Returning to My Home

The Pilgrimage Continues in Everyday Life

The Pilgrim stood quietly beneath the tree.

For a while, he had watched James's Flame travelling towards the distant horizon.

James's human journey had ended.

His body would return to Mother Earth, along with everything material he had borrowed throughout his life.

And his Inner Flame?

That remained part of the Great Mystery.

The Pilgrim did not know where the Flame was going.

He did not need to know.

He had accompanied James as far as one human being could accompany another.

Now, their paths had separated.

James's earthly journey had ended.

The Pilgrim's journey was still unfolding.

And so, he picked up his satchel, adjusted his hat and began walking towards his own home.

The Home That Was Waiting

The familiar path stretched before him.

Wildflowers grew along its edges.

Birds moved across the evening sky.

In the distance, the windows of his little house glowed warmly.

Nothing extraordinary was waiting for him.

There would be a kitchen to enter.

A chair in which to rest.

Perhaps a cup of tea.

Perhaps someone with whom to share a conversation.

There would be ordinary tasks, unfinished responsibilities and the familiar movements of everyday life.

Tomorrow might bring laughter.

It might bring disappointment.

Someone might misunderstand him.

He might misunderstand someone else.

There would be moments of ease and moments when his mind became busy, guarded or troubled.

Life would continue to offer experiences, just as it always had.

But something had quietly ripened within him.

He had witnessed the ending of another human life.

And he had recognised that his own life, too, was temporary.

What Mother Earth Had Lent Him

As he walked, the Pilgrim looked at his hands.

They were growing older.

His steps were slower than they had once been.

His body had changed through the years, sometimes so gradually that he had barely noticed.

And yet, it continued to accompany him.

His lungs received the evening air.

His feet carried him along the path.

His eyes welcomed the colours of the setting sun.

He remembered James.

Like James, he had borrowed his body from Mother Earth.

The food he ate, the water he drank, the clothes he wore and the house towards which he was walking had all come, in one form or another, from her.

One day, he too would have to return them.

But not today.

Today, Mother Earth was still lending him a body through which to experience life.

He did not need to feel guilty about what he possessed.

Nor did he need to abandon the things that brought comfort and usefulness to his life.

He could enjoy his home.

He could tend his garden.

He could appreciate the warmth of a meal and the companionship of others.

The understanding that something was borrowed did not make it less valuable.

Perhaps it made its presence more precious.

What is entrusted to us need not be possessed forever to be appreciated today.

Returning to the Inner House

The Pilgrim had spent time exploring his Inner House.

He had encountered its different rooms.

He had become familiar with the voices of his mind.

He had discovered how easily attention could be drawn towards the outer world, how experiences could awaken old residues, and how the Hijacked Voice could create pressure, urgency and the need to continue.

He had also discovered something quieter.

- Presence.
- Awareness.
- Stillness.
- The Inner Flame.
- The Still Point.

But these were not trophies collected along the pilgrimage.

They were not achievements to display.

And they were certainly not instructions to watch himself throughout every waking moment.

The purpose of visiting the Inner House was never to escape ordinary life.

It was to become more familiar with the life unfolding within him.

- He would still become distracted.
- He would still react.
- He might become impatient, worried or disappointed.

And sometimes he might forget everything he had explored.

That, too, would be part of living.

There was no need to turn awareness into another responsibility.

When something within called for his attention, he could notice.

When he needed to pause, he could pause.

When understanding emerged, he could allow it to guide his next step.

And when life was flowing naturally, he could simply live.

The Garden Beyond His Door

As the Pilgrim approached his home, he noticed the garden.

Some flowers were flourishing.

Others had begun to fade.

A few weeds had appeared between the stones.

There were branches that needed pruning and patches of earth waiting to be cultivated.

He smiled.

The garden did not need to be perfect before he could enjoy it.

Neither did his life.

There would always be something unfinished.

- Another task.
- Another conversation.
- Another question.
- Another experience waiting to unfold.

For much of his life, he had sometimes imagined that peace would arrive when everything was finally settled.

- When difficulties disappeared.
- When relationships became easier.
- When he had achieved enough.
- When there was nothing left to worry about.

But life had never offered such a moment.

And perhaps it never needed to.

Contentment did not require a finished life.

It could be found in the simple recognition that he was here, living the life available to him.

The garden could be tended without becoming a burden.

Relationships could be nurtured without demanding perfection.

Difficulties could be met without turning every experience into something that needed fixing.

And wisdom could continue ripening without being hurried.

Nothing to Prove, Nothing to Complete

The Pilgrim paused at the garden gate.

He thought of James once more.

There were things James had completed.

And things he had left unfinished.

There were experiences he had understood and others that had remained unresolved.

Yet James's life had been a life.

Not a project waiting for perfection.

Not an examination requiring a final score.

Not a competition to determine whether he had succeeded or failed.

The Pilgrim recognised that the same was true of his own journey.

He did not need to return home as a wiser person than everyone else.

He did not need to become permanently peaceful.

He did not need to eliminate every difficult emotion or resolve every hidden experience.

- He could continue learning.
- Continue making mistakes.
- Continue discovering.
- Continue living.

The pilgrimage had not taught him how to complete life.

It had invited him to experience life with greater understanding.

The Door Opens

At last, the Pilgrim reached his home.

The evening light rested gently upon the walls.

He opened the door.

Everything was familiar.

And yet, the moment felt quietly different.

Not because the house had changed.

Not because the world had changed.

But because something within him had been allowed to ripen.

He placed his satchel beside the chair.

Removed his hat.

And entered the ordinary rhythm of his evening.

- There was no ceremony.

- No grand declaration.
- No promise that tomorrow would be different.

There was simply life.

- Still offering itself.
- Still unfolding.
- Still inviting him to participate.

Somewhere beyond the mountains, the last light of the day was disappearing.

James's Flame had travelled towards the mystery of the Universal Home.

And here, within his own individual home, the Pilgrim's Inner Flame continued illuminating the possibility of another human experience.

One journey had ended.

Another continued.

Neither needed to be measured against the other.

The Pilgrim had returned home.

But the pilgrimage had not ended.

For the pilgrimage was never separate from life.

Life itself was the pilgrimage.

Sahachari's Whisper

One Flame journeys towards the Great Mystery.

Another continues within the living Pilgrim.

One returns what Mother Earth has lent.

The other still has a life to experience.

Return to your home.

Not to complete your journey, but to continue living it.

Ubuntu, Ubuntu.

My Stillness honours your Stillness.

My Inner Flame bows to your Inner Flame.

Atmadeva Devatma

The Living Wisdom of Arriving

THE STILL POINT