



Entering the silence

by Kim Nataraja

It takes courage to leave our thoughts, our 'ego' behind, to leave the comfort of our conditioning, to let go – however temporarily - of our sense of identity and individuality that we have shaped out of our thoughts. But it is essential “to leave self behind” to follow Jesus into the Silence and discover, who we truly are, a child of God. And yes, when we enter the forest of silence we meet both the beauty and the beast: both forgotten memories of beautiful moments and repressed fears. We are now in the psychological/emotional world, which John Main called: “darker level of consciousness of repressed fears and anxieties” and Laurence Freeman: “psychological distractions”. The silencing of our surface thoughts allows us to become aware of the personal unconscious, where the 'ego' has deposited all that seemed to threaten our adaptation to our environment, which constituted our survival, when we were young.

= Joy bubbles up, peace reigns, tears flow; feelings of anger and irritation come to the fore. Accept all that happens: the tears are the tears you did not shed, when you should have done so; the anger and the irritation were also not expressed at the appropriate time. These emotions are blocking your path to your centre. Let them come up, name them and accept them; be aware of them without acting them out. It is Christ the Healer at work. These suppressed emotions are frozen blocks of ice; hold them up to the Light and Love of Christ and they will melt and a further step on the path can be taken. There is no need to know the causes of these emotions: “just name your demons and your heart will tolerate them better.”

Sometimes hidden traumas surface and, if they are severe, help from a psychotherapist is needed as an accompaniment on the journey. It is insight, awareness of the present situation and ways of dealing with it that is required; searching too much for causes can in turn present us with obstacles – we become too self-conscious, fascinated by our own story and we forget the reason we are on this pilgrimage.

At this point the 'ego' may try to stop us entirely on our journey by encouraging us to “Let the past be! What is the point of reliving these emotions; they are better left alone!” Thoughts of “this is self-indulgent”, that “we should do something useful for others” often appear. The 'ego' resists our delving deeper by making it all seem painful and pointless, dry, and boring. Don't fall for these tricks. You are free to choose to go into the silence of meditation, to be made whole and discover your true self. Trust and persevere. Remember that what happens is at a much deeper level than your rational consciousness. Meditation is beyond thoughts, feelings, and images. Your surface mind may be distracted, but at the same time healing takes place at the level your mind can't reach, at the level of silent communion with your own deep consciousness and the consciousness of Christ. Persevere with the faithful repetition of the mantra, so that the mantra becomes the harmonic that sounds in your being, allowing Christ to do his work, leading us to wholeness.