

Time for the Wind – An Explanation of the Ending

One or two readers of this book have expressed some mystification over the ending; and maybe the other three were too polite to comment... Accordingly, it occurred to me that it might be helpful to write this brief essay to provide a little more explanation.

WARNING: If you haven't yet read the book, what I am about to write will not be relevant to you and will spoil the experience if you do decide to read it later.

About two thirds of the way through the book the main character, Bradley, apparently succumbs to the 'red grass disease' and dies. Yet, on the final page, we see him typing at his computer and still holding a discussion with the mysterious Krishna. Indeed, the fact that Bradley 'finishes his typing' as the story ends implies that Bradley is the author of what is, in fact, fiction and not the end of the world at all. What is going on here?

Clearly the account of the extra-terrestrial destruction of humanity is just another Science Fiction story but, equally clearly, the reader expects it to follow convention in being internally consistent and 'pretending' to be true. Fiction should be 'real' while we are reading it. We 'enter' a story and, for the duration, IT is the world. Since it is apparently intended to be our own world, events ought to follow the pattern that our experience has led us to expect. If a character dies, he does not suddenly appear again without some reasoned explanation and certainly does not create the fictional world in which he lives.

Or does he?

Is there not a sense in which we DO create our own world? We see what is really a rope but we superimpose an imagined snake and run for our lives to escape it. We firmly believe that rings and chains are quite different things when, in fact, they are both only gold. Tables and chairs are both wood, irrespective of the fact that they have different forms and functions and we happen to give them different names. We enter into the dream state at night and create entire worlds, full of perfectly realistic countryside, sea, animals, buildings, transport, people, events - all indistinguishable to our dreaming self from the waking world; and yet everything is 'made out of' our own mind. We cannot even say that we 'imagine' it, because there is usually no volition or awareness involved.

Truman Capote said "Life is a moderately good play with a badly written third act". We tend to just laugh at such statements and immediately forget them. Characters in plays and stories are written by some 'higher life form' – an author who 'really' exists, as opposed to the entirely fictional characters in the story. But is there not a sense in which these 'real' people are also just stories? Certainly the 'real' events we read about in the newspaper relate to supposedly 'real' people in other countries. But we never meet them. Even if we see them on the TV, they could be actors or (in the near future) realistic but lifeless robots. Irrespective of this, their lives have no impact on our own other than through their 'story'.

We never think of our friends and relatives as in any way unreal, but we can never know how they think or feel. Although we may interact with them, they can only ever be 'objects' of perception, accessible to our senses and seemingly receptive to our own actions and responsive to our speech and so on. But then so are all of the people in our dreams, and in precisely the same way. You never doubt the reality of the friend who travels with you in the dream, yet on waking you might be forced

to acknowledge that they have been dead for 30 years. If your dream continued each night from the point at which it left off the previous time, how would you know which state was waking and which dream? (There is much discussion of such ideas in my book 'A-U-M: Awakening to Reality'. The 7th Century CE Indian philosopher Gaudapada shows how notions such as creation and causality cannot withstand the onslaught of cold reason. We are forced to conclude that we have never been born and that the world does not exist separate from Consciousness.)

Suppose that your name is Katie Smith. Therein lies the clue. It is only your NAME. It is not who you really are. You could change the name by deed poll; you could have been called something entirely different (and would have been if you had been born in India, China, Russia...) Similarly, you may have lost a limb, an organ, a sense in the past (or future). This did not change who you really are. Who you are happens to be conscious, and aware of the world, through this particular body. Because of this, it is perfectly natural that you should identify with that body, and feel directly impacted if something goes wrong with it. If you carefully analyze the situation, however, you are forced to conclude that the ultimate 'you' is actually the Consciousness that operates through this particular body-mind.

And, when the body-mind 'dies', it is only the material aspect that 'returns' to the 'dust' that it always was. Admittedly, the complex proteins and DNA will rupture and become more basic carbon-based compounds but these are just another 'form' of the basic elements of carbon, nitrogen, and hydrogen etc. The key difference is that these chemicals are no longer animated by Consciousness but this Consciousness (which is the only reality) is not affected. (Note that I am not saying that you, Katie Smith, are not affected – Katie Smith will be dead! I am saying that You (Consciousness) are not affected.) One story ends and another begins.

So Bradley, as well as being a character in the book, is also the author. But Bradley's being the author is also an element within the book – Bradley does not really exist. I (Dennis Waite) am a character in the empirical world and the 'real' author of the book. But is the empirical world 'really' real, or is it effectively a fiction, with the world only an imaginary snake conjured up by us in our delusion? Perhaps, when we wake up from our night-time dream, we do so into what is just another (waking) dream...

But if our lives are a fiction, who is the author? In the book, is it Krishna, the elusive and enigmatic, alien, computer-mind; Krishna who in the Bhagavad Gita is the avatar of the god Vishnu? Gods, being equally part of the story, cannot create anything – in reality. Within the context of the story, there can be a god or gods, creating the world, rewarding the good and punishing the bad. In reality, the story is just that – a story. Is there an analogy with our own experience in the world? Clearly there is Consciousness but is there a 'person', are there 'people', is there a 'world'? Is it possible that there is ONLY Consciousness??

These are serious questions. The intention was that a reader might be triggered to ask similar questions as a result of the 'strange' ending, especially in the light of the various conversations between Bradley and Krishna and the monologues given by the latter in the book. The hints given there and the statements here are aspects of the Indian philosophy and teaching methodology called Advaita. These demonstrate unequivocally that reality is non-dual (the meaning of the Sanskrit word 'advaita').

So, what does Advaita actually say? Very briefly, we presently experience ourselves as separate persons in a universe of objects. Despite this seeming duality, according to Advaita, reality is actually non-dual. This non-dual reality is called Brahman. As noted above, we do feel ourselves to be other

than our body or mind. Advaita calls our essential self, which is beyond body and mind, the Atman. And the fundamental message of Advaita is that this Atman is Brahman.

There is an oft-quoted sentence which is said to summarize Advaita. This is:

brahma satyam, jaganmithya, jivo brahmaiva naparah (in the Sanskrit in which it was written).

Translated, it means: "Brahman is the reality; the world is not in itself real; the individual self is not different from Brahman." And the purpose of the teaching is simply to bring about this realization.

Unlike religions and most other spiritual systems, you are not asked to set aside reason and accept the unprovable as truth. On the contrary, you are encouraged to question everything until all doubts are satisfied. The only 'practices' you are expected to follow are those which promote self-control of mind and senses so that discrimination may operate in a still mind. Thereafter, it is simply a matter of listening or reading, clarifying confusion and reflecting until there is 'enlightenment'.

For further reading on the subject by the same author:

- . Short book for complete beginners – '[Advaita Made Easy](#)' (2012).
- . For those who already know a little – '[The Book of One](#)' (2003), extensively revised in 2010.
- . The advanced, encyclopedic book – '[Back to the Truth](#)' (2007).
- . Why traditional teaching is best – '[Enlightenment: the Path through the Jungle](#)' (2008).
- . A readable commentary on possibly the most profound Advaita text (by Gaudapada, as mentioned above) – '[A-U-M: Awakening to Reality](#)' (2015).

The author's website is at <http://www.advaita.org.uk> with a blog (from which he may be contacted) at <http://www.advaita-vision.org/>.