. About this he said:

*“No, this is not right; there must be the desire for God, this desire is necessary.
A man must not only desire this; he must want it more than anything!”*

So a man must bring to the spiritual life emptiness of all other kinds of wishing except this one desire. Neither the surrender of his own Intelligence nor the acceptance through the strength of his mind will bring him towards God. He can and will be led more and more deeply into this path of the spiritual awareness simply by the desire for God alone. But it must also be understood that spiritual awareness is entirely different from what we call ‘consciousness’. About consciousness he speaks in a way that is traditional but always paradoxical. That is: consciousness is the veil, so that it is what separates us from God.

*“Because of your consciousness you cannot see God.
Put aside this consciousness for one instant and you will see!”*

That is strange. To us Western people, consciousness is the very condition of our having a full life; and the more conscious we are, the fuller the life. But there is a difference. What we call consciousness is really nothing more than our sensitiveness to impressions and images which come towards this body. Our impressions of what we see and hear and touch, our memories of the past, our visceral, inward movements, the stirring of our emotions and our sexual energies and all of that together strikes upon a sensitive part, and when it strikes, we call that consciousness.

There is something else in a man that is a different kind of awareness, a different consciousness. Every tradition speaks of this other consciousness which is only reached when the first consciousness is put aside. No one can describe this to another. When the Shivapuri Baba spoke about this – as you heard when I played a tape-recording last week of him talking – he took the example of the rose. He held it out and said:

*“You see this; I tell you that it has a sweet smell.
Can you know this, if you do not smell it for yourself? You cannot.”*

No description will help us to smell the rose, and the truth is that no description of this other consciousness is even possible, because all our words – every language, every form – are derived from the ordinary consciousness: the outer or superficial consciousness. There is not one single word or image in any language which comes from the other consciousness. Even when negative images are used – like ‘the dark night’ or ‘the invisible’ – they are still only images taken from our ordinary consciousness. And therefore it is really true that no one can really know this other, who has not himself entered into that Other. But it is possible for us to recognise that there is a veil, and there is then the great question: “Are there ways by which this veil can be penetrated?”. The way the Shivapuri Baba puts in front of us is simply this: Follow the disciplines of regulating the earthly life and strengthening the mind, and you will prepare a foundation upon which to build a meditation – emptying the contents of the mind to everything and turning solely towards God. I have known him to say to some people:

“If you do this, in ten or twelve years you will perfect yourself.”

You will come to it, and this will be reached.”

To others maybe it cannot be done in this lifetime; others, I have even heard him say, a shorter period – two years. I think he has a penetrating vision into people and can see what is possible for them, but it is measured in those sorts of terms: as something by which, if a man will really follow the way that he recommends, completion of the three parts of man’s life can be attained.

For each of the three parts, something has to be understood; but it is different. The first part requires knowledge. It is knowledge just like any other knowledge – such as scientific knowledge, or technical, or practical knowledge – it is all connected with the living of the earthly life. The way he asks that you should know your body is the same as you would know any other material thing, or living thing. The way he asks that you should understand your social duties is just the same as you would learn them by observation and watchfulness over the behaviour of yourself and other people; and the same with our professional duties. Here we need knowledge in the ordinary sense. When it comes to the second, that is, the mind-life or soul-life that first kind of knowledge does not avail, because it becomes a matter more of taste, of discrimination, than simple knowing of fact. One cannot know theoretically the taste of the higher and lower parts of the self; any more than one can know theoretically the smell of a rose. One cannot even know them by the same procedure as we learn how to make tea. The second kind of self-knowledge is more exactly a self-seeing, a more direct, more intimate awareness of one’s own nature, not really to be learned, but a power to be acquired. It is the power, at all times, of seeing into oneself and yet remaining free in relation to what one sees. Because if one is not free, then one is not truly seeing – one is only reacting, and one is caught. He spoke quite definitely about the very great importance, as far as the strengthening of the mind is concerned, of seeking for impartiality towards oneself. One is not to be swayed by like-and-dislike of what one sees in oneself. This is a very hard and serious demand, because when one begins to penetrate into the mind, one begins at once to be affected by likes and dislikes in relation to oneself. One finds it painful to observe certain characteristics; one is pleased to observe others; but that is not the way to acquire a strong mind. In this respect also, knowledge of mind is very different from knowledge of body and its needs.

One acquires a strong mind, says the Shivapuri Baba, through the practice of being separated from one’s own impulses, so that one can see. Also by never allowing oneself to be swayed by like-and-dislike; and by cultivating the positive qualities. For this, one must see at the moment, not in retrospect, not in the future, but see here-and-now what is the content of one’s own mind. That is the second kind of self-knowledge – though, as I say, it is something higher than knowledge.

The third self-knowledge is again completely different. It concerns that which cannot be described in terms of consciousness. It is the inmost awareness of ‘I’. It is I AM – that intimate finding of oneself, where there is no longer a separation of subject and object, of knower and known, and therefore it is of a different kind: this is the spiritual.

That, I hope is a fair presentation of the picture of man which one gets in talking to the Shivapuri Baba. He specifically said I should try and present this coherently when I spoke about it, to those people who want to learn what he has to say. Next week I will have to speak to you about how to bring all this into practice, in what he calls the three disciplines. Today I have only tried to give you the framework – a way of looking at man.

Questions and Answers

Q. I would like some guidance about what you call 'higher and lower'; whether there is a middle ground of impulses which are, as it were, neutral. And, whether 'higher and lower' could be called 'positive and negative'. The normal assessment of 'higher and lower' is by what is usually branded as good or bad, acceptable or not acceptable to society.

J.G.B. There is nothing new or special about this. They are the 'good and bad' moral qualities – perhaps not so much in social terms, as in terms of intrinsic values. Let me illustrate it by some examples. He speaks about 'fearlessness and cowardice'. Fearlessness he says, is a quality of the higher self; straightforwardness belongs to the higher and crookedness to the lower. Another example, which he gave in a letter, was 'dignity'. To be 'dignified' belongs to the lower self; 'not to be dignified' belongs to the higher self. There is a list of them, which he has taken from the sixteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. That chapter enumerates some thirty qualities, each of which, as you say, may be positive or negative. You ask whether there are indifferent qualities, which do not matter one way or another. Qualities cannot be neutral. The nature of a quality is that it expresses a value. The higher nature can be said to be a system of values. Mind should be so formed that it will contain a certain stable system of values by which one lives. Now, obviously values by their nature cannot be indifferent. There are all sorts of things which are necessary for us – or may be present, and are either indifferent or necessary – but these do not belong to the system of values. The point about values is that every value will have its negative. To have ten pounds is the opposite of owing ten pounds! To be straightforward is the opposite of being crooked! To be dependent upon what other people think is the very opposite of not being a slave to people's opinion! Impulses towards not-harming and impulses towards harming – of kindness and unkindness – are opposites.

The nature of all these things is that they do have opposites. Now you may object and say: "But is it not recommended that one should be free from opposites?!". If the strong mind is not influenced by 'like-and-dislike' – which he emphasises very much (and which I certainly have to speak about specially next week, because of the practical question of how one has in fact to be free from 'likes and dislikes') that does raise this question: "If one is to be free from the pairs of opposites, how then is one also to have a mind which has positive values?".

'Being free' here means that one must be attaching importance to the positive values and rejecting the negative ones. How is this compatible with non-dualism? That is a real question. I think it is one of the points where possibly the Shivapuri Baba departs from what has become traditional – and which is not altogether satisfactory – in some Eastern teachings. That is the tradition of indifference, with the suggestion that a truly free man is indifferent to moral questions – "beyond good and evil" as Nietzsche puts it. We must answer the question: "If I am to be free from these 'likes and dislikes', how am I to avoid becoming indifferent – becoming without feeling?".

How many times I have heard this question discussed! It only seems difficult if one puts it to oneself in a theoretical way. In one's actual experience one can see very well that it is just not so. One becomes free from something that one formerly was a slave to, and one finds rather that instead of being indifferent, one has got an enhanced capacity of enjoyment – just because one is free. One is more alive because one is free – one is not indifferent. I do

not think there is any theoretical way of proving that this action of the mind – in rejecting negative values and accepting positive ones – will give you that special combination of being free and at the same time being positive. It is one of the mysteries of the mind. It is not 'logical'. Logically, one would suppose that to be free in relation to 'like-and-dislike' would produce a state of apathy, of *apathia*, of indifference – in practice it does not. If your query refers to the really practical question: "How on earth is all this to be done and how is one to recognise that?" – The much more subtle way in which he shows how the practical realisation is to be achieved – that I shall speak about next week. I thought it was necessary, first of all, to show you his presentation of man and his nature and the way he teaches and talks, so that you will know, when I speak about a particular thing next week – illustrated by some of his really delightful similes and parables – what is behind it all.

Q. What do you mean by 'God' in relation to the third degree of self-knowledge?

J.G.B. About that, the Shivapuri Baba himself says. "You cannot know God until you see Him. You cannot tell what you mean by God until you see for yourself. You cannot know God beforehand." He said: "If you accept and really believe in God, then speak in terms of God. If the Name of God presents any difficulty to you and you say: 'How can I use the word God if I have no idea what God means?' then speak of the 'Meaning of Life'". It does not matter for this present purpose; there must be a desire for 'That' – for knowledge of the Truth – to know what is behind it all – what it all means. Really that desire is the same as the desire for God.

Q. You said interestingly that you thought it was the Greek influence which causes us to feel that the body is to be despised. Is this not really more St. Paul's influence?

J.G.B. He was born in a Greek city. He probably had a Greek education, and clearly the influence of Plato has been great upon all who developed Christian ideas. The main point is that it is not a Jewish contribution; it is not a Jewish point of view at all. It has come into our Western thought from another source. It is quite true that it appears in Buddhism also, but according to my personal belief, this is a distortion of Buddhism, just as hostility to the body is probably a misinterpretation of St. Paul. That is a graver matter – I think it is a distortion of Christianity, because the Christian belief is essentially concerned with the flesh, with the fact that the Incarnation represents an entry into the body. The renunciation is of the flesh and therefore indifference or hostility to the body would be a fundamentally non-Christian idea. I believe it is also an idea that is not Buddhist either, but was grafted on to Buddhism at least two hundred years after the time of the Buddha, when the *Pali Pitakas* came to be written – but that is another matter. I am sure that you will agree that you do not feel at all in the Gospels, any sort of negative attitude towards the body. One may say even that the Christian belief goes a good deal further, because it treats man as a permanent combination of body, soul and spirit, not simply a temporary one.

Q. Do you consider that higher values can be taken too far? For instance 'kindness' becomes 'self-indulgence', 'fearlessness' becomes 'rashness'.

J.G.B. Yes, indeed! That is where discrimination counts. I shall certainly speak of this next week, because discrimination occupies such a big part in the Shivapuri Baba's teaching. Any formula, followed without discrimination, will result in some form of exaggeration. Just to make a catalogue of virtues and say: "These must be practised and their opposites must be shunned, and no discrimination is required" would lead to some sort of monstrous situation.

Therefore discrimination is at the centre of the mind – of the strong, wise mind. I have tried to avoid tonight the elements needed for the practical realisation of all this, so as to be able to go through those with you next week, inevitably in a less systematic way than I have done tonight. It is easy enough to give a general presentation, but when it comes to practice, there is something that is different. Certain extra properties are required which change the situation, which remove that kind of rigidity. I was very interested to watch and to observe – in talking to the Shivapuri Baba – how he was always on his guard against rigidity. The safeguards against this come into the bodily duties, they come into the mind and its working, they come even into the spiritual. There is always a danger of fixing something in a formula or a method or something like that but, as my last word this week, I would remind you that discrimination is different from compromise.