

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

General Background

Paulo Coelho's Santiago, the protagonist of one of his most noted novel *The Alchemist*, guided by a spiritual philosophy. In the novel we find Santiago believes that treasures are not the only tangible things but there are intangible things that can make us as much happy, satisfied and respected. This is an interesting and questionable aspect of the novel, *The Alchemist*.

Santiago's spirituality attracts a lot of readers. In this present study this aspect of the novel is discussed in detail. While doing so the following question will be taken into consideration. "How does Santiago, in difficult circumstances also, keep on his spiritual journey to make the unification of soul and super soul?" The research work is guided by the hypothesis that Santiago ultimately attains spiritual enlightenment.

Paulo Coelho: His Life

Coelho was born in the Botafago neighborhood of Rio de Janeiro, the capital city of Brazil, on 24th August 1947. His father, Pedro Queima Coelho de Souza, was an engineer. His mother Lygia Araripe Coelho, who was a homemaker, had a strong faith in religion. His family, which was upper middle class, neglected Coelho's interest in artistic career. Because of this clash between his interest and his family's interest about his career Coelho's schooling period was not so good. Since his childhood he loved to read works of Jorge Luis Borges whom Coelho regarded as his literary *guru*. Borges' inspiration guided him to become a writer.

Coelho was always a non-conformist and, a seeker of new things and taste. During the guerrilla and hippie movement of 1968, which was known as the revolt against the then military regime of Brazil (1964-1985), he was a follower of Marx and Engels. He took part in elections and demonstrations. He participated in all the progressive movements and was part of the "peace and love generation." It was during

this period Coelho confronted a crisis in his way of thinking. His life was as varied and unusual as the life of the protagonist of *The Alchemist*. He had a dream of wish fulfillment. His dream to be a writer met with frustration throughout much of his early adult life, a time in which he worked at various professions, some of them he found materially rewarding but spiritually unfulfilling. In an interview with Laura Sheahen he says, “The only way that you can learn any language is by making mistakes. I made my mistakes, but then I started to connect with the signs that guide me. This silent voice of God that leads me to the places where I should be” (n.p).

In this difficult situation Coelho indulged in drugs, hallucinogens, sects and traveling. However his father played a vital role to bring him to proper track and admitted him to Law University of Rio de Janeiro. But Coelho, a lover of art and literature, was not happy in Law University. In 1970 he decided that the law school was not for him and started to work in a theater. He earned some money as an actor but later he was sent to a mental asylum in 1974 by the military dictatorship of Brazil. He escaped from the mental asylum and traveled through much of South America, North America, Mexico, Europe, especially France and Spain, and some African countries.

Coelho was interested in literature and writing. He worked as a theater director, actor, lyricist and journalist before he fully dedicated himself to literature. After two years he returned to Brazil and tried journalism. He started a magazine called *2001*. The magazine went only two editions. As part of Brazilian rock scene, Coelho wrote song lyrics for famous performances in Brazilian music, such as Elis Regina and Rita Lee. His most well known work was with Raul Seixas. Together they wrote such successes as “Eu nasci ha dez mil anos atras” (I was born ten thousand years ago), “Gita” and “A1 Capone” amongst sixty other songs. Seixas taught Coelho the magic of communication: a complex message doesn’t need to be hard to understand– the message must be as simple as possible to grasp, even though to live it is the hardest of things.

As Coelho confesses in an interview with Juan Arias, during which he was introduced to the controversial English mystic Aleister Crowley, who influenced his collaboration with Raul Seixas. The influence extended not only to music, but also to plans for the creation of the Alternative Society.

After imprisonment Coelho lived a normal life and worked as a lyricist. But in 1976 his writing passion took him away from Brazil to the U.K., a place where he worked as the correspondent of many Brazilian magazines. He also had written his biography including his childhood experiences in a Jesuit school and the hard time he faced. However, this book remained unpublished.

After three failed marriages, Coelho married a painter, Cristina Oticia, with whom he is sharing the success of his life as a world famous writer. Oticia led him towards Christianity. His fascination with the spiritual quest dates back to his hippie days when he traveled to many places of the world learning secret societies, oriental religion and mysticism. Coelho became a member of a catholic group called Regnus Agnus Mundi. However, the existence of the group was not verified. In 1986, he experienced one of the determining moments of his life. He walked along the seven hundred kilometer Road of Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain. On this ancient highway, which was used by the pilgrims for centuries to get to the cathedral, he achieved self-awareness and spiritual awakening. To cover the experience of his journey from France to Spain he published his first book *Diary of Magus* which was later renamed as *The Pilgrimage*. Coelho himself offers the following comment on his spiritual philosophy:

People ask me: what is the secret behind such huge success? The only honest response is I don't know. All I know is that, like Santiago the shepherd boy we all need to be aware of our personal calling. It is God's blessing, it is the path that God chose you here on Earth. Whenever we do

something that fills us with enthusiasm, we are following our legend.

However, we don't all have the courage to confront our dream. (vii)

Coelho's Works

Coelho started writing with *The Pilgrimage* and continued writing other luminous novels about the different streams of lives including *The Alchemist*, *The Valkyries*, *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept*, *Veronica Decides to Die*, *The Fifth Mountain*, *The Zahir*, *The Devil and Miss Prym*, *Eleven Minutes*, *Manual of the Warrior of Light*. These texts have made him one of the most famous writers of the world.

The Pilgrimage (1987) is the first of Paulo Coelho's path breaking novel. He has tried to strike the chords of spiritualism in this finely written novel. He has cast himself as the central character and he has described his inspirational tale of spiritual journey from Santiago to Spain. He tries to compare the experience of his black magic period, a period during which he revolted against the Brazilian military regime and took a journey to a religious place. *The Valkyries* (1992) is a modern day adventure in the searing heat of the Mojave Desert for forty days to meet his angel and an exploration of fear and self doubt. His *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept* (1994) is a wonderful novel, with a poetic and transcendent narrative, that reflects all the mysteries of life. In this novel it is described when two young lovers are reunited they discover the truth of what lies in their hearts. Similarly, *The Fifth Mountain* (1996) teaches how faith and love can overcome suffering.

Coelho's famous book *The Manual of the Warrior of Light* (1997) is an invitation to each of us to live our dream, to embrace the uncertainty of life, and to rise to meet our own unique destiny. In his inimitable style, he helps us to discover the warrior of the light within each of us. With inspiring short passages, we are invited to embark upon the way of the warrior. The one who appreciates the miracle of being alive, the one who accepts failure, and the one whose quest leads him to become the person he wants to be.

In the famous book *Veronika Decides to Die* (1998) a woman on the point of death discovers the emotions and experiences she has shielded away from before. *The Devil and Miss Prym* (2000) illuminates the reality of good and evil and our human capacity to choose between them. Similarly, *Eleven Minutes* (2003) depicts how a girl happens to become a prostitute when she is convinced that she will never get true love in her life. *The Zahir* (2005) is about the writer's own notion about spirituality. It describes the pilgrimage of a successful author, who has to learn how to strike a balance between spiritual refinement and blinding obsession, and to remain bewildered by the love without fully understanding it. It offers nothing more than a naïve listen to your heart philosophy whose goal is to realize and become friends with one's destiny. *Like the Flowing River*, *The Witch of the Portobello*, and *Brida* are his recent novels.

Paulo Coelho's novels explore the timeless struggle between good and evil and its relevance is to our everyday dilemmas. They encourage us to dare to follow our dream, to have courage to be different, and to master the fear that prevents us from living truly. Coelho is rather fascinated to deal with the various mental facets that create the gap between our ordinary existence and the enlightened state of spiritualism in the material world. He once said that following our dream is like learning a foreign language; we will make mistakes but we will get there in the end. In 1988 he published *The Alchemist*, a novel that explores this theme, and it launched him as an international bestselling author. Specifically Coelho is recognized for his powerful storytelling technique and the profound spiritual insights he blends seamlessly into his parables.

Literature Review

Coelho has the ability to bring his readers face-to-face with existential questions. He also helps them to meet the sublime within themselves. He connects fact and magic to religion. While reading his works we feel as if we are reading some religious books giving spiritual message. Young people can gain this sense from reading Coelho's work. His message can help them to find and trust their own will and way, to strengthen their

individuality and to affirm their feeling of self-worth. Yet, what is simple, wise, profound and inspirational for his admirers, is simplistic nonsense to his critics.

The writings of Paulo Coelho give us a sense of conversation. We get the sense that a person whose experience is similar to us is sharing his experience with us, and instructing us the right way of life. His writings can be understood more by the words of Eisinger who writes, “This is the reason behind the fame of Coelho which he has achieved by using only those people as character which he himself has lived” (145).

The Alchemist revolves around the story of an Andalusian shepherd boy Santiago who has a passion for traveling. It is the story of a boy who embarks on a journey in search of a treasure. Santiago displays an innocent idealism and allows himself to be guided by the “signs” by coincidence as it were in his encounters with people and nature. His journey through adventurous lands is also an inner journey that finally leads him to the discovery of the treasure in the most unexpected place.

The charming tale of Santiago, a shepherd boy, who dreams of seeing the world, is compelling. Coelho’s writing has the power to bring images, feelings, memories etc. into our mind during the journey Santiago makes in *The Alchemist*. He travels from Spain to Morocco in search of worldly success, and eventually to Egypt, where a fateful encounter with an alchemist brings him at last to self-understanding and spiritual enlightenment. The story has the comic charm, dramatic tension and the psychological intensity of a fairy tale. It is also full of specific wisdom about becoming self-empowered, overcoming depression, and believing in dreams. Santiago's journey is like a childish demand or a crazy activity which is not believed by most of the people. Along the way, of course, this young man is beset by all manner of setbacks, where his resolve is tested and he is forced to become attuned to the soul of the world in order to survive. By paying attention to the details in the world around him, which serve as omens guiding him towards his goal, young Santiago becomes an alchemist in his own right, spinning unfavorable circumstances into riches.

Coelho's works help in the study of the nature and development of society and social behavior. His books have changed what it means nowadays to be a Latin American author. Coelho's works are not only novels but something more.

For Antje Jackelen the use of elements of fable in *The Alchemist* raises Coelho's book far above the level of many would-be-wise guides for a successful life. She shows the existential aspect of the novel. In the essay "Why is Soren so Popular?" she writes, "*The Alchemist* falls short of reaching the depth of a master of irony like Soren Kierkegaard. But the difference lies in the ability and willingness to deal with the tragic" (103).

Stephen M. Hart opines that *The Alchemist* celebrates cultural hybridity. Coelho's eyes are those of the hybrid in which there is no single overriding mono focal vision of reality. In his essay "Cultural Hybridity, Magical Realism, and the language of Magic in Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist*" he remarks, "The protagonist is portrayed as standing of the crossroad between various ancient cultures: he simultaneously is intersected by Christian, Hebraic and Arabian cultures. The forces of different cultures melt into each other" (311).

Spencer Johnson who is the co-author of *The one Minute Manager* finds *The Alchemist* as a tale of universal wisdom which is applicable even now. He writes about this novel as "An entrepreneurial tale of universal wisdom which can apply to the business of our own lives" (n.p).

For Charlotte Zolotow, author of *If You Listen*, *The Alchemist* appears to be a didactic piece of literature. According to her, this book is helpful to the readers to find their own destinies in life. She further says, "The mystic quality in the odd adventures of the boy, Santiago, may bring not only him but others who read this fine book closure to recognizing and reaching their own destinies" (27).

We find a wide range of criticism on *The Alchemist*. We also can find many fields about this text which remain unexplored. Santiago's journey which leads him to

spiritual enlightenment in *The Alchemist* is one of them. I will explore this element in the next chapter. The third chapter of this dissertation will be the detailed analysis of Santiago's quest for spiritual enlightenment. And the last chapter which is about the conclusion brings the end of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

Spiritualism

The philosophy of Spiritualism is based on the simple theory that man is a dual being, consisting of physical and spiritual components. The physical element (the body) disintegrates at death, but the spiritual (the soul, spirit, personality, consciousness, etc) continues exactly as it was, in another form of existence in the spirit-world or heaven.

Spiritualism is a monotheistic belief system or religion which accepts existence of God. Spiritualism says that spirits of the dead residing in the spirit world can be contacted by mediums that can then provide information about the afterlife. It emerged in Christian environment; it has features in common with Christianity, ranging from an essentially Christian moral system to worshiping practices such as the singing of hymns. Spiritualists do not believe that the works or faith of a mortal during a brief lifetime can serve as a basis for assigning a soul to an eternity of heaven or hell. They view the afterlife as containing hierarchical spheres through which each spirit can progress.

There are seven principles of spiritualism. They are: the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the communion of spirits and the ministry of angels, the continuous existence of the human soul, personal responsibility, compensation and retribution for all good and evil deeds, and eternal progress upon every soul. These principles are followed by people in different phases of their life.

We all have a soul within us. This has different feelings in different situations with different persons. When we die our physical body dies but our soul does not. This will enter into somebody else's body and continues to be here in the earth. Soul is regarded immortal by all religions. So we have to do for the betterment of other beings as well. There are many situations in our lifetime that we have to be careful in our activities. We have to understand the signs and situation and work accordingly. When we die we do not take anything with us. We leave everything which we achieve in our

life. Other people will evaluate them. The popular Hindu concept of *Maya* says this world is nothing but an illusion.

We find many arguments on the content of spiritualism. In the book *Science and Spirituality*, B.K. Jagdish Chandar Hassija writes:

Spiritualism should have rationalism of science, faith of religion and integrated vision of philosophy and common sense. It should give an overview of all branches of knowledge of the mundane and should flower into such spiritual wisdom as can bring fulfillment and bring about happiness. Spiritual knowledge is free from any prejudices. It provides an insight into the nature of consciousness. It interprets many subjects and integrates all knowledge into one whole to give man an integrated vision of truth and an integrated personality based on this. It explains the relationship between man and his creator. (5)

Spiritualism is commonly understood as the practice of religion in the prevailing environment of competitiveness, hatred, self promotion, material prosperity and usurpation of authorities. Spiritualism, concerns with the matter of the spirit, a concept closely tied to religious belief and faith, a transcendent reality, and belief in one or more deities. Spiritual matters are thus those matters regarding humankind's ultimate nature and purpose, not only as material biological organisms which is confined to worldly things but as beings with a unique relationship to that which is perceived to be beyond both time and the material world. But in a broad sense, intuitionism, pantheism, dualism and monism are philosophical concepts contributed by the great thinkers during the last three millenniums and these concepts are considered as Spiritualism. Subjects dealing with matters are not spiritualism. Spiritualism talks about the nature of the Supreme Being, or the cosmic and universal forces.

The entire philosophy of Spiritualism as considered by many distinguished modern thinkers is a thought which accepts the existence of the reality beyond the

material world. The truth as such accepted is beyond the sensual perception of human being. In principle, the acceptance of infinity, morality, God, immortality, soul, and religious concepts are common to all spiritual thinkers. So, spiritualism is the idea of immaterial identities which include cosmic forces and the universal mind. The practice of spiritualism is beyond sensual as well as material reach. Gorge Lawton in his essay *Spiritualism a Contemporary American Religion* opines, “Spiritualism is not only a belief in spirit but in spirits as well. It arose to combat Materialism and is to be looked upon as part of the post Kantian idealistic movement in philosophy” (53). As such, the spiritual is contrasted with the material, the temporal and the worldly. A perceived sense of connection forms a central defining characteristic of spirituality– connection to a metaphysical reality greater than oneself, which may include an emotional experience of religious awe and reverence, or such states as Satori or Nirvana. Nirvana is a state where we stay out of greed, hatred, and illusion. Equally important, spirituality relates to matters of sanity and of psychological health. Spirituality is the personal, subjective dimension of religion, particularly that which pertains to liberation or salvation.

Spiritualism has also been understood as organized religion which believes that Spirits of the deceased survive bodily and communicate with the living usually via a medium. It is sometimes understood as the communication between dead and alive. Kantibhushan Chakrabarti in his book *Spiritual Life*, writes, “The concept of Spiritualism is understood as a dead interacting with the living being, an intangible and immaterial “Spirit” dealing with the living persons, dealing with a “Spirit” something immortal and separable from the body at death, occult communication with the departed soul” (11).

George Lawton also has a similar type of view. Spiritualism like all religious systems is based on the inveterate reluctance of human beings to admit that death is the extinction of their own or their loved one’s personality. For him, since the death of the

person is not the extinction of his soul, he can interact with the living one. He further writes:

The chief business of spiritualism is the transmission of messages from the dead. These people say that spiritualism is a science which may be utilized by anyone regardless of his particular religious creed or lack of it. Fortune telling has no more to do with spiritualism than it has to do with merchandizing, to communicate with loved ones in spirit and to receive the teachings that come from spirit is the purpose of spiritualism. (48)

Spiritualism lies as an essence of eastern culture which says, to achieve spirituality, sacrificing material possession is a must. Modern people run after material quest and prosperity. They generally do not understand the core spirit of spiritualism which the easterners find in the sacrifice of material possessions and by caring about the needs and happiness of other people more than their own.

The oriental concept of spiritualism is the observance of the wisdom about the ultimate truth. It is termed as *Adhyatmikata*. The practice of control, compassion and charity is the key to the gate of spiritual life and the key is possessed through the gradual realization, which is the practice of *Adhyatmikata*. In understanding the *Sanatana* principle of spiritualism it is pertinent to comprehend the basic truth of the creation and formation therein, the cosmic energy and its prevalence within the universe. Anybody who succeeds to realize the networks of the creation, the threads of the same and the threads of the threads, he realizes the supreme lord.

Spiritualism begins with the aspirations and the inquisitiveness to acquire the knowledge about *chaitanya* and *jada*, which are mind and body. The *Para-vidya* is the science of ultimate reality, the knowledge of the creator, and *Apara-vidya*, the ordinary knowledge, the knowledge of the created. Chakrabarti further writes:

Spiritualism also deals with the traits of desire, *vasana*, sense-gratification, passion, repression and restraints, false-ego accepting the

body as the self, real ego accepting the soul as the self, ageing process, ailments, materialistic living and balanced living. At higher and advanced level it deals with the attainment of knowledge about absolute truth the *Brahman*, the *Paramatma*, the Supreme Soul. In this process *Para-vidya* supersedes *Apara-vidya* which is about temporary and ever-changing elements relevant to illusion, false existence and unstable matter. (17)

As spiritualism begins with the aspirations and inquisitiveness to acquire knowledge, it deals with the ways and means to acquire knowledge of the organic and inorganic elements functional in the process of the discrimination of *Sat* and *Asat*, the knowledge leading to ignorance and the knowledge leading to Enlightenment.

The understanding of truth and illusion is the function of spiritualism. This understanding begins with the deep contemplation of the phenomena of the world. In his book *Japanese Spirituality*, Daisetz Suzuki writes, “The working of spirituality begins from deep contemplation of the phenomena of the world, progressing finally to a desire to grasp the eternally constant something that is beyond the world of cause and effect” (75).

Spirituality perceives life as more important, more complex or more integrated with one’s world view. It deals with the actions and deeds and outcomes thereof, the practices and methods of conducting the living process to acquire wisdom, to get freedom from the cycle of life, the birth and the death and materialistic existence. Many spiritual traditions share a common spiritual theme. And the theme is the path to perceive one’s true nature and relationship to the rest.

Regarding the path of spirituality, we find many opinions. In his book *Applied Spiritual Knowledge*, Brahma Kumar Jagdish Chander Hassija writes:

The path of spirituality is paved with many slipping tiles. One has to be very cautious in one’s gait. One may, sometimes, see the self surrounded by flatterers and flippants and, at other times, by those who want some

special favours by offering fat purses, costly gifts, big bouquets or high flown words of praise. This may sharpen one's thirsts for fame, hunger for position, power, high profile or honour. A true spiritualist is one who remains above these all or participates in such programmes minimally and that also with the idea of service only. (273)

We know that people are lured to spiritualism in this or that way. People commit many criminal activities in their life time to collect material wealth. When they think about the true essence of life, it may be too late. So they want to buy spirituality by donating money or by doing other things. We respond to everything we see or hear. There must be spiritual response to every action. We must be clear about what spiritual response is. In this regard Hassija further writes; "Spiritual response is a moral response, based on the awareness that we are souls and brothers. This response is the understanding that all problems arise from our failure to observe some moral or spiritual value and can, therefore, be solved-in the true sense of the word-by observing those values" (331).

Spiritualism and enlightenment are two interrelated terms. To understand spiritualism we need to know enlightenment also. Enlightenment means the knowledge about and understanding of something. It is also related with Buddhism as Buddhism deals with the greater level of understanding of everything. In this regard Christmas Humphreys in his book *Buddhism* says, "Buddhism denies the existence in man of an immortal soul. The enlightenment which dwells in life does not belong to one form of life. All that is man's is changing and mortal; the Immortal is not any man's" (80).

Everybody has to suffer in this transitory world. To find why one has to suffer in his life; Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, left his palatial comforts more than twenty five hundred years ago. After meditating for years he became enlightened and started preaching whatever he gained. Those teachings have now become the principles of Buddhism. Humphreys further says, "All forms of life, said the Buddha, can be shown to

have three characteristics in common; impermanence, suffering, and an absence of permanent soul which separates each from the other forms of life” (80).

What is enlightenment?

The act of enlightening or casting light where there was darkness is termed as enlightenment. Spiritual Enlightenment is pretty much what all spiritual studies strive for. It is the hope of anyone studying the topics to come to this stage of being. It is not likely anyone of us will achieve “total” spiritual enlightenment in our lifetimes, but many have and will at least gain partial enlightenment.

Enlightenment is a universal subject which is hard to put into a can and give a label. Mystics, theologians, even religious fundamentalists all have people within their ranks that claim to have or can give spiritual enlightenment. The bottom line is this; if we learn something deep, profound and true, and it sinks into our heart and becomes a part of us, then we have achieved enlightenment at least to a certain degree. Many people attempt directly to achieve enlightenment through meditation, fasting, prayer, even occult means. Though many have tried, and many may have succeeded in gaining this knowledge, there exists today no one single definitive source of spiritual enlightenment. It is up to us, only we can find this path, and ultimately we must do it on our own.

Soul and Super Soul

There is a great misunderstanding about the characteristics of the individual soul and Super soul, or *jiva-atma* and *param-atma*. Some claim that the soul and Super soul are absolutely one and the same whereas others claim them to be different.

The truth, however, is that the individual soul and Super soul are two different entities which are similar in their spiritual natures but distinct in their quantitative function.

Jiva-atma, or the individual soul, refers to the living entity which is embodied in a physical form, produced by material nature. *Param-atma* refers to the Supreme Lord who expands Himself as the Super soul and who enters into the hearts of all living

entities as well as all the atoms. Thus *Param-atma* is the localized aspect of the supreme, situated in everyone's heart as a transcendental witness.

This is also confirmed in *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is* [15.15] where according to Prabhupada, Lord Krishna says “I am seated in everyone's heart, and from me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness. By all the Vedas, I am to be known. Indeed, I am the compiler of Vedanta, and I am the knower of the Vedas” (646).

The entrance of the Supreme Lord into everyone's heart as *param-atma* sometimes bewilders those, who think in terms of the equality of the living entities with the Supreme. They think that because the Supreme Lord enters into different bodies along with the individual soul, there is no distinction between the Lord and the individual entities. According to them, both the Super soul and the individual soul are on the same level; they are one, without any difference between them.

However, according to the Vedanta philosophy there is a difference between the Super soul and the individual soul, and this is explained in *Bhagavad-Gita*, where the Lord says that although He is situated with the living entity in the same body, He is superior due to His transcendental situation. He is directing the living entity by giving knowledge and intelligence from within.

Mayavadi philosophers mistake the living entity for the *param-atma*, who in actuality is sitting side by side with the living entity. The Super soul acts as the neutral observer, witness, adviser, guide and friend of the individual soul. Because the *param-atma*, the localized aspect of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the individual living entity are both within the body, a misunderstanding takes place that there is no difference between the two. But there is a definite difference between the individual soul and the Super soul.

The individual soul and Super soul are compared to two birds which reside in the same tree. One of them (*jiva-atma*) is eating the fruits of the tree, while the other (*param-atma*) is just witnessing the activities of his friend. The witness is the Lord, and

the fruit-eater is the living entity. The fruit-eater (living entity) which is overcome by the reaction of his enjoyment has forgotten his real identity and is overwhelmed in the fruitlike activities of the material conditions, but the Lord (*param-atma*), who is always transcendently situated, is not affected by the material atmosphere. That is the difference between the Super soul and the conditioned soul. One should not think that the Supreme Lord becomes conditioned when He incarnates on earth or expands Himself as the Super soul.

Both the Supreme Lord and the living entity are known as *atma*. The Supreme Lord is called *Paramatma*, and the living entity is called the *atma*, the *brahma* or the *jiva*. Both the *Paramatma* and the *jivatma*, being transcendental to the material energy, are called *atma*. Generally people have many wrong conceptions about both of them. The wrong conception of the *jivatma* is to identify the material body with the pure soul, and the wrong conception of *Paramatma* is to think Him on an equal level with the living entity.

This is also confirmed in *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is* [13.23]. It says, “Yet in this body there is another, a transcendental enjoyer, who is the Lord, the supreme proprietor, who exists as the overseer and permitter, and who is known as the Super soul” (591).

The individual soul, deluded by material energy, tries to enjoy the activities of particular types of bodies offered by material nature, but the Super soul is present not as finite enjoyer nor as one taking part in bodily activities, but as the witness and permission giver. He is present within to sanction the individual soul's desires for material enjoyment.

The Lord is always eager to take us back to the spiritual energy, but due to our minute independence, we are continually rejecting the association of spiritual atmosphere. This misuse of independence is the cause of our material strife in the conditioned nature. The Lord, therefore, is giving advice and instruction from within and

from without. From without He gives instructions through such Vedic scriptures as the *Bhagavad-gita*, and from within He acts as the Super soul to enlighten the conditioned soul about his spiritual nature. Thus the intelligent person, who understands the difference between the Soul and Super soul, can advance toward a blissful eternal life of knowledge. So, to follow the dictums of conscience in contemplations, action, acquisition of knowledge, sustaining and conducting temporary existence of life and for achieving the ultimate goal is spiritualism.

Spiritual Quest

One's journey towards spirituality is his journey of self or soul. When people feel their life is imperfect, the journey to achieve the goal begins. The goal here is the fulfillment of the real purpose of life as apart from the lower purposes of earning a livelihood, rearing a family, or so forth. The ultimate goal is to live from the over self not from the ego. When the time comes to achieve such a goal, people leave their family, friends, possessions etc. Some people are guided by their dreams that they should discover their "self"; they do not think about the mundane pleasure since it is insufficient to fulfill their quest. Buddha had also sacrificed sophisticated life in search for ultimate reality. Such people feel that sometime is missing from their life; a need that none of their possessions or relations can satisfy. So, this is not the outer or physical journey to achieve the goal of life; rather, it is inner journey that is the journey of the self or soul to enlightenment

So, the spiritual quest is simply an attempt of a few pioneering men to become aware of their spiritual selves. It is dedicated to find out who they are. The very idea of quest involves a passage a movement from one place to another. Here the passage is really from one state to another. For Paul Brunton spiritual quest is a clarion call to man to seek his true self. In his famous book *The Quest*, Paul Brunton writes:

Spiritual quest is the deliberate and conscious dedication to the search for the ultimate truth, freedom or awareness; it is a call to those who want inner nourishment from real source, not from fanciful or speculative ones.

It calls them away from things, appearances, shows, and externals to their inwards being, toward reality. And, such quest not only begins from heart but also ends there too. (4)

It is a brave struggle for freedom, a fine resolve to win strength from weakness. In fact it is a movement in character from animality to purity, from egoism to impersonality.

We can find here that, the person who is searching for spiritual life does not give any importance to his egoist self. One's quest for spirituality is his excessive desire to dissolve his or her ego. And there is no doubt that dissolving ego is the outcome of being free from inward bondages and attaining super-consciousness. Paul Brunton further writes:

Spiritual quest is continual effort of self-release from inward oppressions and self-deliverance from emotional obstructions. This is an adventure as well as a journey; a work to be done and a study to be made; a blessing which gives hope and a burden of discipline which can not be shirked. Here is a goal for men and women which can bring them the fulfillment of their best purposes, the happiness of being set free from their inward bondages and the calmness of knowledge their own soul. (7)

So, the quest means disciplined emotions and disciplined living, sustained aspiration and nurtured intuition. It is a method, a teaching, and an ideal combined for those who seek a genuine inner life of the spirit.

Since the journey is to discover the "self," Hindu thinkers traditionally identify three *yogas* as paths to realization: *Karma-yoga*, the path of ethical living and cultic ceremonies; *Jana-yoga*, the way of understanding and study, frequently involving active contemplation, and *Bhakti-yoga*, the route of loving devotion and service. Despite personal preferences, it is usually maintained that no one of these ways is better than the other, and most practicing Hindus combine aspects of all three.

Nevertheless, the Hindu says the most visible side of spiritual practices can be seen in the *Bhakti* movement— loving devotion to a particular deity, chanting the names of God, being caught up in ecstatic states of consciousness. But Buddhism openly disregards this. Buddhism disregards the *Bhakti* movement and loving devotion to a particular deity. The Buddha outlined the eightfold path to achieve the goal of life. He did not believe that the spiritual practices begin with meditative techniques. The eightfold path consists of right meditation or understanding, right thought, right speech, right action or good conduct, right means of livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and concentration and right memory. Following these noble paths we can achieve the ultimate goal of life that is spiritual perfection or Nirvana in Buddhism.

Enlightenment is the goal; but the means to reach the goal may vary with the pilgrims. The ways to the one are as many as the lives of men. And all agree that spiritual practices are ways of living that seek restoration of wholeness. It is to be understood as ways of uniting the little self with the great life giving self in wholeness.

So, the desire to uplift our conscience beyond the world of cause and effect is the spiritual quest. It is an endeavor to lift to a higher plane and expand to a larger measure, the whole of one's identity.

The spiritual quest is a holy journey. So he who is engaged on it is truly a pilgrim. Who stands on the threshold of this path is about to commence the last and greatest journey of all, one which he will continue to the end of his days. Once begun there is no turning back or deserting it, except temporarily. And as on many journeys, difficulties, fatigues, obstacles, delays and allurements may be encountered on the way.

Brunton writes:

There will certainly be dangers, pitfalls, oppositions and enmities too.

Despite such hurdles, his intuition and reason, his experience and earnestness will constitute themselves as his guide upon it. When he happens to face such dangers on the way there is the possibility of

deviation in our purpose as well. There is also the danger to the receiving soul of mistaking its momentary emotion for real religious earning. These momentary emotions are thus mistaken that continuous, real want of the soul will not come, and he will not find the transmitter. (10)

The difficulties on the way towards spiritual perfection appear in the form of doubt as well. When the aspirant becomes too doubtful, in such situation he may need a teacher as a guide. He must join a particular group or attach himself to one teacher. The inner work must then proceed by the guidance of one's own intuitive feeling together with the pointers given by outer circumstances as they appear. However, our first duty is to look into our own souls and find whether we really want the truth. Purity in every way is absolutely necessary.

When the aspirant is devoted in his quest he can fulfill it in either way, be it the grace of God or his self-effort. These two schools of thought one of which says that spiritual attainment depends on self-effort and the other that it depends wholly upon the grace of God do not really clash if their claims are correctly and impartially understood. When a man begins his spiritual quest it is solely by his own strivings that he makes his initial progress. The time comes when this progress seems to stop and when he seems to stagnate. He has come to the end of a stage which was really a preparatory one. The stagnation indicates that the path of self-effort is no longer sufficient and that he must now enter upon the path of reliance upon Grace.

The aspirant is living in a human form; the higher power can reach him best through finding a living outlet which is also in a human form. So it bestows its grace upon him partly as a reward and partly as a consequence of his own preparatory efforts by leading him to such an outlet, which is none other than a master or guide in the flesh. No man is wholly saved by his own effort alone, nor can any master save him if he fails to make effort. The claims of both schools are correct if introduced at the proper stage.

Yoga Vasistha also states that there are two kinds of path leading to liberation. If one should, without the least fail, follow the path laid down by a teacher, delusion will wear away from him little by little and emancipation will result, either in the very birth of his initiation by his guru or in some succeeding birth. The other path is where the mind is, being slightly fortified with a stainless spontaneous knowledge, ceaselessly meditates upon it, and there alights true life in it, like fruit falling from above unexpectedly.

However, fulfilling the spiritual quest in either way is not a romantic or dramatic adventure, but a stern self-discipline. It is continual effort of self –release from inward operations and self –deliverance from emotional obstructions. It is a homeward journey.

The term spiritual is loosely used nowadays. It includes in its domain but is not limited to certain state of mystical consciousness, certain religious mental experience, high moral attitudes and unworldly emotional reactions. Thus one man may be called highly spiritual although he may not have had any mystical experience, that is, when he is highly moral. So, a lonely life is not essential for a person while searching spiritual awakening. Paul Brunton also focuses on this fact and says that living a moral life is more important than embodying oneself within temples and meditation. According to him, a person without following religious worshipping too can achieve spiritual perfection in life. He writes:

It is less important whether or not we live under monastic rules than whether we live faithfully in the purpose which prompted those rules to be formulated. Whether a man stays within the household and secular society or whether he enters the monastic or ascetic one, his enlightenment is neither guaranteed by the second choice nor blacked by the first one. The god within him is the secret watcher, be he layman or hermit he can defile or purify himself in either estate, grasp the truth or

miss the point whether active in the world or enclosed in a religious order, ashram or temple. (129)

So, the purification of mind may be accomplished at home or it may be accomplished in an *ashram*-monastery. The point is that holiness is not necessarily limited to hermits and monks; it may also belong to householders. It is immeasurably more important to have inner detachment than to wear a monk's robe. Detachment from the world is an absolute necessity for the man who seeks authentic inner peace. But renunciation of the world is not necessary to any except those who have an inborn natural vocation for the monkish life.

Spiritual Enlightenment

Besides consciousness in the animal world (perception and action), and self-consciousness in the human (intelligence and will), we have spiritual consciousness or super consciousness, a level of experience at which new aspects of reality reveal themselves. At the spiritual level the individual becomes aware of the substance of spirit, not as an object of intellectual cognition but as an awareness in which the subject becomes its own object, in which the timeless and spaceless is aware of itself as the basis and reality of all experience.

When a person attains super consciousness, the soul of the person is unified with the super and becomes one with the eternal spirit. S. Radhakarishnan says such men discovering their "self" attain the super-conscious and become eternal. In his famous book *An Idealist View of Life*, he writes, "The awakened man draws back from his mind, life and body and all else that is not his true being and know himself to be one with the eternal spirit which is the soul of all phenomena" (302).

Spiritual enlightenment or awakening is the primary goal of almost all spiritual practices, traditions and religions and for any spiritual seeker. It is truth seekers' goal in life. When the goal is achieved or when the person realizes his "self," the enlightenment life of the person begins. When one can live in the state of pure bliss and carry on in the

midst of his daily round activities he has become a *jivan –mukta* (a liberated person). This state is the “eternal present,” in which personal consciousness is transcended permanently. For such a person there is neither ego nor world nor other person. In this book *Spiritual Discipline in Hinduism Buddhism and the West*, Harry M. Buck opines, such man is free from the present, past and future. He writes:

A liberated person is devoid of ideas of “I” or “mine”; he looks on the body as a mere shadow, an outer sheath encasing the soul. He does not dwell on the past, takes no thought for the future and looks with indifference on the present. He has the power to know present, past, and future at the same time. He is the super human attaining super- conscious in his life (18).

Such a person surveys everything in the world with eye of equality. He is no longer touched by the infinite variety of phenomenon; he no longer reacts to pleasure and pain. When the wall between his little ego and the infinite being collapses, he is said by some Orientals to have entered Nirvana, the void, and by other to have joined his soul to God.

This is the spiritual climax of one's life, the dramatic moment, when consciousness comes to recognize and understand itself. He will know that this is the day of his spiritual rebirth that struggle is to be replaced henceforth by serenity, that self-reproach is to yield to self-assurance, and that life in appearance is transformed into life in reality. At last he has emerged from confusion and floundering and bewilderment. He is able to experience the blessed satisfaction, the joyous serenity of an integrated attitude wholly based on the highest truth.

The divine presence has now become to him an immediate and intimate one. Such man can perform some miracles which seem to be uncanny in general life. The person knows present, past, and future at the same time. He is the master of two worlds like Jesus. Paul Brunton in his book *Enlightenment Mind, Divine Mind* opines:

It is natural as well as inevitable that one who has entered into the larger life of the over self should show forth some of highest powers. Such an individual's thoughts are informed by a subtler force, invested with a diviner element, pointed by a sharper concentration, and sustained by a superior will than are those of the average person. He has a better capacity to enjoy life and a true expression of happiness than those who delight only in ephemeral pleasures and sense satisfaction. (73)

This is the condition in which a person becomes one with the ultimate entity and attains super consciousness. Now the person becomes god-like. As God has no desires, the person also has no further desire after fulfilling his quest. It is the state of eternity, the ultimate truth or reality. The Hindu thinkers affirm the reality of life eternal or release from rebirth. S. Radhkrishnan opines this state of awakening as:

It is the supreme status of being in which the individual knows self to be superior of time, to birth and death. It is not life merely future or endless but a new mode of being, a transfigured life, here and now. It transcends individualism to raise superior to the phenomena of time and thus escape from rebirth. Now the person need not face the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. (304)

Thus, Nirvana is considered as the highest form of spiritual practice which leads a person beyond the state of death and rebirth. Therefore it is parallel to immortality. Sir Aurobindo in his famous book *Essays on the Gita* shares the same type of view about the characteristics of liberation and says it is timeless, spaceless and beyond cause and effect. He writes:

Nirvana means the extinction of the ego in the higher spiritual inner self, that which is forever timeless, spaceless, not bound by the chain of cause and effect and that change of the world mutation, self-blissful, self-illuminated and forever at peace. He becomes the Brahman: he is unified

in consciousness with the immutable divinity of the eternal self which is immanent in his natural being. (225)

So, Nirvana, the spiritual consciousness, is the condition of the soul and the super soul merged into one, the state of attaining super consciousness, the destruction or extinction of limited separate consciousness and it is the whole, original and eternal and final truth.

Spiritual enlightenment is a new dimension altogether, dealing with things eternal. Nirvana is reached when the mental consciousness is perfectly controlled and liberated from desire and remains still in the self. It ceases from its restless action, shut in from its outward motion, and by the silence and stillness of the mind. The self is seen within, not disfigured as in the mind, but self seen as it is. It is the putting away of the contact with pain or grief. It is the greatest of all the treasure beside which all other lose their value.

CHAPTER THREE

Santiago, a Spiritual Hero

The Alchemist is the story of Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy, who dreams of traveling the world in search of a treasure as extravagant as any ever found. From his home in Spain he journeys to the exotic markets of Tangiers and then into the Egyptian desert, where he has a fateful encounter with an alchemist. With the help of the alchemist he travels to the pyramids and knows the exact location of the treasure. The treasure is found under the sycamore tree where he used to spend days looking after his sheep.

Paulo Coelho's novel *The Alchemist* deals with the hero's spiritual journey and his faith in a recurrent dream to fulfill it. Santiago, the main character of the novel, leads his life towards spiritual perfection denouncing his family's imposition. Finally, the protagonist becomes one with the ultimate entity and attains super consciousness.

Santiago is born into a lower middle class family. He gets priestly education because his family thinks to be a priest is a prestigious profession. But he is not happy with his father's decision to make him a priest, rather he has passion for traveling through the world and know it better. His father tries to convince him that travelling is meaningless. He gives example of people who visit many lands and return getting nothing. Coelho writes, "They come in search of new things, but when they leave they are basically the same people when they arrived" (8). There is a spiritual meaning hidden in this saying. Santiago's father says that many people come to this earth empty handed and when they die they go empty handed. However Santiago is persistent in his passion and opposes his father's logic about traveling. He argues, "I want to know the world, and this is much more important to me than knowing god and learning about man's sins" (8).

These two thoughts, the passion for knowledge about the world and the revolt against the imposed life, are significantly noticed in the oriental concept of spiritualism.

We find such senses in the texts related to Buddhism. The Buddha also revolted against his father. He was a prince and enjoyed a luxurious life. But the Buddha ignores all worldly pleasures and he leaves home to find out the causes of unhappiness of human beings in this transitory world.

The Buddha sacrifices everything, leaves the royal palace, his would be throne, his beautiful wife, lovely son and all comforts that he can enjoy as a prince for knowledge. Santiago also leaves his home, family and opts for the life of a shepherd in order to travel. All these things happen because of the passion for knowledge about the reality of the world. And there is a reciprocal relationship between the quest for knowledge about the ultimate reality of the world and spiritualism. Denouncing his father's will Santiago, too, becomes a shepherd, which is a mean profession for his family, to know the world. He is happier to be a shepherd than to be a priest.

Traveling through Andalusia as a shepherd Santiago happens to face the same dream once again; a dream, in which a child comes, plays with his sheep and leads him towards Egyptian pyramid where he is assured to get the treasure of life. Treasure is a man's reason to live. Santiago's dream can be taken as an inspiration to find his destiny in his life. And very few people have the chance to know about such density of life which is taken as the legend of their life. This density of life is known to them as in the forms of dream or symbol or instinct or things like that. Santiago is one of such few who becomes successful in understanding his heart's murmur which makes him a spiritual hero. The dream Santiago sees leads him to a path of spiritual enlightenment.

Dream becomes a simple guide to people to live their life beyond cause and effect. We know dream is the sacred language of god to people. Santiago takes it seriously. He does not give much interest to his dream on its first occurrence. But he decides to get his dream interpreted when it occurs twice. Pyramids are the places where ancient Egyptians were buried. It is also believed that souls roam near the buried bodies. Santiago's dream about the pyramids is a symbol for him to start a spiritual journey. He

goes to Tarifa for the interpretation of the dream. There he meets a gypsy woman. The lady demands one tenth of his treasure when he gets it. She says “I am not going to charge you anything now, but I want one tenth of the treasure if you find it” (13). This makes Santiago laugh out of happiness and asks him to interpret the dream. But he gets disappointed when the woman suggests simply asking him to go to the pyramid and find it. She says, “And this is my interpretation: you must go to the Pyramids in Egypt. I have never heard of them, but if it was a child who showed them to you they exist; there you will find a treasure that will make you a rich man” (14).

Hearing this, Santiago is surprised and irritated. The gypsy woman makes him promise twice looking at the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He is not seeking out the old woman just for this. He thinks he does not need to waste his time just for this. Santiago is not the type of a person who wants to become a rich man in his life. After the twice occurrence of the same dream he is inspired to find out the treasure of his life that is the ultimate reality, a being’s reason to live. And to know all about this one should live the life of spiritual perfection which is possible only after attaining the super conscious. So, he is determined to follow his dream and get the treasure of life. If he wanted to be a rich person he would not disagree with his father and would be a priest which was a prestigious occupation in his society.

The behavior of the gypsy woman makes Santiago almost leave his dream unnoticed. He even decides that he will never again believe in dreams. He becomes confused. He thinks of quitting the thought of dreams and continuing his duty as a shepherd. *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is* says, “You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty” (121).

We have many duties to perform in our life. We should do them without thinking about their result. We have to do our duties but the result is not in our grip. So we have

to work faithfully as we are moved and directed by some unseen power. Santiago also moves ahead being hopeful about the treasure, though he is not sure about it.

Santiago's thirst to find out the treasure is further motivated when he meets an old man, Melchizedek, the king of Salem. Santiago is confused with the man first. The man appears as a grace of god. He knows everything about Santiago. Pointing out the book which Santiago is reading, the king says, "It describes people's inability to choose their own destinies and it ends up saying that everyone believes the world's greatest lie; that at a certain point in our lives we lose control of what's happening to us and our lives become controlled by fate" (17). Santiago gets startled thinking whether the old man is pointing him by saying so. He reveals to the man that he has refused to live the life of a priest which his father imposed on him. Santiago's confusion about that man increases when he finally asks him to give one tenth of his sheep so that he could reveal the way to find out his hidden treasure.

Sometimes in life, when a person wants something with enough passion, everything seems to go perfectly accordingly to how it was planned. Paulo Coelho, the author of *The Alchemist*, calls this desire a personal legend. Everyone, when they are young, knows what their personal legend is, and at that point in their lives everything is clear and possible. However, as time goes on, a mysterious force seems to blind us toward achieving that goal. Through Santiago, the main character, and his attempts at reaching his personal legend, we are reminded of our own personal legends and become more aware of everything around us.

In the journey of purifying the "self" we may find teachers on the way. These teachers help make our journey easy and comfortable. Paul Brunton says, "The spiritual journey must proceed by the guidance of his own intuitive feeling together with the pointers given by outer circumstances as they appear in any form" (136). Brunton further says that these teachers are thought to be a divine guidance. They lead the person's life towards achieving the ultimate goal of life. The goal is the fulfillment of

the real purpose of life as apart from the lower purposes of earning a livelihood rearing a family or so forth. Brunton further clarifies that the goal is for us to live from the over self not from the ego. And here too the king appears as the teacher of Santiago in the form of divine grace. Clarifying his existence in the form of teacher, Melchizedek says:

Not always in this, but I always appear in one form or another.

Sometimes I appear in the form of a solution, or a good idea. At other times at a crucial moment, I make it easier for things to happen. There are other things I do, too, but most of the time people don't realize I have done them. (22)

In this way, the king tries to persuade Santiago to complete his journey thereby discovering his "self." He also laments that most of the time people ignore his advice in such crucial moment of life.

As in the form of grace of god, before Santiago could say anything, the old man leans over, picks up a stick and begins to write in the sand of plaza. There in the sand of plaza Santiago reads the names of his father and his mother and the name of seminary he attended. This man guides Santiago as if he has known everything that he wished and says, "The Soul of the World is nourished by people's happiness. And when you want something the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it" (21). Here, Melchizedek as a guide motivates Santiago to find out the treasure of life consequently becoming the enlightened one. He strengthens his point saying that the universe also helps in this process. Melchizedek clarifies about destiny to Santiago by saying:

At that point in their lives, everything is clear and everything is possible.

They are not afraid to dream, and to yearn for everything they would like to see happen to them in their lives. But, as time passes, a mysterious force begins to convince them that it will be impossible for them to realize their destiny. (20)

Melchizedek is sent by God to guide Santiago properly to make him realize his dream. Being a teacher, Melchizedek further supports him in continuing his journey to find the treasure he dreams. He suggests that Santiago should follow the omens. God prepares a path for everyone to follow. Santiago also has to read the omens that God left for him. By saying so he provided him two stones, black and white, to read the omens if any difficulty appears in his way. These stones are the guidance for the boy to follow his dream properly. Directing the way for discovering the truth, Melchizedek finally instructs the boy, “Don’t forget that everything you deal with is only one thing and nothing else. Don’t forget the language of omens. And above all don’t forget to follow your destiny through to its conclusion” (29).

Santiago’s meeting with Melchizedek, who teaches him about Personal Legends and their importance to anyone who wants to live a fulfilling life, essentially marks the point when Santiago decides to embark on his journey to Egypt. Subsequently, the book’s plot largely focuses on Santiago following his dream and trying to live out his Personal Legend. *The Alchemist* subsequently resembles other “follow your dream narratives,” though Melchizedek’s lesson differs from the lessons in those narratives in a few important ways. For one, Melchizedek insists that everyone knows their Personal Legend when they are young. Personal Legends do not become clear to people only in later in life. In addition, the baker’s story illustrates that society works as an enemy of Personal Legends. When the baker adopts society’s traditional expectation of success, he forgets his true Personal Legend. But as Melchizedek explains, the force that age and society exert against anyone pursuing their Personal Legend plays a vital role in preparing a person to achieve her or his goal.

In this way Melchizedek as the teacher sent by God guides Santiago towards achieving the enlightened life. Getting the treasure of life is discovering the ‘self’ or finding the ultimate truth. Such people’s life is filled with spiritual perfection. And to attain spiritual enlightenment if they feel the need of teacher in difficult situation there

exists a teacher by the grace of god. Santiago is also directed towards fulfilling his dream by the king of Salem who, after giving suggestions provides him two miraculous stones, Urim (black) meaning yes and, Thummim (white) meaning no, to read the omens if he is confused to take any decision. The king also suggests Santiago to ask an objective question in a difficult situation and take out one stone. However, Santiago uses those stones only once throughout his journey.

After getting directions from Melchizedek, Santiago decides to go to the Egyptian pyramids. At that time he does not know that after reaching there he will be enlightened. He is ready to sell his sheep too. He sacrifices his love to his sheep as he has done to his family. He gathers courage and self confidence. He thinks that he has left his father, mother, and his home town just for the passion to know the world and he is confident that things will go in the similar way if he leaves his sheep as well. He says, “I left my father, my mother and the town castle behind. They have gotten used to my being away, and so have I. The sheep will get used to my not being there, too” (26). Here, he assures himself that the sheep will be able to live in his absence as well. Now the thing is clear that Santiago is not only passionate for traveling but also impatient to get his dream come true. And we know that getting the treasure of life is not only earning a simple livelihood, rather it is the awakening of the “self” as well. So he has the desire for spiritual enlightenment.

Santiago’s spirituality is intensified when he meets Melchizedek next day and gives him six sheep as payment for his guidance. Santiago is surprised when all the other sheep are immediately purchased by his friend. Melchizedek interprets it as the principle of favorability or the beginner’s luck. It is because he says, “There is a force that wants you to realize your destiny; it whets your appetite with a taste of success” (27). These surprising incidents taking place one after another further and motivate Santiago to believe in his dream. Now sacrificing his love for the family and the sheep, he becomes determined to go towards Egyptian pyramids to find out the ultimate reality of life. In

Buddhism sacrificing love is one of the steps considered crucial in finding out the treasure of life. In this way after giving instructions and taking six sheep Melchizedek disappears. Coelho writes, “He would never see the boy, just as he had never seen Abraham again after having charged him his one-tenth fee” (31).

The journey of Santiago towards Egyptian pyramids is not only the journey happening in the outside world but it is a journey within his mind as well. Spiritualism says the journeys are interrupted within the pilgrimage when he is too doubtful about accomplishing his task, that is, achieving the real purpose of life. Paul Brunton opines, “The person may face dangers and pitfalls here which can deviate the purpose of the pilgrims” (5). In this parable too the hero faces such dangers while on the way towards discovering his “self.” When Santiago moves towards Egyptian pyramids he reaches a place in Africa called Tangiers which is two hours away from Andalusia, Spain. In this new place, he faces difficulty because of the lack of common language. Neither the African people nor Santiago can understand the language of each other consequently he is cheated by a person.

While Santiago is on the way, at a teashop in Tangiers he thinks about the way to find his treasure. He has enough money in his pouch left by the selling of sheep. When Santiago is drinking bitter tea in a hotel he hears a voice in Spanish language asking about his identity. He gets surprised by the person and looks at the new comer’s face. He is from this city and is of his age. Santiago talks to the young man about the way to reach the Egyptian pyramids sharing his secret to the new man ignorantly. The owner of the tea shop, though he wants to help Santiago, is unable because of the lack of common language. At the time of paying bill the shopkeeper tries to separate Santiago from the newcomer grabbing and talking to him in an angry stream of words. But he fails to save Santiago from being cheated when the newcomer who really is a thief tells Santiago that the shopkeeper wants to steal his money. He makes the things clear by saying, “Tangier is not like the rest of Africa. This is a port, and every port has its thieves” (35). Trusting

the newcomer he gives him the pouch of money. Unfortunately, the man runs away with the money when Santiago is looking at an attractive sword in the market. Nothing is left except his dream, two stones, and a jacket. Santiago falls in difficulty. This is an obstacle in his journey which makes Santiago frustrated. He laments that he was happier with his sheep than meeting such fate. "He wept as he thought God was unfair, and because this was the way God repaid those who believed in dreams" (37). Coelho further writes:

When I had my sheep, I was happy, and I made those around me happy. People saw me coming and welcomed me. But now I am sad and alone. I am going to become bitter and distrustful of people because one person betrayed me. I am going to hate those who have found their treasure because I never found mine. And I am going to hold on to what little I have, because I am too insignificant to conquer the world. (37)

Now, he has the feeling of humiliation. He thinks himself as not being enough to know the world in detail. He regrets for believing in dream as a common man.

Such obstacles were previously seen in the form of doubt in Santiago. He doubted that he was sure to acquire his dream in reality. Doubt can hamper the journey of a pilgrim when he is searching for spiritual perfection in his life. It may cause deviation in the purpose of pilgrims. Santiago also doubts whether his dream will change into reality.

Now, he decides to return to his friend's stable by the longest route. He seems to be deviated from his purpose for some moment. As he walks past the city's castle he interrupts his return, and climbs the stone ramp that leads to the top of the wall from where he can see Africa at distance. Someone had once told him that it was from there that the moors had come to occupy all of Spain.

Here, sitting at the top of the wall and looking around Africa, he thinks that neither the woman nor the old man understood his reality. He wishes the old man and

the woman to be impressed by the fact that he was a shepherd. But they were solitary individuals for him and who no longer believed in things, and did not understand the shepherds become attached to their sheep.

Santiago's confusion about making the right decision reaches its climax at the moment when the wind begins to pick up at the place where he sits. He knows it as a levanter because the moors had come from the Levant at the eastern end of Mediterranean.

The levanter increased in intensity. Here, I am between my flock and my treasure, the boy thought. He had to choose between something he had become accustomed to and something he wants to have. There was also the merchant's daughter, but she was not as important as his flock, because she did not depend on him. (26)

However, he is not deviated even at the moment of severe confusion about choosing his true vocation. His decision to venture towards getting treasure overshadows his thought about going back to his sheep. He is persistent in his quest because he thinks that he left home, his father, his mother, the town castle behind and he is confident that he can leave his sheep as well. "The sheep will get used to my not being there, too, the boy thought" (26).

Santiago's quest for freedom thereby getting the ultimate goal of life increases as the levanter further becomes strong. He thinks that the wind has brought the moors; it has also brought the smell of the desert and of veiled women. It has brought with it the sweat and the dreams of men who had once left to search for the unknown and adventure for the pyramid. The boy wishes to get freedom in life, "The boy felt jealous of the freedom of the wind, and saw that he could have the same freedom. There was nothing to hold him back except himself. The sheep, the merchant's daughter, and the fields of Andalusia were only steps along the way to his destiny" (27).

Santiago has strong desire to get enlightenment despite some doubts in achieving it. After being robbed by his so called friend in Tangiers he almost deviated from his purpose. He could go back to Andalusian fields. But he does not get back. Though he does not have a cent in his pocket, he has faith and seems to be confident to follow his dream thereby fetching it into reality. He has decided, the night before, that he will be as much an adventurer as the ones he had admired in books. He realizes that he has to choose between thinking of himself as the poor victim of a thief and as an adventurer in his quest of his treasure. Santiago is persistent in his quest. He has to get it anyway. He is not the type of person who leaves his quest unnoticed. "I am an adventurer looking for treasure" (40).

Now, Santiago has to go through much of struggle to get the treasure. Being bankrupt he goes to a crystal merchant's shop to work so as to earn money for his remaining journey. He starts the job of cleaning glasses. The merchant also becomes happy with the boy as his business increases after he started to work there. Santiago is devoted to his work of cleaning glasses. "I will clean every piece of crystal in your shop. In return I need money to get to Egypt tomorrow" (44). He needs money to go to Egypt. He works there only to use it as a ladder in fulfilling his quest to achieve the treasure. "It was not exactly the kind of job that would make him happy" (49).

While working in the crystal merchant's shop, Santiago earns some money. However, he seems to be happy with working and earning money. Santiago, once again is affected by his desire to purchase sheep and to pass the life of a shepherd. He calculates the money that he has earned and seems to be money minded for some moment. He thinks of Egypt as a distant dream. "Because Egypt was now just as distant dream for him as was Mecca for the merchant" (53). He almost deviated from his purpose here. The boy desires to go back to his sheep. Brunton says that such deviations in the mind of a person are removed by the proper guidance of the grace of god. Here, after Melchizedek, the crystal merchant appears as the teacher of Santiago. He declares

Santiago's inner quest as if he knows everything about his desire. He says, "You know that I am not going to go to Mecca. Just as you know that you are not going to buy your sheep" (58). The boy takes the crystal merchant seriously. He thinks that the crystal merchant is not an ordinary man. This makes him rethink about his purpose of life. He also remembers the old man and his behavior towards him. It brings him much enthusiasm to venture towards the Egyptian pyramids. He does not miss the chance to get the treasure of life. He holds Urim and Thummim in his hand which also inspire him to move forward.

After working eleven months and nine days in the crystal merchant's shop Santiago moves towards the Egyptian pyramids with a new sense of hope. With new courage, new wisdom and a better purified mind he is ready to face any obstacle that confronts him in the journey of discovering the "self." He gathers self confidence to get his dream come true.

The news that a caravan is moving toward the oasis makes Santiago very happy. He joins the caravan and moves forward in his quest. He is hopeful that after crossing the dessert he will get the treasure. While joining the caravan, he also meets an Englishman who is searching an alchemist who lives in the oasis of Al-Faiyum. He is going to meet him so as to know the universal language which everybody used to understand but now it is forgotten. At that time the caravan leader too appears and instructs the people in the caravan that desert is not easy to pass and that disobedience to the leader's command can lead to death. Santiago thinks that since he has learnt something from his sheep, from the gypsy woman, from the king, from the crystal merchant, he can also learn something from the desert. He becomes friendly with the camel driver as well. The camel driver in one conversation teaches the lesson of life to the boy. He says, "We are afraid of losing what we have, whether it is our own life or our possessions and property. But this fear evaporates when we understand that our life

stories and the history of the world were written by the same hand. There are rumors of tribal wars” (80).

The tribal war is a major obstacle for the caravan to cross the desert; sometime resulting in the death of many people. The camel driver informs Santiago about the tribal wars which he said had already started. The threat of death and the tribal wars become major obstacles in the journey of Santiago. Such obstacles are common in such journeys. As the person needs proper guidance in such a situation, the camel driver helps in holding patience. Santiago’s inner journey within his mind becomes much stronger when the camel driver suggests him to live in the present. He further says, “To die tomorrow is no worse than dying on any other day” (103). So, the camel driver also becomes a teacher in Santiago’s journey of discovering the “self.”

The caravan is welcomed by the chieftain when it reaches an oasis named Al-Fayoum. There is a tribal war just outside the oasis and this war interrupts Santiago’s physical journey towards the Pyramids as well as his internal journey towards enlightenment. As the caravan stops at the oasis Santiago and the Englishman both start searching the Alchemist. Santiago approaches a woman who comes to the well to fill a goatskin with water. He asks her where the Alchemist lives but she does not know the man. She also suggests that it would be better not to converse with women who are dressed in black because it is restricted there to speak with a married woman by a stranger in their culture.

Santiago and the Englishman feel that the people in the oasis do not know the term Alchemist. They start asking the people there about the man who cures people from illness. As they are instructed not to speak with married women, Santiago respects the tradition despite the English man’s insistence to speak with them too. At this time there appears a lady who is not in black dress. Santiago approaches her to ask about the Alchemist. When he reaches near her he knows that he is standing in front of her twin soul. Though the outer journey of Santiago is interrupted here he is getting improved in

his inner journey. After the appearance of his twin soul Fatima, he knows that the only language which the whole world can understand is the language of love. Love is the sacred language of the world. He becomes dumbfounded and motionless. Despite that, they develop intimacy. The girl not only reveals her name as Fatima but also tells its meaning. The boy asks her about the particular man they are looking for. Fatima informs, "That's the man who knows all the secrets of the world," (90) and further clarifies that he lives in the south. Then the Englishman leaves for south to search the Alchemist. Next day at a well Santiago meets the Englishman who reveals his meeting with the Alchemist; a man who had instructed him to practice alchemy by himself by converting lead into gold. The Alchemist had told the Englishman to follow his destiny alone and by himself.

After the Englishman leaves the place, Fatima comes there whom Santiago tells the entire story of his life and also about his interest to marry her. He reveals that the war was a curse for him in his purpose. But at this point Santiago thinks that Fatima is more important to him than the treasure. He nearly gives up his journey when the caravan leader says, "We don't know when the war ends. So, we can't continue our journey" (92).

Santiago beforehand thinks the war as a curse in his journey but after meeting Fatima he thinks the war as a blessing. Coelho writes, "I have crossed the desert in search of a treasure that is somewhere near the Pyramids, and the war seemed a curse. But now it's a blessing, because it brought me to you" (91). So, here too, god sends Fatima as a guide in Santiago's journey of spiritualism. She pleads him to complete his journey. He should not stop at the middle part of his journey. Fatima further convinces him saying that it is those omens that brought him to her. Fatima says:

So now, I fear nothing, because it was those omens that brought you to me. And I am a part of your dream, a part of your destiny, as you call it. That's why I want you to continue toward your goal. If you have to wait

until the war is over, then wait. But if you have to go before then, go on in pursuit of your dream. (93)

Santiago thinks seriously. He also remembers the Englishman who had said fear of failure keeps man away from their destiny. He gathers courage along with their inspiration.

Though the journey across the desert seems an external journey of Santiago, he is equally undertaking the journey inside his mind towards attaining the super conscious. Now he is in the situation where he can understand the language of the world. When Santiago is wondering about the meeting with Fatima, he sees two hawks flying in the sky. He sees one hawk attacking the other. At that time he gets the image of armed people in his mind. Understanding the meaning of that omen he suddenly interprets it as an attack on the oasis soon. He can interpret it because he understands the language of the world. "I am learning the Language of the World, and everything in the world is beginning to make sense to me even the flight of the hawks" (95). Then he moves to the chieftain of the oasis to talk about his understanding of the language of the world. The chieftain tells him if the forecast changes into reality he will provide a gold coin to Santiago for every ten killed person, if not he will be killed. Santiago accepts the challenge because accepting challenge is common to him. He is alarmed by what has happened. He has succeeded in reaching through to the soul of the world, and now the price for having done so might be his life. It is a frightening bet. At the same time the Alchemist as a stranger comes to meet the boy because he knows that there is a person who can understand the language of the world. He checks the boy's ability, and after being convinced he calls the boy to meet him the next day. The prophecy turns true. The boy gets fifty gold coins. Then he moves towards the south where the Alchemist had called him.

The next day Santiago goes to the south to meet the Alchemist. The Alchemist asks the boy whether his destiny is to meet him. He says no. He also says because of the

war between tribes, which is taken as a hurdle in Santiago's inner journey, he is unable to cross the desert. But the Alchemist appears as a teacher and says, "When a person really desires something, all the universe conspires to help that person to realize his destiny" (109). The boy remembers that these words were also told by the old king. Santiago shows his reluctance to go to the pyramid because he had everything he wanted in the oasis. But the Alchemist replies that he has to get his dream into reality. Finally, convinced by the Alchemist the boy leaves the oasis and heads towards his final destination. The Alchemist himself leads Santiago towards the Pyramids. This is the last guidance by the Alchemist in Santiago's journey of enlightenment.

When the Alchemist desires to meet Santiago for the first time he appears as an enemy. He tests the Santiago's courage. He wants to find out whether he is capable of achieving his treasure or not. But Santiago is always ready for death for the betterment of the people in the oasis. This makes us clear that Santiago does not love his body or his life. He can sacrifice his life for the welfare of other people. After meeting his twin soul Fatima he knows the immortality of soul and he has no value for the fragile body. He also knows the language of the world which is wordless. These evidences prove that Santiago is developing his spiritual journey. He undergoes many changes. He discards the love of his body which can be taken as a remarkable instance that he is heading towards getting super conscious. All these things make the Alchemist realize Santiago as the true seeker of spirituality. The alchemist is further convinced when Santiago becomes able to find life in the desert when he is asked. Now the Alchemist decides to help Santiago in his remaining journey.

The Alchemist and Santiago start their journey. The journey is very long and they come across many tribal men and see many of them in the horizon. The Alchemist teaches the boy that one needs to listen to his heart. But the boy says that his heart is a traitor. The Alchemist believes that the heart is "as the sign of life." Then Santiago requests his heart not to stop speaking. The heart follows his request and every time

Santiago wanders away from his dream his heart warns him. Here, we must know the fact that Santiago's heart is united with the soul of the world. While on the way Santiago is instructed once again by the Alchemist.

Before a dream is realized, the Soul of the World tests everything that was learned along the way. It does this not because it is evil, but so that we can, in addition to realizing our dreams, master the lessons we have learned as we have moved toward that dream. That's the point at which most people give up. It's the point at which as we say in the language of the desert one dies of thirst just when the palm trees have appeared in the horizon. (126)

Santiago is now on the verge of attaining the super conscious. Along with their journey they meet a lot of tribal warriors who blame them as spies and take them to the tribal chieftain. The chieftain interrogates them. The Alchemist answers all the questions and further claims that the boy is an Alchemist and he can convert himself into wind if he likes. They want to see a man being transformed into wind. But the Alchemist says he needs three days. Though Santiago is afraid, the Alchemist leaves him helpless thinking that he has learned the language of the world and he is sure that Santiago can do so. After three days the time comes and Santiago talks to the desert wind, sun in heaven, and "the hand who wrote all" and reaches the soul of the world. He now becomes one with the ultimate entity. After this, Santiago turns himself into the wind. "The boy reached through to the soul of the world and saw that it was a part of the soul of the God. And he saw that the soul of God was his own soul. And that he, a boy, could perform miracles" (145).

As the story progresses and Santiago comes closer to the treasure, he becomes more focused on his growing understanding of the mystical force that imbues everything, called the Soul of the World. The time he spends crossing the desert on his way to the pyramids teaches him to pay attention to the world around him and to see all

of creation in his surroundings, even in a single grain of sand. The knowledge he gains from the desert allows him to recognize nature as a single, unified whole. His greatest spiritual advancement, however, comes after he meets the alchemist, who helps him to understand himself and to read the omens in his environment. Santiago ultimately learns to communicate with the wind and the sun and the Hand That Wrote All, a force evidently synonymous with God or Allah.

The lesson is pointed and obvious that when we understand our heart we are sure to accomplish our purpose. So, heart is the place where the treasure of life lies. We should learn to respect our heart. The treasure of life lies in spiritual awakening. In the case of Santiago too, his heart tells him what his strongest qualities are. The qualities, as his heart tells him, are, “His courage in having given up his sheep and in trying to live out his destiny and his enthusiasm during the time he had worked at the crystal shop” (128). So we need to learn that the fear of failure keeps us away from realizing our destiny.

Now the Alchemist leaves Santiago alone to find out his treasure. He simply needs to hear his heart which tells him where the treasure lies. When he reaches near the pyramid he weeps thanking god for making him realize his destiny. As Santiago weeps, a drop of tear falls. He starts digging there thinking it as the symbol of god. Suddenly three people appear in front of him and ask the reason for digging. But Santiago does not tell anything. When they start beating him severely, he tells his dream to the people. Then the leader of the people says, discouraging Santiago to dig:

Two years ago, right here in this spot, I had a recurrent dream, too. I dreamed that I should travel to the fields of Spain and look for a ruined church where shepherds and their sheep slept. In my dreams there was a sycamore growing out of the ruins of the sacristy, and I was told that, if I dug at the roots of the sycamore, I would find a hidden treasure. But I am

not so stupid to cross an entire desert just because of a recurrent dream.

(155)

But as Santiago is persistent in his dream he does not leave his task unnoticed. He gets nothing there. Through the difficulties he faces, Santiago, ultimately reaching Egyptian pyramids, discovers that the treasure of life lies in spiritual awakening. He is cheated by a stranger at Tangier, he is again looted by the Arab militants, and he is finally looted at the pyramids by the three men. He has to lose whatever he has earned in his life. Finally he comes back to the abandoned church in Spain and finds a chest full of Spanish gold coins. Santiago keeps his promise as he remembers that he has to go to Tarifa so he can give one-tenth of his treasure to the Gypsy woman. At last wind reminds him of Fatima and he says, "I'm coming, Fatima" (161). His treasure of life turns out to be his discovery of the "self" and this is the perfect form of spiritualism. The discoveries he makes and the wisdom he acquires are the real treasures. Now he has acquired the capacity to live the life of comfort and the life of knowledge at the same time. A soul which is one with the universal soul will not be suffering the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. The novel appeals to every person because everyone is identical to Santiago and like him we all dream and want to hear someone tell us that our dream will come true.

In *The Alchemist*, the spiritual unity represented by the Soul of the World binds together all of nature, from human beings to desert sand. This idea underlies the parallel we see in the novel between the alchemist purifying metal into gold and Santiago purifying himself into someone capable of achieving his Personal Legend. According to the novel, the Soul of the World has created an ultimate desire, or Personal Legend, for everything, whether Santiago or a piece of iron. To accomplish Personal Legend, each thing must learn to tap into the Soul of the World, which purifies it. That continual purification ultimately leads to perfection. This notion of humans, metals, and all other

things sharing the same goal demonstrates that all elements in nature are essentially different forms of a single spirit.

Furthermore, over and over again we see that Santiago must communicate with nature in what the novel calls the common language of the world. Santiago's horse, for instance, communicates with him by showing him evidence of life in an apparently barren expanse of desert, and Santiago must employ the help of the desert, the wind, and the sun in order to turn into the wind. As the alchemist says when he leaves Santiago, everything from a grain of sand to God himself shares the same spiritual essence. This pantheistic view dominates *The Alchemist*, and along with the individual, it forms the book's core spiritual message. By the end of the novel Santiago becomes able to understand exactly what his heart says to him. Spirits talk to the heart and any person able to understand this becomes a spiritual hero. So I conclude that Santiago becomes a spiritual hero as the novel ends.

CHAPTER FOUR

Santiago's Enlightenment

The Alchemist is an enlightening story about a shepherd's spiritual journey to find his treasure. Along the way, he encounters helpful guides as well as insurmountable obstacles. As he nears the end of his journey, in an ironic twist he finds that it isn't what or where he thought it is. At last he finds out that the treasure is the journey itself and the journey within.

I found *The Alchemist* to be a wonderful tale on pursuing one's dream. Santiago pursues his dream of finding his treasure and, at times, we see and feel his fear, but during journey, he learns to listen to his heart and trust what his heart says. Santiago is constantly tested along the way, yet he continues to listen to the voice of his heart, which is never wrong. Santiago learns about love along the way and helps others to face their fears as well. Because when we love, we always strive to become better than we are. We simply let life proceed, in its own direction, toward its own fate. But, unfortunately, very few follow the path laid out for them - the path to their destinies, and to happiness.

Santiago grows throughout the story and in the end, even though he is tested severely, he obtains his treasure by following his dream and becomes a spiritual hero. Santiago travels from a comfortable lifestyle as a carer of sheep to the Arabian Desert where he faces several hardships to meet the great Alchemist. The Alchemist is the only man who is said to be able to turn lead into gold and turn fair weather into storms. Along the journey to meet the living legend, the protagonist stumbles upon many self-realizations and gains the wisdom that will make him able to be the next Alchemist.

Santiago's life of spiritual sense starts from the very beginning of the novel when he desires to know the world in depth. He has a passion for the knowledge of the world. So, he starts his life as a shepherd discarding his father's will to make him a priest, which is considered a prestigious profession in his family. Santiago is haunted by a recurring dream in which he is assured to get his treasure. He wanders to interpret what

the recurrent dream meant for him. He meets a gypsy woman in Tarifa who discourages him by asking one tenth of his treasure. Then he meets an old man who inspires him to go to the Egyptian pyramid giving two stones Urim and Thummim to read the omens. After this, Santiago decides to go to get the treasure. The treasure is the ultimate goal of life that is higher than simply earning a livelihood. The person who gets the treasure of life can live beyond cause and effect. So, to complete his journey he sacrifices his father, mother, home town, and profession.

Santiago's journey is not only the outer journey but also directed towards discovering his "self." During the journey difficulties, fatigues and obstacles appear one after another. These obstacles are physical as well as psychic. In Tangiers he is cheated by his so called friend. He loses everything there except his dream. This makes him frustrated from his dream. Nevertheless, he works in crystal merchant's shop to collect money for completing the remaining journey. But he doubts in achieving the treasure. He thinks of going back to Andalusia where he could be a shepherd again. However, the crystal merchant guides him. Santiago remembers the old man once again and collects zeal to continue his journey. He joins a caravan in desert and heads towards achieving his goal. But the tribal war in the desert stops the caravan. The war becomes curse for Santiago. There he meets his twin soul Fatima who also inspires him to complete his journey. Though Santiago's journey seems to end here, yet he undergoes an inner journey. He learns many things from the old king, the crystal merchant, the camel driver and Fatima too. Now he can understand the wordless language. When he wanders to meet Fatima he sees two hawks flying in the sky attacking one another. He gets the image of armed people there attacking one another. But Santiago prevents the possible war in oasis by reading the omens.

The Alchemist appears as the last teacher of Santiago in the desert. As from the king, crystal merchant, and Fatima he learns many things from the Alchemist. Now he can convert himself into wind. He reaches apotheosis because he is not afraid of the

threat of death given by the tribal people. He learns the language of the world, which is basically the language of the soul of the world. As the soul of the world is related to the soul of God, Santiago is able to perform miracles after he reaches into the soul of the world. Upon reaching Egyptian pyramid he starts to dig in one place. But he is severely beaten by three people there. He continues to dig but gets nothing. However he realizes that the real treasure of life lies in the spiritual awakening. He becomes one with the ultimate entity. He can now live in any form. The message is obvious that we should respect our heart.

The protagonist of Coelho's *The Alchemist* faces much difficulties and adversities in finding the treasure of his life. Then also he is confident in his journey that he will achieve the ultimate goal. The trials on the journey make him almost deviate from his purpose but he considers them trivial later. The teachers who appear in different phases of his journey, too, make it easier to find out the real treasure of his life by attaining the super-conscious. The message of the novel appeals to every person as he/she identifies himself/herself with Santiago. Because like Santiago, we all dream and want to hear someone tell us that our dreams will come true. The novel can be a great inspiration for humans who seek their path in life. It teaches us a moral that when a person is confident to achieve his inner desire he can succeed to achieve it respecting his heart.

Achieving our destiny becomes easy when we listen to our heart and follow our dreams. Buildings of towns as well as the burning sand, the hot wind, the overbearing sun of the Sahara, a beautiful girl, challenging threats, and other dangerous situations try to put a break in Santiago's spiritual journey but he moves forward disregarding them. *The Alchemist* reaches every heart, and even if for a little while, connects us closer to ourselves, to our own memories as the alchemist put it. Coelho shows how even an ordinary wandering shepherd can do probably the impossible, when he realizes what he needs to, and encourages us to find our own dreams, realize our goals in life, and learn.

The Alchemist inspires millions to find their dreams, to follow the omens, and realize their own Personal Legends.

The vision Santiago has while watching the hawks shows his progress in penetrating to the Soul of the World. He deliberately tries to read meaning into the hawks' flight, and he thinks to himself. Santiago's decision to go to the tribal chieftains with his knowledge of the future also shows his growing confidence in his ability to understand the Language of the World. Although Santiago acts on omens regularly, he always hesitates to do so. After he has his vision, he wishes he could forget it and return to thinking about Fatima. Later in the novel, the man who beats Santiago does not believe in his own dream, but when he describes his dream to Santiago, Santiago recognizes it as an omen telling him where to find the treasure.

The alchemist teaches Santiago two lessons during the pair's ensuing encounters with tribesmen. He admits to the first set of tribesman that he carries two legendary treasures, the Philosopher's Stone and the Elixir of Life, in order to show Santiago that most people do not believe someone who possesses great treasures. The third encounter Santiago and the alchemist have with tribesmen does not end as easily as the first two, mainly because the alchemist seems to deliberately cause trouble. He gives away all of Santiago's money then claims that Santiago has the power to destroy their camp and will turn himself into the wind to prove it. Santiago's great test of turning himself into the wind serves as the climactic scene of *The Alchemist*. The final twist, that the treasure lies under the sycamore tree in Spain the whole time, brings Santiago back home, just as his father predicted when Santiago first sets out on his travels as a shepherd.

Melchizedek says that dreams are not silly or selfish desires that should be ignored. Instead, they serve as the primary means by which people can get in touch with the mystical force that connects everything in the universe. He convinces Santiago that his nagging desire to visit the pyramids is actually a calling, and he sets Santiago on his

journey of spiritual discovery. By associating seemingly selfish human desires with the soul of the universe, *The Alchemist* presents a form of spirituality that differs radically from traditional religions that espouse self-denial.

The novel's significance is crystal clear. Treasures are not only those tangible things that give us fortune and fame; there could also be treasures that are invisible to our eyes, but are no less precious. They are not necessarily buried, all we have to do is to open our eyes a little wider.

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