

THE JOURNEY

4. Conclusion

It is helpful to have an image of what the end of the journey is like, but sometimes it fades. There's an analogy with seeing places of pilgrimage like Salisbury or Chartres Cathedral from afar. They seem to dwarf the landscape – at least Chartres does as it is on a rise above a flat landscape and although Salisbury is in a valley surrounded by hills you can see the spire from miles away. But entering the town they disappear from view; it seems one just has to turn a corner and there it will be, but it's like one of those nightmares where one has lost the way.

The Peer Gynt story is somewhat different in that Peer, perhaps symbolising the restless mind, seems to have totally forgotten what was dear to him, and all he knows at the end is that he must get home.

This aspect of forgetting the point of the journey may perhaps arise from a false picture we may have of the kind of person we would like to be. We may remember times when we have been supercharged with Sattva, and would secretly like always to be like that. Or we want to be always calm and wise, always in control.

But the Self, the ParamAtman, may not be like that at all. Rupert Spira paints a picture in which the end of the journey lies in a different way of seeing: realising that 'It is Consciousness that contains the mind, the body and the World, on an equal footing.'

In the waking state transcendental experiences usually come out of the blue, and the first impression they make is too quick for our minds to interpret in our usual terms. This is their great strength as signposts, as there can be a profound change in the perception of the self, a loss or expansion which is a glimpse of Self-realisation.

The Shankaracharya spoke of this area in an analogous way:

Everything is always united but because of ignorance this process has been forgotten and it has to be brought into action once again. In the Vedic text the same thing has been explained by stating that there are two ways of approaching Unity - one is the ANVAYA and the other is VYATIREKA. ANVAYA is the way of unity by addition, VYATIREKA is the way by separation or subtraction, in the sense of discrimination. So, by discarding things one after the other one reaches the Self because that is at the end of everything. By addition one comes to the idea of Samashti where the Param Atman prevails, so whichever way you choose to go, ultimately you will come to the Absolute either as Param Atman or as Atman. Whatever seems useful to one at a particular time one should respond to by either of the two ways, for one can see that if the discrimination True Knowledge, the Viveka, prevails, then there is no separation of any sort - it is the same Absolute available within during the Meditation, and also available everywhere in every type of relationship which we find in this external and manifest world. There is none else to meet but the Self. [Record 22.9.75]

That is, one should try to see the Self in everything or everything as included in the Self¹. Seeing the Self in everything is the same as Rupert Spira's statement?

*

Several new people in the Pewsey Group have asked if they could hear the teaching from the beginning. Also, we would like to start a new group in London, starting in January if there are enough takers. The 'course' in London would start with the System and lead up to Advaita. So how should we deal with this? What should we teach and in what order?

Ouspensky prescribed a sequence of teaching of the System. Start with the psychological side, then the cosmological side. There are the two sets of lectures, *The Psychology and Cosmology of Man's Possible Evolution* which set out the introductory teaching, but we have tried using these and it was not successful.

There is no prescribed sequence for Advaita, though we have Phillip Jacobs' book which was developed for use by the Colet new group.

How should we start? Should we be systematic or deal with what seem to be the questions people are asking and then assemble the elements of the teaching to match?

It might be helpful if everyone was to think about the ideas which have most influenced them, and think out what other ideas had first to be understood.

* * *

¹ There is a further, difficult passage but one that merits private study. Here is part of it:

There are two approaches to enlightenment. One flashes as "All this I am". This is the way of Anvaya, the process of positive reckoning and understanding. This approach is incomplete. The other approach is called Vyatireka and it flashes as if "There is nothing else but I". This is total enlightenment - the real Advaita - after which one sees the same Self everywhere all the time.

Aham or the feeling of oneSelf is primary and the knowledge of Idam - that - is secondary. The reason is simple. Without the existence of Aham or 'I' there is no possibility of the knowledge of Idam or 'that'. When unity is seen from the position of Idam or 'That' which exists in the Universe, the enlightenment is incomplete. When one sees only the Self and nothing else, then enlightenment is complete through the process of Vyatireka, elimination or transcendence until the reality of the Self alone flashes. [Record 17.4.88]