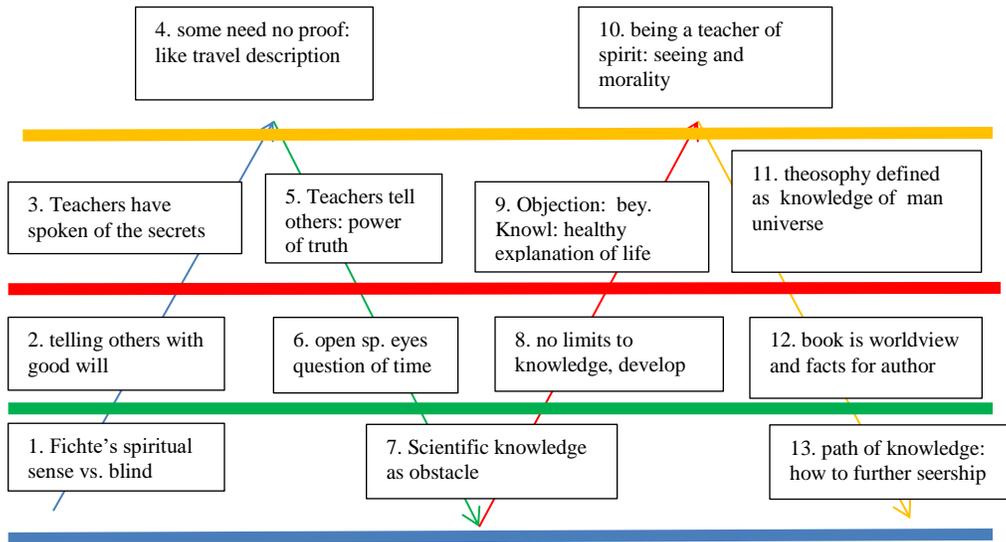


Rudolf Steiner's Theosophy, Chapter I, Introduction



Chapter I

Introduction

Paragraph 1/4 WHAT?

1. (what?) In the autumn of 1813, the philosopher **Johann Gottlieb Fichte** announced to the world his "new spiritual teaching" as the ripe fruit of a life wholly devoted to the service of truth, he began with the following words: *"This new spiritual teaching presupposes an entirely new inner sense organ by means of which there is revealed a new world that does not exist for ordinary human beings."*
2. (how?) And Fichte proceeded to give the following comparison to show how incomprehensible his new spiritual teaching must be, when judged by others whose knowledge is derived from their ordinary five senses - Fichte said: *"Think of a world of people born blind, who therefore know only those objects and relations that exist through the sense of touch."*
3. (why?) *Try to engage these people and speak to them of colors and the other relationships that exist for the sense of sight and only through light.*
4. (who?) *Now, you will convey nothing to their minds, and this is actually preferable especially if they tell you right away, for you will quickly register your mistake - and, if unable to open their eyes, - you will then discontinue the futile discussion."*

Paragraph 2/4 HOW? (dash in the original)

1. (what?) - One may find oneself however, when speaking to people about these things which Fichte is talking about, all too often in a similar situation of the seer and the blind.
2. (how?) But these are important topics that concern the human being's true essence and highest goal.
3. (why?) And consequently one would have to doubt all of humanity's potential if one believes that it is necessary to end "the futile discussion."
4. (who?) One should not, for one moment, doubt the possibility of opening the eyes of everyone to these things, provided that people have the good will.

Paragraph 3/2 WHY? (dash in the original)

1. (what?) - This is the situation that all those lecturers and writers found themselves in who felt that in themselves had grown an "inner sense tool" which enabled them to perceive the true nature of man that is concealed to the outer senses.
2. (how?) This is why from the most ancient times such "hidden wisdom" has been spoken of again and again.

Paragraph 4/4 WHO? (dash in the original)

1. (what?) - He who has embraced aspects of this wisdom, feels just as certain of his possession as do people who having normal vision feel about their perception of color.
2. (how?) For him this "hidden wisdom" requires no "proof."
3. (why?) And he also knows that it requires no proof for any other person who, like himself, has unfolded his "higher sense perception."
4. (who?) Such a person speaks as a traveler would about America to people who have themselves not seen that country, but who can form a concept of it because they would see all that he has seen if the opportunity presented itself to them.

Paragraph 5/12 Inner WHY?

1. (what?) In addition, the seer of the supersensible world should not only talk to researchers of the spiritual world.
2. (how?) He must address his words to all humankind.
3. (why?) For he is required to report about things that concern all humanity; indeed, he knows that without a knowledge of these things no one can, in the true sense of the word, be a "human being."
4. (inner why?) And he speaks to all humankind because he knows that there are different levels of understanding of what he has to say.
5. (inner how?) He knows that even those who are still far from the moment in which they will themselves be capable of spiritual investigation, can bring a certain measure of understanding.
6. (inner what?) For a **feeling** for truth and **understanding** of truth are inherent in **every** human being.
7. (what?) And to this understanding, which lights up in every healthy soul, he speaks initially.
8. (how?) He also knows that in this understanding there is a power which, little by little, must lead to the higher grades of knowledge.
9. (why?) This feeling, which perhaps at first sees **nothing at all** of that which is told it, is itself the magician that opens the "eye of the spirit."
10. (inner why?) In darkness this feeling stirs.
11. (inner how?) The soul does not **see**; but through this feeling it is seized by the **power of the truth**; and then the truth will gradually draw nearer to the soul and open in it the "higher sense."
12. (inner what?) For one person it may take a longer, for another a shorter time; but everyone who has patience and endurance reaches this goal.

Paragraph 6/1 Inner HOW? (dash in the original)

1. (what?) - For although not every physical eye can be operated on: **every spiritual eye** can be opened; and it is only a question of time when it will be opened.

Paragraph 7/5 WHAT?

1. (what?) Scholarliness and scientific training are not requirements to the unfolding of this "higher sense."
2. (how?) It can be developed in the simpleminded person just as in the scientist of high-standing.
3. (why?) Indeed, what is often called at the present time "the only true science" can, for the attainment of this goal, be a hindrance rather than a help.

4. (inner how?) For this kind of science will not acknowledge anything as “real” that is not accessible to the common senses.
5. (inner what?) And, however great its merits regarding the knowledge of **that** common reality may be: by declaring that **its** necessary and useful methods should be standard for all areas of human knowledge, this kind of science creates a lot of prejudices which bar the access to higher realities.

Paragraph 8/5 HOW?

1. (what?) In objection to what is said here, it is often claimed: "insurmountable limits" have been once and for all set to human knowledge.
2. (how?) One cannot research beyond these limits; thus all branches of investigation and knowledge must be rejected which do not take such “limits” into account.
3. (why?) And a person is looked upon as highly presumptuous who wishes to make assertions about things which many regard as proved to lie beyond the limits that have been set to the human capacities to know.
4. (inner how?) Those who make such objections entirely disregard the fact that the **development** of the human powers of knowledge has to precede the higher knowledge.
5. (inner what?) What lies beyond the limits of knowledge **before** such a development lies - after the awakening of faculties slumbering in each human being - entirely **within** the realm of knowledge.

Paragraph 9/7 WHY? (dash in the original)

1. (what?) - One point should not be neglected in this discussion.
2. (how?) One could say: “of what use is it to speak to people about things for which their powers of knowledge are not yet awakened, and which are therefore still closed to them?”
3. (why?) **But that is also the wrong way to look at it.**
4. (who?) One requires certain faculties **to find out** the things that were talked about; but if they are **made known** after being found, then **every** person can understand who is willing to utilize their unprejudiced logic and healthy feeling for truth.
5. (inner why?) **In this book, nothing is said that isn't apt to tell any person who is able to think on many levels, without prejudice and to let himself be guided by his feeling for truth that, through this new information, the riddles of the human condition and of the facts of life can be approached in a satisfying way.**
6. (inner how?) Put yourself for a moment in the position of asking: If the things that are asserted here are true, do they afford a satisfying explanation of life?
7. (inner what?) **And one will find that the **life** of each human being supplies the confirmation.**

Paragraph 10/9 WHO?

1. (what?) In order to be a "teacher" in these higher regions of existence, it is by no means sufficient that a person has developed the sense for them.
2. (how?) For that purpose "science" is necessary, just as much as science is necessary for school teachers in the domain of normal physical reality.
3. (why?) "Higher seeing" alone doesn't make a "knower" in the spiritual any more than healthy sense-organs make a "scholar" in regard to the sensible realities.

4. (who?) And because in truth **all** reality, the lower and the higher spiritual, are only two sides of one and the same fundamental essence, anyone who is ignorant in the lower branches of knowledge will as a rule remain ignorant in the higher.
5. (inner who?) This fact creates a feeling of responsibility that is immeasurable in him who, by way of a spiritual calling, is destined to be a teacher in the spiritual regions of existence.
6. (inner who?) It creates in him humility and reserve.
7. (inner why?) **But it should deter no one from occupying himself with the higher truths.**
8. (inner how?) **Not even an individual whose life-circumstances afford no opportunity for the study of ordinary science.**
9. (inner what?) For one can, indeed, fulfill one's task as a human being without understanding anything of botany, zoölogy, mathematics, and other sciences; but one cannot, in the fullest sense of the word, be a "human" being without having, in some way or other, come near to a perception of the nature and destiny of humankind revealed in the "higher wisdom."

Paragraph 11/5 Inner WHY?

1. (what?) The highest to which the human being is able to look up at, he designates as the "divine."
2. (how?) And he considers it his highest mission to be in some way connected to this divinity.
3. (why?) **Thus, the supersensible wisdom - a wisdom which shows humankind its true spiritual nature, and thereby humanity's ultimate vocation - may also be termed "divine wisdom" or Theosophy.**
4. (inner how?) One can give the term **spiritual science** to the observation of spiritual processes in the human being and in the universe.
5. (inner what?) When, as in this book, one extracts from this spiritual science those special results that have reference to the spiritual core of the human being, then the expression "theosophy" may be employed to designate this domain because it has been employed for centuries in this way.

Paragraph 12/2 Inner HOW?

1. (what?) From this point of view, there is sketched in this book an outline of the theosophical conception of the universe.
2. (how?) He who wrote it down, presents nothing that is not a **fact** for him in the same sense that an experience of the outer world is a fact for eyes, ears, and ordinary intelligence.

Paragraph 13/6 Inner WHAT? (dash in the original)

1. (what?) - The concern here is with experiences that become accessible to everyone who is determined to tread the "path of knowledge" described in a special chapter of this book.
2. (how?) One takes the right attitude towards the things of the supersensible world when one assumes that sound thinking and feeling are capable of understanding all true knowledge that emerges from the higher worlds, and further, when we start from **this** understanding and **therewith** lay down a firm foundation, we have also made a great step forward towards "seeing" for ourselves; even though in order to attain this, other things must also be done.
3. (why?) **One locks the door to true higher knowledge when we despise this road, and are only in some other way determined to reach the higher worlds.**

4. (inner why?) The maxim: “to accept higher worlds only after we have seen them” is itself a hindrance to this spiritual seeing.
5. (inner how?) The will to understand first through sound thinking what later can be directly seen, furthers this seeing.
6. (inner what?) It conjures forth important powers of the soul that lead to this “spiritual vision of the seer.”