

28 October 1963

## READING 4

## PART 1

We return this week quite naturally to the Nyaya Ladder given us by the Head of the Holy Tradition from which the Meditation came, Seven Steps to Self-realization or to Happiness which mean the same thing. Only this time we mustn't look on these Steps as *distant* from us, taking the idea as just philosophy; we must look at them practically in a 'Here and Now' context. 'Give us this very day our Miraculous bread' – what we greatly need is more confidence and drive!

The '*Good Impulse, the First Step*', is that described in the story of the Prodigal son who, at rock bottom, 'came to himSelf' and said, 'How many hired servants of my Father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish, with hunger!' *The Second Step, the 'Resolution' or 'Decision'*, follows immediately; there must be no argument, no delay. 'I will arise and go to my Father' and make a clean breast of it all, let nothing stand between us.

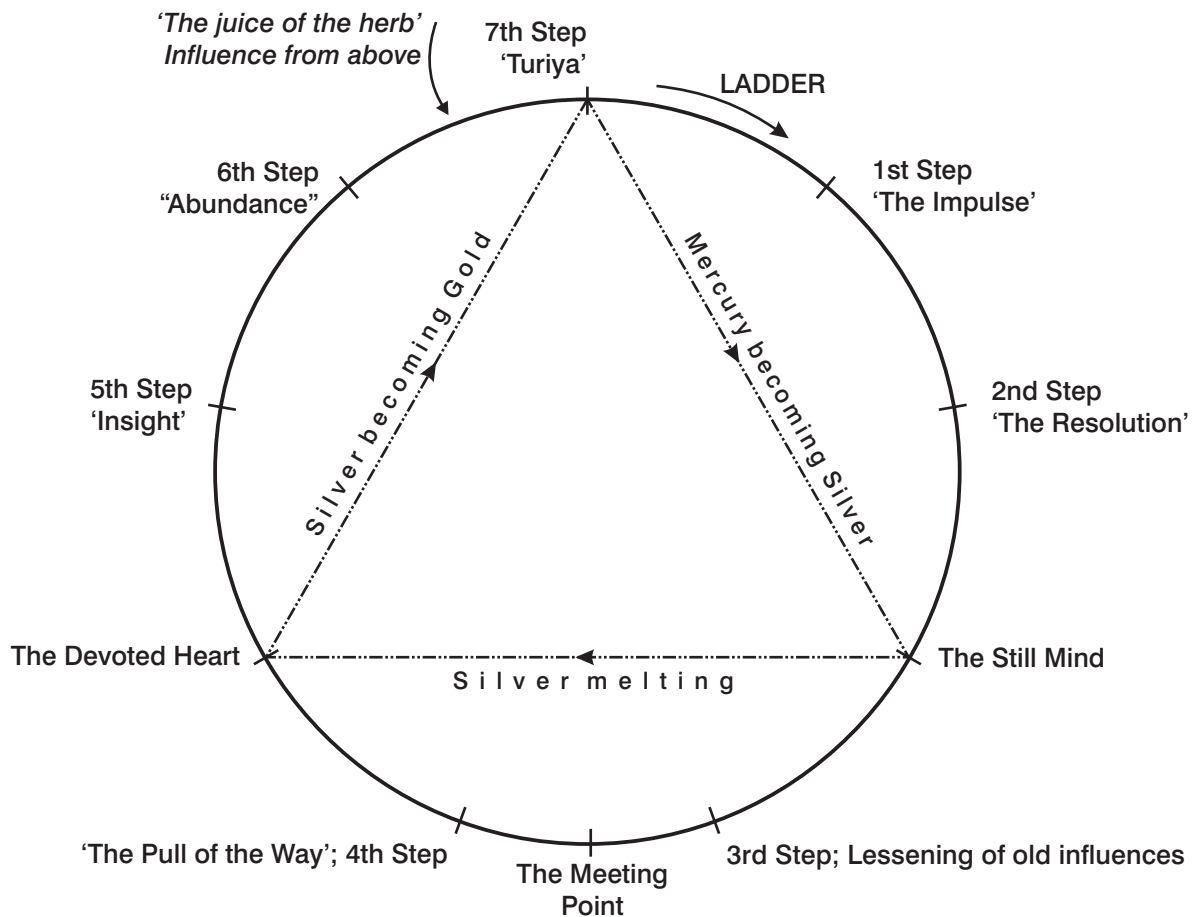
And in that very act, all this other world begins to melt away – the 'far country', the 'riotous living', the 'swine' and the 'husks' they eat. That *Third Step* is when one sits in peace and silence and feels quite free of it all. And the *Fourth Step*, the 'Pull of the Way' – 'He arose and came to his Father'.

And he didn't have a long journey to go; he didn't have a long time to wait, 'For while he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him'.

And brushing aside His son's confession – for after all He knew all about it already – He said to His servants: 'Bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet... and let us eat and be merry; For this My son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found'.

How strange that those words 'This My son was dead and is alive again' should be echoed in the Mevlevi Turning ceremonial! For in the words of our instructor, 'the Dervishes enter as dead men in their black cloaks, the cerements of the grave'; the Sheikh leads them three times round the circle of Creation showing them the way of rebirth; and then, 'throwing off the grave-clothes, they come alive again; and, all in white, they begin to turn'. But they don't immediately become 'one with their Father'. As on the Ladder, there are four steps from that point: In the first turning period they feel the '*Pull of the Way*', in the second (5th Step) they get '*Insight*', in the third '*Abundance*' (6th Step); only in the fourth does 'the poor Dervish cease to wander; now he turns only for himself, around himself, for he has found himSelf'. That is '*Turiya, full Enlightenment, the Seventh Step*'.

Maybe he takes seven years; maybe there has to be a seven-year engagement before the marriage; but *this* Marriage is not just till 'death do us part', for in *this* Marriage there is no death. What is a mere seven years on that scale? We begin today; each day is an aim in itself; each day we go as high as we can in whatever way we can; just because it is happier to be going there, than not to be going anywhere at all.



Figure

## PART 2

We have said that Self-realization has two phases each day like 'inspiration' and 'expiration'. In the process of inspiration we, for a short period, put aside everything else, and with the help of some special technique, turn inwards toward the Source of happiness. The rest of the day is the 'Expiration', the expression of that Realization in our activities – in 'good thoughts, feelings and actions'.

The relation between the two is well expressed in yet another contribution just received (from C.L.):

The different functions man possesses – his ability to think, to feel, to make skilled movements, to respond to different sense impressions and so on – all these depend upon the degree of happiness he has within him. If he is empty of happiness, then his different functions will work mechanically, without enjoyment. If he has collected within him a certain degree of happiness, he will begin to enjoy what he is doing, his attention will be attracted to it, and the work of his functions will be of a correspondingly higher order. But if he is filled with happiness – if happiness has circulated within him and his functions have become saturated with it, then they will work quite differently. They will begin to work in a way he never experienced before – to reveal quite new possibilities within him. And this is not only because their individual work will be better, it is because they will begin to work in unity with one another. For the nearer man gets to the Source of happiness within him, the more he becomes unified in his thoughts, his feelings and his actions.

All the great works of art that man has produced, his highest achievements in religion, philosophy or science – all these depend for their expression on the simultaneous working of his various functions – on their working together as a single whole. And the only thing that can make this possible is happiness – the Divine happiness that exists in all things, able now and then in history to express itself in one form or another through the human mind.

#### COMMENT

In the child's game of 'hunt the thimble' or 'find the treasure' someone calls to the children 'You're getting warmer'... 'No, no, you're very cold', so in this game at first someone else may have to tell you. After a little you will be able to tell yourself. Every step on the Ladder means you are that much 'warmer'.

From our own experience we know also that the mind has to be stilled again and again; many times the silver has to be melted, for it hardens again as it grows cold;<sup>†</sup> but at last when your mind is completely at one with yourSelf and all the silver melted, then the juice of the herb will produce the permanent transformation to the Gold of Immortality.

#### CONCLUSION

By relating all this to the Symbol (Figure, facing page), it is possible to sum up what we have so far understood and also learn much that is new.

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<sup>†</sup>O waly, waly gin love be bonnie  
A little time while it is new;  
But when it's auld it waxeth cauld,  
And fades awa' like mornin' dew.

