

Mysteries of the Soul

Spiritual text 7 - Handling the seven golden keys

Spiritual text: The Voice of Silence III:1-25

From day to day you can be transformed by opening yourself for the six emanations. The Elohim never stop creating. The six days of creation from the creation myth in Genesis stand for the six emanations that are always active. So there will be no end to the creation and recreation process. When we read that the Elohim rest on the seventh day, it means that man has been transformed, after a sixfold process, into personality-soul, soul and spirit-soul, and thus is able to independently execute the divine plan of creation. It is the task of that person to contribute, on the basis of the glow of the soul, in such a way that all creation will glow like a pearl. The creation myth of Genesis ends with the words:

'Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation. These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.'

In response to all the previous reflections, there is the possibility that you experience a certain form of regret. 'I should have focused on spirituality much earlier. I have wasted decades. Now I am older and have only a limited amount of time left to go the spiritual path!' The thought is understandable, but not justified. You can safely assume that everything comes and goes right on time. As mentioned, we can regard the story of the Hymn of the Pearl as a process of development – descending and ascending – that unfolds during many incarnations. However this process of involution and evolution can also be accomplished during one human lifetime, one in which the person concerned takes the spiritual path very seriously as a ripe, mature adult.

When a human child has just been born on earth, it is still somehow connected with the heavenly spheres. What the child experiences as heavenly forces diminishes more and more as the child grows up. It is a necessary development as the child has to construct a personality in order to experience the sensory world and to function in it.

Children and spirituality

So in a symbolic sense the child must be sent to Egypt to collect the pearl; he must forget his origin in order to become an individual, after which, as a mature adult, he can once again long for his divine origin, having received the invitation from 'above'. During the youth of the child, parents, grandparents and other educators can support the return of this longing for our divine

origin both by being examples themselves and also by taking time to develop authentic spirituality. Secondly they can tell authentic mythical stories to the children or read to them and talk to them about God and the divine world. Thirdly they can encourage them to take part in the youth work of a spiritual tradition. In a certain sense these three aspects

correspond with the three jewels of Buddhism to which the student can turn: the buddha (the awakened one); the dharma (the teachings) and the sangha (the spiritual community). If a child gains positive experiences in this way by virtue of the one who ignites of the light (the buddha), the teaching that leads the way (the dharma) and the group that goes the path (the sangha), then the chance is increased that the child will go the spiritual path later on, as an adult, when the time is ripe for it.

It is excellent when children grow up in an atmosphere in which spirituality goes without saying. They live mostly out of the energies of the adults around them, absorbing that energy as would a sponge. If those adults are pupils of the soul, their energies will help to maintain a certain openness for the impulses from their spirit-sparks in the auras of the children and in their environment. It is, however, wrong to force children and adolescents to go the spiritual path. It is important that each person first build up a more or less stable and integrated personality before a certain path of development can be followed in full autonomy. Too strong a focus on spirituality in the life of a child, teenager or adolescent can lead to fragmentation of the personality before it has been developed, resulting in a life full of difficulties that could have been avoided.

Only a very small minority of humanity is actually following an authentic spiritual path. This has always been the case and it will be for a long time still. It is therefore not a good idea to lean on the opinion of the majority when it comes to inner enlightenment, because the majority is not enlightened and lives – in a symbolic sense – in darkness.

For the very few

Quite practical instructions for going the spiritual path can be found in the booklet 'The Voice of the Silence' that emerged in the Middle Ages from a Buddhist tradition. Helena Blavatsky, the founder of the Theosophical Society, published an English translation of it in 1889, two years before her death, and dedicated it – quite rightly – to 'the very few'. Much of what has been covered in this program can be recognised in 'The Voice of the Silence', acknowledging the assumption that human experience – thus including the spiritual path – has a universal character. 'The Voice of the Silence' speaks directly to the soul, in poetic language. The first thirteen verses of Fragment I read:

*'These instructions are for those ignorant of the dangers of the lower iddhi.
He who would hear the voice of Nâda, "the Soundless Sound," and comprehend it, he has to learn the nature of Dhâranâ.
Having become indifferent to objects of perception, the pupil must seek out the râja of the senses, the Thought-Producer, he who awakes illusion.
The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer.
For:
When to himself his form appears unreal, as do on waking all the forms he sees in dreams;
When he has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the one – the inner sound which kills the outer.
Then only, not till then, shall he forsake the region of Asat, the false, to come unto the realm of Sat, the true.
Before the soul can see, the Harmony within must be attained, and fleshly eyes be rendered blind*

to all illusion.

Before the Soul can hear, the image (man) has to become as deaf to roarings as to whispers, to cries of bellowing elephants as to the silvery buzzing of the golden fire-fly.

Before the soul can comprehend and may remember, she must unto the Silent Speaker be united just as the form to which the clay is modelled, is first united with the potter's mind.

For then the soul will hear, and will remember.

And then to the inner ear will speak – THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE'.

These directives are thus given to the person who is not focussed on the development of psychic powers (the lower iddhi), one who is willing to listen to the impulses that come from the spirit-spark, one who will no longer be fascinated by the sensory world (the hall of ignorance) and who wants to free himself from the illusions of the astral world (the hall of learning) so as to be able to live from the spiritual world (the hall of wisdom, the kingdom of sat).

Liberation from the wheel

Why, in fact, should you make the effort to follow a spiritual path that in the end requires everything from you? To become free from the earthly vale of tears? To be liberated from the wheel of birth and death? To slide back into the ocean like a drop? To be able to immerse yourself in heavenly bliss forever? These are all legitimate reasons. Wisdom teachers advise you to act without being attached to the results. Practising this karma-yoga is important not only for attaining liberation but also and most importantly for afterwards as well. When the personality-soul, the soul and the spirit-soul are connected within man then he will be liberated and will no longer need to incarnate on earth after death of the physical body since an immortal personality-soul will have been created.

When such a person dies, the three more tenuous aspects of the fourfold personality-soul – the etheric body, the astral body and the mental body – will remain intact and will not be dissolved (as is the case with those who have died without having transfigured). The liberated deceased one may choose to enjoy the accrued great happiness permanently. If that is his choice, he will be – according to The Voice of the Silence – a Pratyeka-Buddha. He or she can, on the other hand, choose to refrain from this heavenly bliss and instead help humanity, either from the heavenly spheres or by voluntarily incarnating on earth again in order to propel struggling humanity to spiritual awareness and renewal.

A liberated soul, voluntarily incarnating on earth, is called a Bodhisattva. At the end of the second fragment of 'The Voice of the Silence' (II:88-92) we read:

'Thou hast the knowledge now concerning the two Ways. Thy time will come for choice, O thou of eager Soul, when thou hast reached the end and passed the seven Portals. Thy mind is clear. No more art thou entangled in delusive thoughts, for thou hast learned all. Unveiled stands truth and looks thee sternly in the face. She says: "Sweet are the fruits of Rest and Liberation for the sake of Self; but sweeter still the fruits of long and bitter duty. Aye, Renunciation for the sake of others, of suffering fellow men." He or she who becomes a Pratyeka-Buddha pays tribute only to his own Self. The Bodhisattva who has won the battle and holds the prize in the palm of his hand, but – in

*his divine compassion – says: “In the interest of others I will give up this great reward”,
accomplishes the greater renunciation. A saviour of the world is he.’*

Seven qualities

In order to reach liberation, the pupil of the soul must thus pass through the seven gates. Seven qualities of the spirit-soul must be developed. As ‘The Voice of the Silence’ says (Fragment III:11-18):

*‘Thou seest well, Lanoo. These Portals lead the aspirant across the waters on “to the other shore”.
Each Portal hath a golden key that openeth its gate; and these keys are: —*

- 1. Dâna, the key of charity and love immortal.*
- 2. Shîla, the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action.*
- 3. Kshânti, patience sweet, that nought can ruffle.*
- 4. Virâg’, indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived.*
- 5. Vîrya, the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal truth, out of the mire of lies terrestrial.*
- 6. Dhyâna, whose golden gate once opened leads the Naljor toward the realm of Sat eternal and its ceaseless contemplation.*
- 7. Prajñâ, the key to which makes of a man a god, creating him a Bodhisattva, son of the Dhyânis.’*

It should not be a surprise that the first key to reach the other shore concerns charity and immortal love. Love is the strongest force in the universe. Love is essential for healing wounds that have arisen in the past. Love is essential to bring humanity and the cosmos to the highest state of development. Love is the fulfilment of the law. Hence Jesus formulated the highest commandment as follows:

‘Love God above all and your neighbour as yourself’.

Everything and everyone is connected at a deep level. All souls are a manifestation of the All-soul and all souls are inextricably connected. Someone who loves everything and everyone in a supra-personal sense surrounds himself with a protective field and reflects that in his environment. Accordingly he or she will receive help and power from the heavenly realms. Love must announce itself. It is the reason for its existence. Those who reach harmony in word and act – the second golden key – will no longer create negative karma and so will gain inner strength. Speech and action will then form a unity. Conscious speech will at the same time be conscious creation, in harmony with the plan of God. From this the power will grow what Psalm 33:9 describes:

‘For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.’

The third golden key is mild patience. This quality grows out of intelligent thought, feeling, intention and action without attachment to the results, in full faith that everything will be there in the moment that it must be. The issue is to keep sowing without worrying when the seeds will sprout. We never know exactly how certain developments come about and we do

not need to. The point is that we become *'executors of God's divine council'*, as it was called by the classical Rosicrucians of the seventeenth century.

Pleasure and pain

The fourth golden key, indifference toward pleasure and pain, appears when man – based on inner knowledge and awareness – no longer identifies with forms such as his body, his feelings and his thoughts. There may be pleasure and there may be pain, but they do not form part of your deepest being. They come and they go, like everything else in the world of forms, and they are not part of your all-pervasive being, which exists outside time and space.

The fifth golden key is dauntless energy. That is needed to withstand the inevitable ordeals and to pursue on the path. It does not matter if you fail and fall again, as long as you get back up and go on again. Falling and getting back up is part of the process, just like when a child learns to walk. That goes for the usual daily life, and it goes for the spiritual path as well.

One-pointed orientation based on the correct mindfulness is one of the aspects of the eightfold path of Buddha. It is also the sixth golden key. The pupil breathes in the kingdom of the soul by means of this ceaseless contemplation.

The seventh golden key can be regarded as the synthesis of the preceding six golden keys; it makes a man a god, an immortal creative being, a living connection between heaven and earth. The pupil has endured the struggle of the soul and has conquered.

The question now is whether this mature spirit-soul man will be enjoying the heavenly spheres forever following the death of his physical body and therefore become a Pratyeka-Buddha, or if he will return from the other shore once he reaches it and re-incarnate in a physical body on earth to go the spiritual path once again and, as a bodhisattva, help his fellow human beings in both a spiritual and also a practical sense, as a living bridge between heaven and earth.

Choose your way

Now 'The Voice of the Silence' reaches the gratifying apotheosis on the endless end of the one who went through the seven gates, on the man or woman who has become a person who is entirely animated by the spirit.

'Now bend thy head and listen well, O Bodhisattva — Compassion speaks and saith: "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?" Now thou hast heard that which was said. Thou shalt attain the seventh step and cross the gate of final knowledge but only to wed woe — if thou would'st be Tathâgata, follow upon thy predecessor's steps, remain unselfish till the endless end. Thou art enlightened — Choose thy way.

Behold, the mellow light that floods the Eastern sky. In signs of praise both heaven and earth unite. And from the four-fold manifested Powers a chant of love ariseth, both from the flaming Fire and flowing Water, and from sweet-smelling Earth and rushing Wind. Hark! . . . from the deep unfathomable vortex of that golden light in which the Victor bathes, all nature's wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim:

*Joy unto ye, O men of Myalba.
A Pilgram hath returned back "from the other shore."
A new Arhan is born. . . .
Peace to all beings.'*