

Discovering Reality leading to Self Realisation (3)

Start with Meditation

In the last paper we decided to look again at the Ladder of Self Realisation with all humility. So let us now look at it, not only from the point of view of our own profit and interest but also from the point of view of School.

At the end of his life Mr Ouspensky said that he needed 'responsible people' to continue his Work. And in his book: 'Strange Life of Ivan Osokin', a novel on eternal recurrence, the Magician tells Ivan: 'Only when you are useful to me will you be useful to yourself.'

Dr Roles reminded us of this approach in a rather beautiful way when he wrote this for a Monday Meeting in 1961:

As a School prayer the Lord's Prayer is used in a particular way. It is not a personal petition but a reminder to the members of the School. We remind ourselves of the source of our system from Higher Mind; that is from cosmic consciousness which is a state uninterrupted by death. We remind ourselves that cosmic consciousness remains unknown until it is manifested 'on earth as it is in Heaven' and that daily inspiration from Higher Mind is the miraculous food upon which the life of a School depends. Then we remind ourselves that the work of the School consists in helping those who come to it to become free of negative emotions; but this depends on our allowing that miraculous influence to cleanse us of our own bad feelings. Finally, we remember the dangers of identification ('temptation') but particularly of the evil of self-congratulation, because all 'the power and the glory forever and ever' belongs to Consciousness, the source of our System and the light of our Tradition.

So now let us look at the Ladder of Self Realisation from another point of view – the need of School for Realised men and women to fulfil its purpose of being a conduit of consciousness. We can use the descriptions of the different stages of the Ladder set out in last week's paper as the basis of our observations, experiences and thoughts as we discuss each stage.

Pause

1st Stage: Right Impulse

Conscious influences are put out by School in oral form, which later get written down and made available to all who are interested. These were then known in our western tradition as 'B' influences, which contain emotional influences that affect the psyche. In certain people these influences create a 'Magnetic Centre' which leads them to seek a School suitable to their nature. From a School point of view these people can then become potential transmitters of Pure Consciousness which aid the transcendental flow of this vital energy over intervals.

Pause

2nd Stage: Decision

For the potential devotee to go further, he or she has to form a firm decision to become a pupil of a School and also be prepared to make certain sacrifices, such as devoting time to carry out Work. Once the individual has made this decision circumstances change and all kinds of happenings and opportunities start occurring in his or her life. The Shankaracharya tells us:

A teacher with his conscious knowledge and conscious action comes to help people, to hold them together and give them a systematic way of life to follow, so as to keep on growing and realising themselves and their possibilities.

Pause

3rd Stage: Effort

It is when we make the right kind of effort through regular periods of Meditation, Turning and studying the scriptures etc that we build attention. It is this kind of attention arising from School that is rewarded with sattva. We can feel it. The effort is always to eliminate the mechanical.

4th Stage: Pull of the Way

The 'pull of the Way', as in all studies, begins to operate when Effort ceases to be an effort and becomes a pleasure, as happens in all studies when interest takes over. It is at this stage on the Ladder that the grip of the outside world and our identification with it starts to weaken and we form a Permanent Aim to continue to work for School regardless of any obstacles or temptations that may come along.

Pause

Next week let us consider the further three stages of the Ladder of Self Realisation.