

Meditation at the United Nations

**Monthly Bulletin of
the United Nations
Meditation Group**

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Our Hope For Mankind

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MEDITATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE
UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP

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Since January, 1973, the United Nations Meditation Group has published the monthly bulletin, *Meditation at the United Nations*. This publication offers a basic introduction to meditation techniques and spirituality through questions and answers and lectures, and also reviews the group's activities. Profits from the sale of this bulletin are donated to UNICEF.

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UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP



WE BELIEVE

... and we hold that each man has the potentiality of reaching the Ultimate Truth. We also believe that man cannot and will not remain imperfect forever. Each man is an instrument of God. When the hour strikes, each individual soul listens to the inner dictates of God. When man listens to God, his imperfections are turned into perfections, his ignorance into knowledge, his searching mind into revealing light and his uncertain reality into all-fulfilling Divinity.

Sri Chinmoy

EDITOR'S NOTE

The United Nations Meditation Group consists of U.N. staff members, representatives, delegates and NGO's who believe that a spiritual approach to world peace is inherent in the basic U.N. ideals and can go hand in hand with political striving for U.N. goals. The Meditation Group was inaugurated on April 14, 1970. At that time it invited the well-known mystic and philosopher Sri Chinmoy to lead its meetings in the Peace Room of the Church Center for the United Nations. As its membership increased and the scope of its activities expanded, the Meditation Group began holding additional meetings Tuesdays at 12 noon in the Chapel of the Church Center as well and on Fridays at 12 noon in the Secretariat.

Staff members of the Secretariat, delegates and representatives from Missions, Specialized Agencies and non-governmental organisations accredited to the U.N. are most welcome to join in these meetings, as well as in our other activities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The New Year's Message for 1976	6
Payments (<i>a short talk</i>)	8
Three Soulful Prayers (<i>a short talk</i>)	8
Action (<i>a short talk</i>)	9
The Role of Humility in the Spiritual Life (<i>a short talk</i>)	12
Series on Great Men and Women:	
<i>Introduction</i>	14
<i>William Blake</i>	15
<i>Thomas Carlyle</i>	19
Questions and Answers:	22
— <i>on meditation</i>	
— <i>on purity</i>	
— <i>on God</i>	
— <i>on inner tranquility</i>	
— <i>on world problems</i>	
— <i>on spiritual Masters</i>	
Questions and Answers on Religion	32
Meditations	41
Schedule of Activities for February	42

THE NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE
FOR 1976

The new year will be the year of destruction,
frustration and satisfaction.

The animal in us will unimaginably be
destroyed.

The human in us will unreservedly be
frustrated.

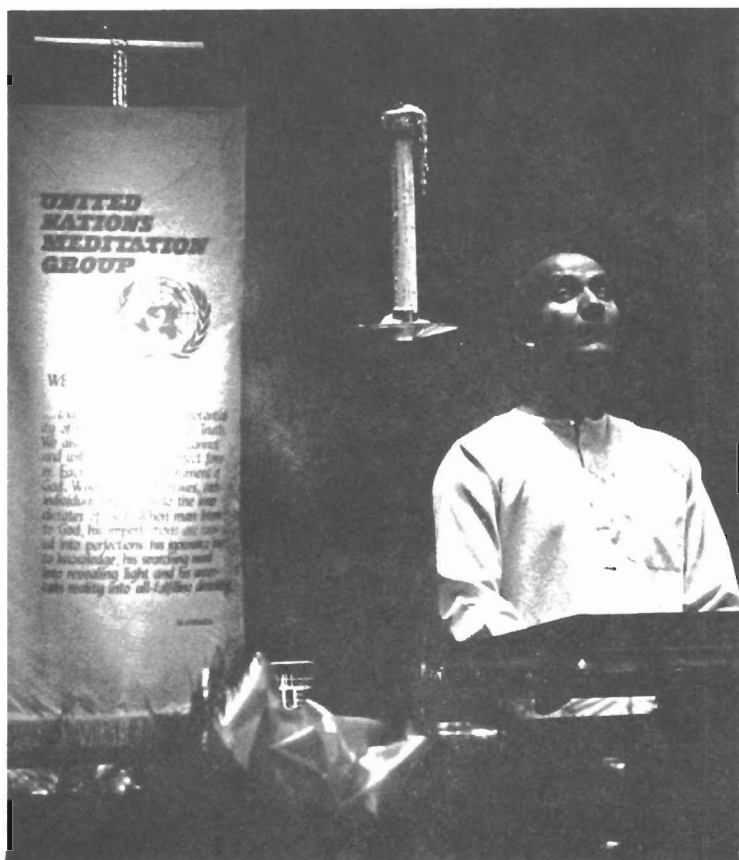
The divine in us will supremely be
satisfied.

The animal in us is self-doubt.

The human in us is self-indulgence.

The divine in us is self-offering.

— Sri Chinmoy



Sri Chinmoy conducting meditation at a Tuesday meeting of the U.N. Meditation Group in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations. (Photo by Ben Lieberman)

(7)

Sri Chinmoy delivered the foregoing two talks in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations on Tuesday, November 18, 1975.

PAYMENTS

What must I pay? I must pay my earth-body's regular earthly rent. What should I pay? I should pay my Heaven-soul's regular heavenly telephone bill for my conversation with the cosmic gods and with the Absolute Lord Supreme. What am I paying now? I am paying for my former love-friendship with my ignorance-night.

THREE SOULFUL PRAYERS

Lord Supreme, I have all along treasured three most soulful prayers. Today I offer them to You.

Lord Supreme, may I always remain awake to see Your Universal Face.

Lord Supreme, may I always remain conscious to feel your boundless Grace.

Lord Supreme, may I always remain surrendered, unconditionally surrendered, to become a member of Your earth-perfecting, earth-illuminating, Heaven-satisfying, Heaven-manifesting race.

ACTION

On Tuesday, July 22, 1975, Sri Chinmoy gave the following talk in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations:

Let us not think before we act, for each thought is a heavy burden, a heavy pressure on our shoulders. This burden and pressure weakens our life-energy considerably.

Let us silence the mind before we act. If we silence the mind, if we know the art of silencing the mind, then we can not only accomplish our tasks faster than otherwise, but we can do hundreds of things at the same time in a fleeting minute.

Let us not talk before we act, for talk does nothing but bind us to action. And I really want to add, we have to be free within and without so that with each action we can breathe in the fresh air of perfecting, perfected and perfect action.

Let us pray before we act. Each prayer is our soulful devotion, and this devotion is our self-illuminating life in action.

Let us not decide before we act. Each decision will be challenged and will be devoured by hesitation. Let us act spontaneously, for each spontane-

ous action is the expression of our expanding consciousness, the result of our heart's preconceived ideals, the result of our life's preconceived light and the result of our soul's preconceived goal. Action is perfect when it is of God-inspiration and for God-manifestation.

Each desire-action makes us feel how weak, how ignorant, how hopeless, how helpless and how useless we are. Each aspiration-action makes us feel how strong, how powerful, how soulful, how meaningful and how fruitful we are. Again, action for action's sake is not and cannot be the right thing. Action has to be for God's sake.

Before the birth of action, inspiration is our guide. During the course of action, aspiration is our guide. At the end of action, our surrendering height and surrendered depth is our satisfaction and God's satisfaction.

Imagination tells action, "Run forward, dive deep within, fly above." Aspiration tells action, "God-Height has not to remain and cannot remain always a far cry. God-Height is our birthright; it is within us. We have only to discover it. And when we discover it, we feel that God-Height does not only belong to us but we belong to it."

Perfection-satisfaction tells us that each individual is not only a direct representative of God on earth, but God Himself in the process of making

and shaping His own Vision-Reality yet unfulfilled and His own Reality-Vision yet to be fully manifested.

Each action is God's Song here on earth for God-manifestation and there in Heaven for God-satisfaction. Each action on earth is God's Dance for humanity's eternal progress and eternal self-transcendence. Each action in Heaven is God's satisfaction in divinity's self-awakening and self-illumination for a new universe; each action in Heaven is a new creation and the constant fulfilment of an ever-growing, ever-glowing, ever-satisfying and ever-satisfied God.

THE ROLE OF HUMILITY IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

On Tuesday, October 7, 1975, Sri Chinmoy gave the following talk in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations:

In our spiritual life, in our life of aspiration and in our life of dedication, humility is the root, divinity is the tree and immortality is the fruit. Only when I am soulfully humble does God allow me to make a perfect estimate of His Universal Reality, His Transcendental Reality and my own life.

The perfect man is he whose inner being is flooded with humility. And it is he who eventually becomes God's Transcendental Choice and God's Universal Voice.

Humility and self-conceit are two real strangers to each other. Humility and God-awareness are two eternal friends. Humility and divinity's reality-expansion are eternally inseparable, inseparably one.

When I am humble to my inferiors, they adore me. When I am humble to my equals, they love me. When I am humble to my superiors, they appreciate me. When I am humble to God, He claims me as His best instrument on earth.

To climb up God's Vision-tree I need only one thing: humility's beauty. To climb down God's Reality-tree I need only one thing: humility's magnanimity.

There are many roads that lead to God. There is one road which is undoubtedly by far the shortest and, at the same time, most illumining and that road is the humility-road.

SERIES ON GREAT MEN AND WOMEN

INTRODUCTION

On Friday, November 28, 1975, Sri Chinmoy gave the first in a series of lectures he is planning on great men and women, prefacing it with the following words of introduction:

Here we are at the United Nations. If we say that the United Nations is the result of the twentieth century awakening, then we are mistaken. The United Nations is the outgrowth of the inner awakening of human beings from time immemorial. I do hope that you do not misunderstand me, as I have made it very clear to you all that it is the joint aspiration of the hoary past, the immediate past, the present and the fast-approaching future that will bring about the union of the world-soul and the world-goal. The human beings who are now here on earth can tangibly see and feel what the United Nations on the outer plane can do.

Each individual nation has aspiration of its own. Again, each individual nation has been blessed with seekers. Each nation has human beings who aspire for a better, more illumining and more fulfilling world. These seekers have expressed their

aspiration in and through various fields: spirituality, religion, philosophy, science, music, art, poetry and so forth. The United Nations is not only for the delegates and the representatives of the various nations. It is for all those who have aspired and do aspire and will always aspire.

Many souls came and presently are coming and eventually will come into the world for the world-aim and the world-goal. That aim and that goal is to see a beautiful, fruitful, unifying and united oneness-world. It is my wish to speak on those souls who have undoubtedly contributed in their respective fields to world-transformation, world-illumination and perfection-oneness. I wish to start this series with William Blake, the English poet.

WILLIAM BLAKE

William Blake, English poet. Imagination he had; vision he had. Needless to say, he had these two supernal qualities in abundant measure. To him, imagination was reality's all-illuminating beauty and vision was beauty's all-fulfilling reality. To him, imagination was a true man and vision was a true and perfection-inspiring man.

Insane he was—so thought some of his contemporaries, even some of his own friends. But he was not insane. Unfortunately, his reality-worlds most people were not and are not wont to see. Most people have no access to these worlds. An inner cry is needed, a true love of the unknown is needed and a brave heart is needed to go beyond the fact-world, beyond the reality-world already seen and already acquired.

Blake's immortal poem "The Tyger" is humanity's invaluable treasure.

Tyger, Tyger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

Here we see that ignorance-energy, which threatens to devour the entire world, finally discovers its transformation-salvation in the realisation of the absolute One. This absolute One embodies both ignorance-energy and knowledge-energy and, at the same time, far transcends them both.

The soul's soulful originality was Blake's gift to mankind. Blake the art-painting-lover and the thought-progress-lover was the puissant and incessant flow of originality-creativity.

Blake's friend and disciple, Samuel Palmer, realised him and made it easy for the world to realise him. Blake was a man without a mask: his aim single, his path straightforward, his words few. So he was free, noble and happy. Something more: Blake was humanity's challenge to go beyond the achievements of the earthbound life and divinity's challenge to grow and glow in the ever-transcending Beyond's reality-existence.

Blake's life-boat sailed between the soul-essence-purity and the body-substance-impurity. Indeed, this experience each human life encounters. Then there comes a time when the unlit and undivine part in us cheerfully and devotedly surrenders to the lit and divine part in us. Here surrender means conscious awareness, inseparable oneness. In the realisation of its inseparable oneness with the divine, the undivine in us receives illumination, satisfaction and perfection.

In his lifetime Blake was obscure; recognition was a stranger to him. Now, a century after his departure from the world-scene, the world has discovered and recognised in him a world-lover who had the message of transformation—the transformation of hell-torture into Heaven-rapture and the transformation of the body's ignorance-sea into the soul's wisdom-sky.

Today is Blake's birthday. On November 28, over two hundred years ago, Blake was born; but his soul is still aspiring, still illumining the world and still trying to manifest the divinity that it embodies for earth-awakening, earth-illumination and earth-fulfilment. The poet has the vision of tomorrow, the artist has the vision of tomorrow; the scientist, the singer and the musician all have the vision of tomorrow. All the human beings who are awakened and who are more than ready to contribute something of their own, their very own, to the world at large are really blessed souls and the invaluable, immortal treasures of Mother Earth.

THOMAS CARLYLE

On Friday, December 5, 1975, Sri Chinmoy gave the second lecture of his series on great men and women:

Last time I mentioned the importance of the great figures who have illumined our world. Today I shall speak about Carlyle.

Carlyle. The colossal pride of his country he was. A thinker he was. A philosopher he was. A historian he was. Most of his life-experiences were founded upon his inner awakening and inner illumination. He stirred quite powerfully and significantly not only the Scottish consciousness and the British consciousness, but also the entire European consciousness.

According to his philosophy, materialism and the machine-world cannot and will not illumine and fulfil mankind. It is the message of the spirit that can and will transform the face of mankind. In unmistakable terms he declared that only the life-disciplined and ideal heroes can steer humanity's boat to the shores of satisfaction-fulfilment.

Something more: in Carlyle's philosophy, all human beings are in essence one, because they are

of the same Source. But if one individual is more awakened and more illumined than the others, naturally he has to lead and guide the rest. Carlyle maintained that this individual has to play the role of a pioneer precisely because he himself was one of the pioneer world-thinkers and world-transformers. Dauntless he was. Nothing could cow him. He hoisted high his lofty banner of life-awakening and life-illumining reality.

He spoke in clear and emphatic terms with regard to the inner resource, and it was here that he was badly misunderstood. His critics saw in him an unbearable autocrat and not an apostle of a new dawn. To his admirers' sorrow, impatience and irritation plagued his mind. Nevertheless, he made his mighty contribution to the world's life-code. Especially his work for the world of German literature and for the French revolution made him a most significant member of the human family. His enthusiasm for German life in his early years added considerably to the German contribution to the world community. And his book on the French revolution is an immortal book. There he offers a most significant idea: an inner guidance, an unseen hand guides and shapes the destiny of mankind. In all human actions, in all activities, in all worldly, earthly affairs there is a spirit that moves, guides and shapes the world-destiny; there is an inner purpose for outer action.

His father wanted him to be a priest. But he became something else: a world teacher. In fact, his father's desire was fulfilled in an infinitely wider and more profound way. Had he become a priest, perhaps only a few Scottish religion-lovers and truth-seekers would have received his light. But by becoming an illumining thinker and writer, a historian and finally a philosopher-saint in the purest sense of the term, he offered to this world of ours his world of light, abundant light. Thus, he has become the property of the world and he belongs to the world-treasure.

Yesterday was Carlyle's birthday. For a second let us offer to his soul our gratitude-heart for what he has done to create a better world, a better mankind.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

On Friday, October 3, 1975, Sri Chinmoy answered the following questions at the United Nations:

Question: What is meditation?

Sri Chinmoy: Meditation is conscious awareness of God. Here we are all seekers. When we are seekers, it is our duty to become aware of God twenty-four hours a day. If we are believers in God, then naturally we feel that God exists. But this feeling is not spontaneous; it does not last twenty-four hours a day. When we meditate, we come to feel and realise twenty-four hours a day that we are of God and we are for God. Constant and conscious awareness of God—His Truth, Light and Bliss—is called meditation.

Question: How can one increase one's purity?

Sri Chinmoy: One can increase one's purity by repeating a special word or mantra. There can be no better word than 'God.' One can repeat 'God'

while breathing in and out. While breathing in, you have to feel that at least seven breaths are coming inside each breath and offering you more life-energy. While breathing in, repeat 'God,' and inside the breath try to see God seven times. And then, after some time, try to see or feel God fourteen times. In this way, try to increase your purity by increasing your count.

There is also something else which I advise my students to do. Start repeating God's Name right from today. Today you try to repeat God's Name twenty times most soulfully, tomorrow thirty times, the next day forty times. In this way, you bring the number up to one hundred. Then you start descending: ninety, eighty, seventy, sixty, fifty, forty, thirty, twenty, until the circle is complete. When you try to increase the number, please use your imagination to feel that your purity is increasing. And when you decrease the number, at that time please feel that you are not decreasing the number; you are only assimilating the increased purity that you have felt. While going up, try to increase your purity, and while going down, try to assimilate in your system the purity-force that you achieved by repeating God's Name.

Question: What is God? Where is He?

Sri Chinmoy: God is everywhere. But if we do not see Him or feel Him inside our hearts, then we will not be able to see Him anywhere. First, we have to see Him within us and talk to Him inside our hearts. If we do this, then only will we be able to see God elsewhere also. If inside our heart God is missing, then we shall not be able to see God anywhere and we shall not be able to speak to God or mix with God.

Now, what is God? God is both formless and with form. He is pure energy and, at the same time, He is the most luminous form. He is endless energy and beginningless energy; and He is also the most luminous form. God is both water and ice. Some people like water, while others like ice. Again, some people at times like to drink water and at times like to have ice.

It depends on the seeker and what he wants. He may want to see God in a human form—but as absolutely divine, supreme, perfect. He feels that if there is a form, then it will be easier for him to recognise God or realise God. So he likes to see the personal God. But again, if one says that he wants to go beyond the personal God, beyond form, beyond duality and remain always in the infinite Peace, Light and Bliss, that also can be done. And

the same seeker can in the morning ask for God with form-attributes and in the evening cry for God as formless, boundless energy.

Question: How can one maintain inner tranquility at work when he is in an atmosphere with a great deal of pressure?

Sri Chinmoy: One can maintain inner tranquility no matter what happens in his office or how many wrong forces from the office try to assail him. He can do this provided he feels that the forces which are attacking him are in no way a match for his love of Light.

Let us take an attack as a force of darkness. When you are in the office you are constantly attacked by the force of doubt, which is the representative of darkness. If you feel that you have nothing to break these forces, then you are totally lost. You have to feel that inside your heart there is something called Light—boundless Light—and that this boundless luminosity is definitely more powerful than the attacker. This Light that you have inside you can easily transform these forces. When darkness consciously or unconsciously enters into Light, it is bound to be transformed. You will be able to feel this just because you pray, just

because you meditate, just because you want to increase your love of God every day, every hour, every minute, every second. Each second you are aware of God's Presence inside your heart, so you can rest assured that you definitely embody Light and that this Light is constantly increasing in you. And if you see a constant increase of divine Light inside your heart, that means there is something immortal inside you which will never surrender to the wrong forces.

The wrong forces are coming from outside; and inside, the strongest force, the mightiest force, is Light. When you can bring your mightiest force, Light, to the fore, then you will see to your great astonishment that the outer forces immediately will give way, because the inner force is in constant communication with the Source, the Almighty Absolute. So the more you can increase your inner Light, which is the divine force, the sooner you will see that the outer wrong forces which are attacking you will be transformed into Light. When darkness consciously or unconsciously enters into Light, it is bound to be transformed.

Question: How can spiritual seekers working at the United Nations make other workers feel that prayer and meditation are a tangible way of dealing with world problems?

Sri Chinmoy: You have colleagues in your own department, and they speak to you every day. The days you meditate they see something totally different in you from the days when you do not meditate. If you have achieved something in your meditation, they are bound to see something pleasing, soothing, beautiful, enlightening and illumining. So the higher and deeper your meditation, the more your face and outer being will radiate. When your being radiates, your friends and colleagues will see something totally new. At the same time, they will feel something familiar although they don't know what it is. Why familiar? Because we have all come from the same Source. They have not discovered this secret, whereas you have discovered it. You have tried, you have practised meditation. They have not yet practised it, but they will. Your own example—not only your example, but your very presence—will inspire them.

Here on earth oneness is not established. Oneness you cannot establish on the ordinary human level where there is anxiety, worry, fear and doubt—unless you aspire. If you aspire, then your inner

being tries to act all the time like a magnet. It tries to see whether there is someone whom it can call its own. So, if somebody is sitting beside you with divine joy, divine love, divine peace, then naturally the magnet that you have inside you will draw these divine qualities from that person. Again, if an un-aspiring person sits beside you, who is given to worldly life and worldly temptation, immediately you will find a kind of restlessness inside your own being.

Outwardly, you don't have to tell others hundreds of times how you have changed your life or what you can do for them. This you can tell them once in a blue moon, but it will be almost useless. But they will see you on two different days: one day when you have not meditated well and on another day after you have had a good meditation. The day you have meditated well, they will see a tremendous change in you. They will try to know what makes you on one day divine and what makes you on another day undivine. What is it that they want to have from you when you meditate, and what is it that they don't want from you when you do not meditate? What they do not want is darkness and ignorance. What they want is the inner divinity which comes to the fore and tries to illumine the persons and the things around you.

Question: Is meditation for everybody regardless of whether a person is consciously seeking God?

Sri Chinmoy: Yes, meditation is for everybody, whether he is consciously seeking God or not. The only thing is that one has to know how far one wants to go. Somebody can study at the kindergarten. Again, somebody else can go on to high school, college and university and get a Master's degree or Ph.D. But this is outer knowledge. Meditation gives us inner wisdom.

You may be satisfied with an iota of inner wisdom. Again, you may find that you can satisfy yourself only with boundless Peace, Light and Bliss. So it depends on where the seeker wants to stop. Just as we go to school for outer knowledge, we have to meditate in order to get inner wisdom. If the seeker wants to be satisfied only with a fraction of Peace, Light and Bliss, then he will get it. And if he wants to get boundless Peace, Light and Bliss, then he shall also get that provided he continues to meditate regularly, devotedly, soulfully, unreservedly and unconditionally.

Question: Can you tell us the place of good character in the spiritual life?

Sri Chinmoy: In the spiritual life good character is of paramount importance. Good character means that life-energy—soulful, boundless energy—is operating in and through the seeker. If the seeker does not see the boundless Energy, Peace, Light and Bliss, then how can he remain in his highest consciousness?

If one is a seeker, then he has to be a man of character; otherwise, his life will be contradictory. God is all purity. It is through purity that one realises God. If one wants to realise God as fast as possible, then purity must come first. To make real, solid, tangible progress, purity is indispensable. Now, if one does not have a good character, then how can that person have purity? And if one does not have purity inside the heart and inside the physical, then how can he make progress?

Purity and character come simultaneously. If someone has inner purity, then he also has good character. And if there is somebody with good character, then he is maintaining in his inner life tremendous purity. Purity is the ladder we climb up in order to reach God's Abode. If there is no ladder, then how can we climb up?

Question: *What does it mean to be a spiritual Master?*

Sri Chinmoy: A spiritual Master is a private tutor. He is the elder brother in the family. Either you can call him a private tutor or you can call him an elder brother. The school teacher examines the student and either fails or passes him according to merit. If he has done well, the teacher will pass him in the examination. If he has not done well, the teacher will dispense justice. But the private tutor will all the time teach the student at home so that he can pass the examination. The spiritual teacher privately teaches the student how to stand in front of ignorance and face ignorance so that when ignorance challenges him, he will be able to pass the examination.

Again, the teacher is the eldest member in the family. Just because he has a little more Peace, Light and Bliss than others, God has chosen him to give his little Peace, Light and Bliss to his younger brothers and sisters. He knows that he is not the father. And, also, his younger brothers and sisters know that he is not the father. The father is somebody else. But because he is the elder brother, he is supposed to know where the father is. The elder brother of the family tells the younger ones, "Come, I will show you where our Father is." And once he can bring the younger ones to their common Father, his role is over. They will be on their own as soon as he shows them where the Father is.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON RELIGION

Continuing his series on questions on religion, Sri Chinmoy answered the following questions on Friday, November 21, 1975:

Mr. Russell Tubbs: How can we as individuals encourage a worldwide recognition of the basic unity of all major religions?

Sri Chinmoy: If we practise spirituality, if we pray and meditate soulfully, our very illumination will encourage others. It is we who have to be illumined first before we can encourage others. The world will be inspired by us only when we grow into something and become something. Each individual's religion is, after all, his code of life. His code of life is his religion. When his life responds to some higher, deeper realities, then it is meaningful and fruitful and it can inspire others.

Mr. Kevin Keefe: How can the different religions best respect and value each other?

Sri Chinmoy: Each religion must feel that it is nothing but a branch. If there is a branch, then there has to be a tree; and the tree is love of truth. Truth finds fulfilment only when it embraces the Vast as its very own. Each religion has to feel the necessity of embracing other religions for its own satisfaction, for its own perfection. Alone it can never be satisfied; alone it can never be perfect. Two hands are required to produce a sound. Similarly, two things or even more will be needed to create something beautiful, soulful and fruitful. But when you go deep within, you do not see two things or three things; you see only one thing that is operating in and through many forms, many ideas, many ideals and realisations.

Ms. Kathy Hartnett: I was brought up as a Roman Catholic, but when I grew up I stopped attending church. Now that I am again interested in the spiritual life, my mother cannot understand why I don't want to attend church again. How should I explain this to her?

Sri Chinmoy: You can tell your mother that you studied in that particular school and you did not care for it. Now you are studying in a different school and you like the teacher, you like the

students and you like what you are being taught. The Catholic Church teaches Truth, Light, Peace and Bliss. You are also trying to bring to the fore Truth, Light, Peace and Bliss in a different way. So if you take the Roman Catholic Church as a school and our spiritual organisation as another school, then you have every right to say that you like one particular school and not another, and that is why you are going to that school.

Ms. Kathy Splain: Can we transcend our religion for a more vast spirituality?

Sri Chinmoy: There comes a time when we have to transcend our religion-barriers. Religion is good, but we have to go far beyond religion. Religion will tell us about God; sometimes it will create fear in us when we do something wrong. The religious approach to God is mostly through fear. But the spiritual approach to God is always through love. It is not out of fear that we approach God but out of love. We want to establish our inseparable oneness with God. I don't want to say that religion does not have love for God, because it has. But fear of God very often looms large in people who practise religion. People who practise Yoga do not have that kind of fear. They have only love of God.

Oneness with God is what they want.

Religion feels that there is someone called God who is high above, in the sky or in Heaven or somewhere else, and that all Peace, Light and Bliss are with Him. But Yoga will say that where I am is Light, Peace and Bliss; where I move around is Truth. Truth and I are inseparable. Religion does not claim that oneness. Religion will say Truth is somewhere else; we can have a free access to it eventually. It says Truth is somewhere, Light is somewhere, and only if we pray and meditate will we one day see the face of Truth and Light. But Yoga will say, "No. Where I am, the very thing I am looking for is also there. I am the very thing that I am now looking for, searching for, striving for. Everything is already inside me, only I have forgotten it, I cannot recognise it or I have misplaced it." Yoga tells us to look for our inner wealth, to discover and bring to the fore what we eternally have. Spirituality is Yoga in a vast and broad sense.

Ms. Cynthia Anderson: Is it possible to reach the state of God-realisation by devotedly practising one's religion?

Sri Chinmoy: Yes, by practising one's own religion one can realise God. But one has to feel that there is something else higher and deeper than religion and that is constant inner cry. Religion as such will tell us there is a God. It will tell us that we have to be good, we have to be kind, we have to be simple, sincere and pure. This much religion will offer us. This is general religion. But there is also a spiritual religion which is higher and deeper. It will say that it is not enough just to know that God exists. We also have to see Him, we have to feel Him, we have to grow into Him. And this we do through prayer and meditation.

Ms. Merri Weisbrot: *Why does reference to God or religion embarrass so many people?*

Sri Chinmoy: People have become very sophisticated; they now have a machine-like consciousness. Anything that does not give them satisfaction on the physical plane, vital plane or mental plane, or anything that does not exist right in front of their nose, that thing they feel is unreal, embarrassing. And anything that they do not or cannot know immediately, or anything that they do not have an immediate need for in their life, they do not value.

Also, many people who claim to follow a religion at times do not lead even an ordinary, simple human life. In the name of religious life, in the name of spiritual life, they do quite a few unthinkable, unbelievable, unimaginable things. So people who feel and think that they are normal feel that this kind of life is all abnormality. But I wish to say that the strange behaviour of some so-called spiritual people is in no way an indication of their inner progress or illumination. Some people are fanatic; some people are not sincere in their approach or they approach religion in a very aggressive way. Some people are at times embarrassed when they happen to mix with those individuals.

But the really religious people never create embarrassment. Actually, who should be embarrassed? He who has seen the light, or he who is crying for the light? No! Only he who does not care for the light should be embarrassed. If I as an individual have seen the light, then why should I feel embarrassed to speak to you? And if you as an individual need light and are crying for light, then why should you be embarrassed? He who has and he who needs light will never be embarrassed. We should be embarrassed only when we do not have something that others need and have, and when we

do not care for that very thing and do not appreciate the persons who have it. We should be embarrassed only then.

Ms. Merri Weisbrot: Please explain the difference between "religious fervour" and "Delight." Can the two complement each other?

Sri Chinmoy: No. Religious fervour can be in the vital, in the mind or in some other part of our existence. It can satisfy us only on the vital or mental level. Religious fervour, religious joy we get mainly on the vital level. But when one experiences Delight, it permeates his entire being. Delight is something infinitely higher than religious fervour. It is on the strength of our oneness with the Absolute Supreme, or on the strength of our total dedication to His Will, that we get Delight. Delight deals with our own birthless and deathless inner existence, with the full manifestation of the divine within us. So these are two different things.

Mr. Edgar Gonzales: Is religion indispensable for our Self-realisation?

Sri Chinmoy: Everything within us that is good is responsible for Self-realisation. But if you ask what is indispensable, then I will say that only one thing is indispensable and that is our inner cry, our constant, inmost cry.

Mr. Edgar Gonzales: *How does religious discipline differ from spiritual discipline?*

Sri Chinmoy: Religious discipline is not asking you to pray and meditate every second of your life. Religious discipline may tell you to go to church once a week and pray to God. That is more than enough for religious discipline. But if it is spiritual discipline, then it will tell you to be conscious of God twenty-four hours a day and to pray and meditate at least twice a day—in the morning and in the evening. Spiritual discipline is a conscious, constant process. It is infinitely more significant than religious discipline, for when one practises spiritual discipline, one tries to be a conscious and constant living instrument of God so that God can manifest in and through him in His own way. If one follows spiritual discipline, then at the end of the road one feels that one is growing into the very Image of God; whereas if one follows religious discipline, at the end of the road one will say that

one has come and seen the goal. Religious discipline at most can lead you to the goal, whereas spiritual discipline or yogic discipline will not only take you to the goal but also make you feel that you are nothing short of the goal itself.

MEDITATIONS

At each Tuesday meeting in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations, Sri Chinmoy conducts an hour of silent meditation. Following are the "Meditations for the Day" by Sri Chinmoy for the respective Tuesdays in January.

January 6

Good promises keep ever.
Bad promises skip over.

January 13

Never underestimate your soul's potentiality.
Never overestimate your body's capacity.

January 20

Man's cry is the ascending soul.
God's Smile is the descending Goal.

January 27

Our desires expire when our attachments retire.
Our aspirations die when our temptations dye
our life-breath.

*We warmly invite everyone at the United Nations
and those officially associated with it to join us in
our regular weekly meetings and other activities.*

SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY 1976

Regular Weekly Schedule

*Tuesdays, 12-1 p.m.
February 3, 10, 17, 24*

Every Tuesday at noon, Sri Chinmoy conducts an hour of silent meditation in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations, corner 44th Street and 1st Avenue (side entrance).

*Fridays, 12-1 p.m.
February 6, 13, 20, 27*

Every Friday at noon in Room 550 of the Secretariat, Sri Chinmoy conducts a meditation and, if time permits, gives a short talk or invites questions on the spiritual life from those present.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

DAG HAMMARSKJOLD LECTURE SERIES FOR 1976

On the first Thursday of each month* Sri Chinmoy will deliver the monthly lecture of the Dag Hammarskjold Series in the Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium at 1 p.m. Following are the titles for the respective months in 1976:

January 8:
1976: The New Year,
New Opportunities,
New Challenges

February 5:
Humanity's Promise

March 4:
The Dream of the United Nations

*An announcement confirming this date will be circulated each month shortly before the event.

April 1:
The World-Mind

May 6:
The World-Heart

June 3:
The World-Soul

July 1:
Earth's Perfection — Aspiration-Cry

August 5:
Competition or Competence

September 2:
The United Nations —
the Beckoning Hands of
the Fulfilling Beyond

October 7:
The Ideal and the Real

November 4:
The Path-Finder and the Goal-Possessor

December 2:
The United Nations:
Humanity's Cry,
Divinity's Smile

