
William Wordsworth: A Subconscious Journey towards Spirituality

Kuldeep Kaur

Research Scholar

Department of English

Desh Bhagat University Gobindgarh

Introduction: I could compose at greater length about the spiritual innuendos in Wordsworth's poetry, his many experiences, and his mission for truth. The search for truth is unified with no plausibility of ultimate satisfaction, and it can often leave one unpleasant, frustrated, and loaded with question. An existence in search of pleasure is in many ways more desirable than an existence in search for truth, for happiness is often thought to be the greatest thing to make progress toward on this earth. It is almost irrational to think a man would commit his life to a search whose destination is unknowable and whose path may not be pleasurable. It is easy to wish to always remain in the ignorance of youth and look for the pleasures of existence without learning of the very thing one is seeking. The answer to the inquiry, "Why be spiritual?", in any case, is that it produces change. Recognizing spirituality changes the way one perspectives the world, oneself, and one's relation to the world, and, ultimately changes the way one acts. It ought to be noted from the earliest starting point that spirituality at its center is an awareness of and relationship with nearness or a riddle that is greater than the self. In any case, this nearness isn't an external being that just watches over earth, yet is a transcendent being, as much a part of this world as it is outside it. Therefore, improving one's relationship with or increasing one's awareness of this Being means changing the way one perspectives and acts on the planet. In *What Are We: An Introduction to Boston College and its Jesuit and Catholic Tradition*, the authors say: "To see, to pay attention to, the nearness of God's affection and care and self in nature and in other individuals, tenderly invites us to take a gander at creation in an unexpected way" (87). Wordsworth's awareness of the strange nearness prompts him to change the way he sees all creation. Wordsworth's spirituality isn't static. His advance from the innocence of youth is one that is loaded with change. His visit to the Banks of the Wye five years after his initial outing, as portrayed in *Tintern Abbey*, is substantially more fulfilling than the primary visit. In his childhood, he approaches the beauty of the Wye at Tintern as a youngster approaches a Christmas tree on Christmas morning: loaded with a yearning for what he finds before him, however without an understanding of what it really is he is racing towards. Five years later, when he visits the same spot again, he is more aware of his growing spirituality. He perceives reality that is available in Nature and understands that its beauty is in excess of a fantastical pleasure. Looking at the world with a spiritual vision allows one to see normal, mundane aspects of life in another way, seeing that "The world is charged with the grandeur of God," as Gerard Manley Hopkins put it.

Wordsworth always knew there is quality in the setting sun. In any case, after his spirituality has matured, he can see magnificence in everything in nature: the nightfall, the wind, flying creatures, and fountains. Recognizing that on the planet there is something other than beauty however a nearness that is truth allows one to see the beauty of Nature in additionally fulfilling ways. One can see the beauty of Nature for what it actually is, without the projection of personal ideas. Recognizing reality on the planet isn't always pleasurable. To see the things as they really are means seeing the bad as it really is, as well as the great. Wordsworth's spirituality does not just

allow him to have a superior acknowledgment of the beauty of the world, yet he perceives that the dark aspects of Nature should be viewed in the same way. The tempest develops darker when he begins to see Nature for what it actually is. This may not be as pleasurable as the innocent way he saw the beauty of Nature the first occasion when he went by the River Wye, yet it is all the more fulfilling. In Tintern Abbey, Wordsworth says:

*For I have learned To look on nature,
not as in the hour Of thoughtless youth;
but hearing oftentimes The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue (Tintern Abbey 88-93).*

His new way of viewing the world means he never again has "aching joys," or "bleary eyed raptures," yet hears the "sad music of humanity." This spiritual way of seeing the world allows him to see it for what it actually is, a world that is often loaded with sadness and despair. Again, this may not be as pleasurable as seeing things the way he might want them to be, yet it is seeing truth, and that creates an all the more fulfilling euphoria, or "abundant reward," as Wordsworth says. Being spiritual does not just mean one changes the way he sees the world, yet it also means he changes the way he sees himself. Thomas Merton says:

At the center of our being is a point of nothingness which is untouched by sin and illusion, a point of pure truth, a point or spark which belongs entirely to God, Which is never at our disposal, from which God disposes of our lives, which is inaccessible to the fantasies of our own mind or the brutalities of our own will (Merton 146).

To find this "point of nothingness," or God, or truth within ourselves is to be authentically human. In an attempt to discover the center of our identity, in an attempt to be real, we are knowingly or unknowingly searching the profundities of our spirituality. Again, individuals don't have to place any title on what it is in themselves they are searching for. Whether it is God, love, the inner Buddha, they are all searchers for the genuine self, and the search for genuine selfhood is inevitably a spiritual one. This search, with no probability of ultimate satisfaction, can appear to be vain and impractical to many individuals. Wordsworth himself states:

In any case, who shall parcel out His intellect by geometric tenets, Split like a province into round and square? (Prelude 2: 203-205)

It is impossible to go to a full understanding of one's identity, however the search merits everything. Wordsworth would not have composed The Prelude in the event that he trusted it was unbeneficial to attempt to perceive oneself, in spite of the difficulty of totally succeeding. The spiritual mission for genuine self-character is a journey for the genuine meaning of creation, and for why there is something instead of nothing at all.

Wordsworth understands of his identity changes as he becomes more seasoned, as it probably does with a great many people. He sees changes in himself from the innocent kid of youth who might race to Nature for the pleasure of its beauty, to somebody who might swing to Nature as a nurturer and defender of what he accepts. This change does happen in individuals who are spiritual, as well as his recognition of the presence of a puzzling nearness outside himself changes the way he sees himself. His change over the five years between his two visits to the River Wye in Tintern Abbey speaks to two changes that are concordant with each other: a change in himself and a change in his spiritual convictions. He has a greater appreciation in his second outing of the nearness that "aggravates" him, and he also has an alternate perspective of his identity. He perceives both of

these distinctions, and realizes that for the duration of his life as his spirituality is strengthened, his self character will change.

A spiritual perspective of the world changes the way one sees himself in relation to the world. Again, Wordsworth's spirituality lies not only in the way he appreciates the beauty of the world, however in the way this beauty changes him. He knows about the association he has to all living beings, and to all of Nature. There is an awareness of the spiritual unity that exists among all things of this earth. This idea is displayed often in Wordsworth's poetry. In *The Prelude*, he says:

*I have felt the sentiment of Being spread O'er
all that moves and all that seemeth still;
O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of thought
And human knowledge, to the human eye Invisible,
yet liveth to the heart; O'er all that leaps and runs,
and shouts and sings, Or beats the gladsome air;
o'er all that glides Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,
And mighty depth of waters (Prelude 2: 401-409)*

Everything seen and inconspicuous, everything rational and irrational, everything loving and unloving, share this sense of Being. Everything that lives and everything that is are related because they exist. Indeed, even aspects of life normally thought to be bad - indecencies, questions, sufferings - all exist together to shape the solidarity that exists in all things. Wordsworth says:

*Dust as we are, the immortal spirit grows Like harmony in music;
There is a dark inscrutable workmanship that reconciles discordant elements,
makes them cling together In one society. How strange, that all the terrors, pains,
and early miseries, Regrets, vexations,
lassitudes interfused Within my mind, should e'er have borne a part,
And that a needful part, in making up The calm existence that is mine when
I Am worthy of myself! (Prelude 1: 340-350).*

Somehow, even these “discordant elements” of life are harmoniously united with the beautiful. Recognizing this spiritual connection among all things allows Wordsworth to remember that even the darkest aspects of life play a part in the harmony of the world. Again, this is more than a fictional way of allowing him to see suffering as something positive. There is much more truth at the core of this spiritual unity. There is truth in recognizing that “terrors, pains, and early miseries” of life play a “needful part” in determining who a person really is. It is an indisputable fact that everything that is shares being. Because everything shares being, there is a necessary connection between everything that exists. Recognizing this unity is recognizing truth; and realizing the importance of suffering and trials means realizing the truth that they are as much connected with the Creator as is the innocent infant babe. This allows Wordsworth to have a better way of dealing with trials and suffering, but it is not an escape from or a falsified romanticizing of these sufferings. The connection of being that exists in all things is more than a similarity all things share. Atheists and pantheists can recognize the connection that exists between all living things. This interconnectedness of existence can simply be an affirmation that all people share in a Godless, meaningless life. But to return again to the passage from *Tintern Abbey*

*have felt A presence that disturbs me with the joy Of elevated thoughts;
a sense sublime Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,*

*And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels All thinking things,
all objects of all thought, And rolls through
all things (Tintern Abbey 93-102)*

There is something more than insignificant presence that associates all things. There is "this presence," that loosens all things in its reality, as well as instigates the minds of all thinking things. Similarly as the Poetic soul is inevitably present in all individuals, whether they know it or not, so too is this mysterious presence that will always remain puzzle.

Spiritual unity isn't inconsistent with traditional religious convictions. Catholics trust that through Baptism all individuals enter the Mystical Body of Christ. Through the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, all participants share in the feast and wind up one with each other and one with Jesus Christ. St. Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians says, "For we, however many, are one bread and one body; for we as a whole partake of that one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17).

This association is not lost individual personality, nor is it an atheistic way of saying individuals needn't bother with God. It is a representation of the way all individuals are joined under the adoration for God that encompasses all individuals, animals, and things. It is this association that Wordsworth perceives and so often expounds on in his poetry. This appreciation of the spiritual unity of all Beings accomplishes more than allow Wordsworth to feel associated with the dusk. It is tremendously important in the way he carries on with his life as a brother of all that exists. It is vital in determining the way he adores everything else on the planet. The presence or gracious soul joins everybody and everything in brotherhood. Wordsworth says:

*Along his infant veins are interfused The gravitation and the filial bond Of nature
that connect him with the world (Prelude 2:242-244).*

If people truly recognized the connection all people have with one another and with the world, there would not be any hatred, wars, or social injustice. Part of the reason there is so much poverty and so much fighting is because people assume they only need worry about themselves. The words of John Donne do not echo in people's ears every time a war is fought, a crime committed, or social policy made:

*Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind.
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
it tolls for thee (Meditation XVII)*

On the off chance that individuals realized that every death toll in a way meant the death of a part of themselves, they would have the capacity to live more harmoniously on the planet. The brotherhood of man Donne talks about is the dream of every individual working for social equity, and for every Christian who genuinely wants to take after the ideals of Jesus. For those individuals standing up for the marginalized individuals of the world and giving a voice to the voiceless, the spiritual oneness that Wordsworth often perceives is of vital importance to their work.

Wordsworth perceives this harmony, and turns out to be more aware of the world at large. This spiritual awareness accomplishes more than change the way Wordsworth sees himself and the world, for it also changes the way he acts. To say that Nature plays an important part in Wordsworth's life, his poetry, and his spirituality would be an understatement. As already examined, Nature plays a prominent part in everything that is important in Wordsworth's life. This is the reason it is amazingly significant when he says:

*Glad sight wherever new with old Is joined through some dear homeborn tie;
The life of all that we behold Depends upon that mystery.*

*Vain is the glory of the sky,
The beauty vain of field and grove, Unless, while with admiring eye We gaze,
we also learn to love (Glad sight whenever new with old).*

Wordsworth understands that the most important part of his fascination with Nature, his spirituality, and his poetry, is the way he loves. For a man who so worshipped the beauty of Nature, to say that this beauty is vain in the event that one doesn't love is a monstrous claim to the power and necessity of love.

In The Brothers Karamazov, by Fyodor Dostoevsky, Father Zossima says:

*Love all God's creation,
the whole and every grain of sand of it. Love every leaf,
every ray of God's light. Love the animals,
love the plants, love everything.*

If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things.

Once you perceive it, you will begin to comprehend it better every day.

*And you will come at last to love the whole world with an all-embracing love
(Dostoevsky 175).*

Wordsworth loves Nature so much that he can feel the love of the immanent Being, and so love whatever is left of the world. Loving God, or the presence, and loving other individuals and things of the world are not discordant as long as that love is requested. Loving others and loving God and recognizing the solidarity that exists in all things happen in a cycle. In the event that one begins to love the world, as Wordsworth says is most important, he will have the capacity to see that all things are associated in the puzzle, as Dostoyevsky says. When this is seen, one will want to love the world significantly more, which will in swing lead to a considerably greater awareness of the eternal puzzle, which will then lead to more love. It is a cycle which ought to be repeated over again, and the initial step is recognizing that all things and individuals are joined under the same Presence, and so all things ought to be loved. Wordsworth, while describing the importance of those transitory snapshots of spiritual awareness, says:

Thence did I drink the visionary power;

And deem not profitless those fleeting moods Of shadowy exultation:

not for this, That they are kindred to our purer mind And intellectual life;

but that the soul, Remembering how she felt,

but what she felt Remembering not, retains an obscure sense Of possible sublimity,

whereto With growing faculties she doth aspire,

With faculties still growing, feeling still That whatsoever point they gain, they yet

Have something to pursue (Prelude 2: 310-321).

The value of these minutes is vague. One can argue that being attentive for minutes that may not last in excess of a couple of moments is vain and unnecessary for they have no practical value. Wordsworth does not give particular examples as to why these minutes are so important, however just says there is a "dark" idea of "conceivable sublimity." People don't recognize what they recollect about those minutes, essentially how they have felt. This guard of spirituality can be viewed as entertaining, since there is no definite gain. In any case, cloud ideas of potential outcomes are critical for the spiritual individual. Spirituality relies on uncertain ideas since the very thing individuals are attempting to discover is unknowable truth.

These dark senses don't create passivity in Wordsworth, however encourage him to change the way he acts. He has had a minute where he perceives some kind of spiritual presence, which

changes the way he sees the world, himself, and his relation to the world, and from that point realizes that his spirit always has something more to which it can aspire. The Mystical Body of Christ today isn't an elitist gathering of "adherents," yet a genuine society of all individuals of the world who are willing to love. It could be argued that Wordsworth does not do anything practical to help other people he is associated with through this spiritual oneness.

In any case, the intensity of his poetry ought not be underestimated. In the Jewish tradition, there is a term, *tikkun olam*, which means: "Repair of the world, whether manifested in the social realms as solid acts of goodness or as a mystical procedure of restoring the sparks to their legitimate place" (Kamenetz 302). This mystical procedure is critical while repairing the world. Although the practical issues of injustice on the planet should be repaired, individuals everywhere require their sparks to be reestablished. Spiritual minutes, or "sparks," are important for individuals of all parts of society, both the rich and poor people. On the off chance that those individuals in control perceived the sparks of God or Mystery in their lives, they would conceivably gain a greater appreciation of the spiritual association among all individuals, and would have the capacity to make the necessary changes to create equity for all. Caring individuals need to perceive the sparks in their lives to give the motivation to continue giving.

The marginalized on the planet need to reestablish their sparks to give them the courage to continue living and continue loving. All individuals need to reestablish their sparks to remind them there are powers in this world more intense than the material world individuals have created for themselves, and there are parts of life more important than what society says is important. This mystical procedure of restoring sparks is one in which Wordsworth plays a critical part. His poetry, other than conceivably inspiring individuals to change their lives, can reestablish spiritual sparks to all readers. Snapshots of awareness can come while reading his poetry. His poetry can enable individuals to recollect past spiritual minutes, or it can essentially be an affirmation that what one accepts or feels about spiritual minutes isn't vain.

J.A. Appleyard, S.J., when discussing the relationship between spirituality and literature says: The premise underlying this thesis is that reading deals with the same issues that are the terrain of spiritual growth: identity, relationships with others, what it means to love, the nature and limits of truth and knowing, manners and morals, mortality, evil, death, what we hope for beyond our lives (Mahoney 31).

Review of Literature

1. Nafi, Jamal (2015) in his article *The Prelude: A Spiritual Autobiography of William Wordsworth*:

The author examined Wordsworth's poem *The Prelude* in the sense of being autobiographical. The poem is considered as the longest, noblest and most fruitful illustration of the spiritual frugality of Wordsworth and a handsome anticipation of the modern concept of autobiography. The poem indicates that the autobiographer projects himself in his own literary work and renders his psyche, truthfully and realistically. Through analytical study, this paper tries to shed some light on the autobiographical elements in the poem, and to show how the poem outlines the growth of the poet's mind throughout the different stages of his life. The study discovers that *The Prelude* is not an autobiography in the usual sense from the holy pen of the high priest of nature. In it, we have the faithful record of his inner life and emotional experiences enabling us to have a

glimpse of the innermost recesses of the poet's soul. So we may unhesitatingly call it a spiritual or poetical autobiography.

2. ukma Dara Damanik, Emeliya. (2018): An Analysis of Experiential Meaning in Poetry “William Wordsworth”:
This paper analyzes experiential meaning in poetry written by William Wordsworth. It applied Halliday Systemic Functional Grammar to pinpoint and analyze the occurrences of processes in the poetry. There are five poems which are taken as the subject on this research. The analysis is conducted based the six processes in transitivity system. The analysis found that there are five processes coded in the poetry of William Wordsworth. They are material, mental, relational, behavioral and existential. It also resulted that the most dominant types is the material process. It's meant that poetry tells about the poet's action in expressing of his idea, feeling and showing in life. This finding also shows that William Wordsworth as the poet uses the material process to build the imagery such as personification, simile and metaphor. Related to the findings of this study, the application of analysis experiential meaning can be implicated in writing and reading academic as well as translators, students and instructors involved in writing and reading pedagogy.
3. Bennett, A. (2015): William Wordsworth in context :
William Wordsworth's poetry responded to the enormous literary, political, cultural, technological and social changes that the poet lived through during his lifetime (1770 to 1850), and to his own transformation from young radical inspired by the French Revolution to Poet Laureate and supporter of the establishment. The poet of the 'egotistical sublime' who wrote the pioneering autobiographical masterpiece, The Prelude, and whose work is remarkable for its investigation of personal impressions, memories and experiences, is also the poet who is critically engaged with the cultural and political developments of his era. William Wordsworth in Context presents thirty-five concise chapters on contexts crucial for an understanding and appreciation of this leading Romantic poet. It focuses on his life, circle, and composition; on his reception and influence; on the significance of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century literary contexts; and on the historical, political, scientific and philosophical issues that helped to shape Wordsworth's poetry and prose.
4. Thomas Merton says, "All that we can do with any spiritual discipline is create within ourselves something of the quiet, the quietude, the detachment, the virtue of heart and the indifference which are required if the inner self is to make some bashful, unpredictable manifestation of his Presence" (Merton 298). Awareness of "his Presence" creates in individuals the necessary modesty expected to perceive the reliance of their lives on some other being. Individuals cannot drive this awareness to happen.

Conclusion:

Art in general has the intensity of the touching the spiritual center of a great many individuals. It doesn't make a difference when something is created or when it is read or saw, the subjects of love, spirituality, and ultimate meaning are themes that have inhabited literature for thousands of years. Despite the fact that the requirement for a spiritual life may not be talked about in mainstream culture today, there is as yet this craving within all individuals to search for ultimate truth, or to grasp the Mystery that encompasses life. Poetry is read not because of its elegant language and feel-great supposition, but since it is the genuine approach of a certain individual to look for this unobtainable truth. Because of this, a writer's mission is inevitably

linked to our own, since we are all searching for this same truth. When reading Wordsworth's poetry, readers may feel a certain sense of awe defeat them when they experience certain passages. There can be "aha" minutes where the reader's eyes and hearts are available to reality that is introduced to them in the sonnet. These circumstances are snapshots of awareness of the same presence that Wordsworth felt while on the banks of the River Wye. One doesn't have to leave the solaces of his own home to encounter these minutes. They can be found in any aspect of life, including poetry. Reading Wordsworth's poetry can also enable readers to recall certain snapshots of their lives. While experiencing a spiritual minute, one may call to mind a certain lyric he or she loves. That lyric can always fill in as a reminder of that one fleeting minute when one was able to see into the life of things, and therefore to make the minute eternal. Reading the lyrics of a spiritual essayist like Wordsworth can remind one that he isn't alone in his search for truth, and the steps one makes in a single's spirituality are not in vain. Reading Wordsworth's poetry can help create the quietness of heart necessary to allow spiritual minutes to transpire. Feelings of calm and relaxation are not the coveted goal of spirituality, which takes a stab at truth, whether it is pleasant or unpleasant. Be that as it may, keeping in mind the end goal to appreciate or perceive this fact, it is necessary to have inner calm and a tranquil heart. Once the heart is hushed, one can end up aware of the mysterious truth pervading all things and existing outside all things. Then intimate romance of this secret can happen, which leads to inner transformation, which in turn changes the way individuals act. This change ought to happen constantly, for no one ever totally actualizes all the potential they were conceived with, and so the spiritual journey never closes. Wordsworth's poetry reinforces this idea, as well as gives the motivation and inspiration to make this inner transformation conceivable. William Wordsworth started his journey from materialistic happiness, with the passage of time he transformed and perceived all matters and non matters so deeply that he made his eternal journey subconsciously. Many authors wrote about Wordsworth as Romantic Poet but I felt it was his one stage not his whole journey. He acclaimed his identity not only a romantic poet but as Spiritual Poet also.

References

1. Jindal, SP. William Wordsworth & Nature: a communion with God. SAS Nagar: Suraj Publishers,2007.
2. Dunn Andrew. "Images of Spirituality" in Refresh V3 No2 of the SGM Journal, Summer 2003-2004.
3. Nafi, Jamal. (2015). The Prelude: A Spiritual Autobiography of William Wordsworth. English Language and Literature Studies. Vol. 5. 146-154. 10.5539/ells.v5n2p146.
4. ukma Dara Damanik, Emeliya. (2018). an Analysis of Experiential Meaning in Poetry "William Wordsworth". Loquen: English Studies Journal. 10. 81. 10.32678/loquen.v10i2.695.
5. Bennett, A. (2015). William Wordsworth in context. 10.1017/CBO9781139236188.
6. Singh, Naranjan. Matter and Non-Matter. New Delhi : Sant Nirankari Mandal, 2000.
7. Priestly J.B "Nature and Spirituality: William Wordsworth's Poems" in The Culture Club.