

Start with Meditation

So far we have examined the meaning of Advaita (not two) over five papers and it would now be useful to carry out a review before proceeding with further study on this important subject.

The first paper began with the statement made by Dr Roles:

I have come to believe that it is the non-dualistic approach that is the ultimate solution to all our problems (Voyage of Discovery p122)

This led on to the point that there is only one reality. There cannot be two. The reality, according to the original Shankara, is permanent. Everything else is ephemeral.

What we are seeking is our Real 'I' in Western terms, or the Atman in Eastern terms.

This question was asked of the Shankaracharya in 1972: 'Is there any further advice His Holiness can give on the subject that the Atman alone is real and looks on all the changing events and situations as a passing show, without getting involved?'

HH: *In order to experience the Self described in the Upanishads one needs simple methods. Many such descriptions have been given....The states of consciousness experienced in deep sleep, dreams, the day time state, spiritual awakening, Samadhi etcetera, are governed by the influx of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas from people, situations and events. These all undergo change, but the **Observer** who sees them all as a 'passing show' always remains the same.*

He goes on to give an excellent example of the difference between reality and the 'passing show':

The waves of the sea cause no loss or gain to it, the waves are only on the surface; at the bottom of the deep blue sea there is complete stillness. In the same way, all those passing shows of the Gunas do not change the Atman, but only provide variety in its appearance.

This paper concluded with this statement from Dr Roles:

In the moment when one realises that one has nothing of one's own, one realises that one is the same as the Absolute and therefore heir to everything in creation.

Pause for discussion

To fully realise or experience that one is the same as the Absolute is a huge step in understanding. It is the end of duality.

Let us remember what Rumi, who founded the Turning had to say:

When someone says he is God's servant, he still sees himself as the doer, albeit in God's service, he is not yet drowned in the ocean of God. When he is, there will be no such thing as his actions, only movements in the water.

This is confirmed in the Gospel of Thomas when the disciples asked Jesus about entering the Kingdom of Heaven and He answered:

When you make the two one, and when you make the inner as the outerthen shall you enter

In the Advaita tradition we have been told in many different ways that 'There is only one reality, that is the Param-Atman, the 'Self' of the whole Universe. And that each of us is an atom of this 'Self' of the whole Universe.

So how do we get to know who one really is? Again we have been told many times that it is through complete stillness and letting go of the ego that it becomes possible for the higher energies of the Universe to resonate with dormant higher energies that abide within us.

We then went on to discuss how we need to re-organise our thinking in order to escape from our ever dominant ego and personal approach.

We began to realise that one way to do this, was to stop seeing everything in 'opposites' and to try to look for the third force in everything. In this way we began to think in 'unities' rather than 'opposites'.

Everyone in the group was able to bring examples of experiences and observations of seeing 'third force' in events, that had awakened him or her.

The common element was that in such moments the person involved was actually 'self remembering'. The practice of looking for third force, we realise now, is something we have to keep practicing.

The next stage is to try to get a feeling of what is meant by the Trinity – by the 'Three in One and the One in Three', that is expressed in 'St Patrick's Breastplate':

I believe in a Threeness, with a confession of a Oneness, in the Creator of the Universe

In our Western tradition, the apex of the 'Ray of Creation' is the Absolute, where the laws governing the Universe have not divided but remain the 'One in Three and the Three in One'. More examples are needed.

Pause

Meanwhile, how did we get on with the threefold task?

1. What is my aim?
2. What is the purpose of School?
3. What is Man's purpose and role in the Universal Scheme?